

It has been US and UN policy since the founding of Israel and Palestine in 1947 that two states should live side by side in peace. Israel agreed, but the Palestinians rejected the state they had been offered, opting instead for war, with the help of the entire Arab world, to make Palestine a "one-state solution." They lost that first war and then 13 more attempts to destroy Israel.

The definition for insanity is to do the same thing repeatedly hoping for a different outcome. If there were to be two states living side by side in peace, it would have happened in 1947. American presidents have tried, one after the other, to get the Israelis (with democratically elected governments) and the Palestinians, (the PLO in the West Bank and the Hamas dictatorship in Gaza) to sit down together and forge a peaceful two-state solution. Several times, these negotiations came close---but at the end, the Palestinian leaders knew that they could not make this agreement without risking assassination.

President Trump, breaking with decades of US policy, has given up on the two-state solution, at least for now. With this pressure off the Israelis, they can pursue a solution of what to do about the Palestinians, a solution that might well provide a federation with Israel that will permit self-governance, but with no ability to continue their 70-year war.

Lest this should seem discouraging, note that India and Pakistan became neighboring nations in 1947 too, and to date have not managed to live together in peace. They both now have nukes as well. They were the first models of a "two-state solution." See how well that works.

I encountered a fascinating column by a Canadian man born in Lebanon, Fred Maroun (a Christian Arab, not Muslim), who survived the 10-year civil war that nearly destroyed Lebanon. He voices the following criticisms:

- o Our worst mistake was in not accepting the United Nations partition plan of 1947.
- o Perhaps one should not launch wars if one is not prepared for the results of possibly losing them.
- o The Jews are not keeping the Arabs in camps, we are.
- o Our hatred towards each other and towards Jews is far greater than any concept of purported Arab solidarity.

He is absolutely right, but Palestinians are not listening to him\205yet. The changes in the neighborhood may eventually make them listen. The Arabs, even Saudi Arabia, the most hostile foe of Jews, has discovered that it has far worse enemies than Israel. The two are talking. Egypt and Jordan had already had solid relationships with Israel, and this continues. The advent of Islamo-fascism in the form of Al Qaeda, ISIS, and their ilk have threatened the existence of every Muslim state, not only in the Middle East, but throughout the Muslim world.

Suddenly the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has assumed its proper size in world events: much smaller than the fight for existence they all face now. The only people who still harp on Israel's refusal to "give up land for peace" are the left-wing academics urging divestment of Israel to punish them for defending themselves. Israel tried land for peace when they gave Gaza back to the Palestinians. Gaza held an election, which Hamas, a terror cult, won. There has never been another election. Even after winning, Hamas thugs pursued their PLO rivals and murdered them. Today, as money pours in from Arabs and left-wing European idealists, Gaza uses all these funds, not to rebuild from prior ill-considered wars against Israel, but to build more tunnels and buy more rockets.

The two-state solution will come when the world cuts off all funds from the Palestinians. Until they know that there is no more support for their behavior, they will not make a deal. As for the demand that Israel give back all the land that they took, critics forget that Israel did not invade the Palestinians; they just kept the land that they won as a result of Palestinian aggression.

The Palestinians have lost. It is time to settle. Would Californians give California back to Mexico, which lost the Mexican-American war? How is this different?

684 words

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