

THE ENDOWMENT FOR MIDDLE EAST TRUTH

SPEAKER:

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THE ENDOWMENT FOR MIDDLE EAST TRUTH**

SARAH STERN: It is my pleasure to be able to welcome you to the first of many future policy symposiums in our brand new unabashedly pro-Israel and pro-American think tank EMET; the first of its kind in our nation's capitol.

It is my honor to be able to begin our series of lectures with a discussion by Emmanuel Navon., who will talk about Paradigm Shifts within the Israeli mind set. He is here, straight from the renowned Herzelia conference, which is the annual paramount foreign policy conference in Israel, to discuss the current foreign policy mood in Israel, and the collapse of the Oslo paradigm, as well as many other subsequent fashionable foreign policy paradigms, as both the people and the leaders of Israel are being confronted with the empirical data of the implacable hatred that surrounds the Jewish state.

Emmanuel Navon is a lecturer at the Abba Eban Graduate Program in Diplomacy at Tel-Aviv University, and a senior fellow at the Institute for Policy and Strategy at Herzelia. As those of you who have read his biography know, he was born and raised in Paris and he has had a very, very interesting personal metamorphosis, to the shock and surprise of people in the French Foreign Ministry, where he was employed, and where the attitude towards Jews led him to make "aliyah" –choose to live and work in Israel.

It is therefore my honor and my privilege to welcome and to introduce Mr. Emmanuel Navon.

EMMANUEL NAVON: Thank you. First of all, I would like to thank Sarah for giving me the opportunity to speak at this first EMET gathering. It's really an honor for me. While you were mentioning the Abba Eban program, I recalled what happened when Abba Eban presented his credentials as Israel's first ambassador to the United States to President Truman. Eban came with his Letter of Credentials and

Truman received him at the White House without a jacket, in his suspenders, and he took the letter and said, "let's cut the crap and have a good talk." I was almost going to do that when I saw you were about to read my biography

This is a good time to talk about paradigm shifts. We talked a lot about paradigm shifts at the Herzliya Conference last week. There is something wrong going on with the way Israel is dealing with its foreign policy and defense issues. And when something is going wrong, you have to think differently. But despite the fact that our policies are not working, we keep thinking the same way.

What else needs to happen for people to start thinking differently? We've had 9/11, we've had a war in Israel for the past six years, we have the president of Iran who says openly that he's getting a nuclear bomb. He knows more or less that he's off the hook and he says that the only purpose of this bomb is to destroy Israel. So I'm just wondering what else needs to happen.

One of the only people who spelled out the truth at the Conference was Newt Gingrich.. He said that we can either wait for Iran to bomb three American cities or start acting now. And that contrasts with the way Israel's leaders address the issue of Iran. For example, our Infrastructure Minister, Binyamin Ben-Eliezer said at the Conference that we should stop worrying about this Iranian issue. It's really not an Israeli issue he said; it's a worldwide issue. So it's not our problem.

And then Tzipi Livni came and all she could talk about was the corruption in the Israeli government, which obviously is a very serious issue, but the only reason why she mentioned this issue is to remind people that she's not as corrupt as the prime minister and therefore she should be getting the job. And when she was interviewed by the *Haaretz* newspaper a month before that, and she was asked about the Iranian threat, she said, well, yes, Iran is trying to get a bomb, but don't worry because the United States and Europe are taking care of that and the real issue today, what's really important for us is to create a Palestinian state.

I'm looking at the Israeli leaders and then I'm listening to the American leaders and I'm looking at the two different nations, the two different people, and I see how the Israelis, despite these leaders, are willing to fight. I know no other society in history that has been going through what Israel has been going through and succeeding the way Israeli society has been succeeding. This is a society facing existential threats and wars and terrorism. But for the past six years, despite the fact that people have been blown up in buses and shot in their cars on their way to work, a our society didn't fall apart.

So on the one hand, you see the strength of Israeli society and this willingness to fight and survive, and on the other hand our leaders who are unwilling to face reality and to fight. In America today it's the opposite: you have a strong leadership who understands what the threats are about, but the American people cannot take it anymore. The American people just want to get out of Iraq.

I was thinking of doing a swap. The bottom line is that we need courage – the courage to face reality. I think one of the reasons why people in Israel today,

especially Israeli leaders, are unwilling or unable to think differently is because it would take too much courage to face reality.

Take the Oslo process. It is completely bankrupt and yet people do not have the guts to think differently. When I first came to Israel, what I knew about the Arab-Israeli conflict was based on what I had been reading about it in the French press and the international press, and it looked pretty simple. I mean, you had two people fighting the same piece of land. Just divide it into two and that's it. What's the big deal? I came to Israel in the summer of '93, right before the Israeli government decided to recognize the PLO and sign the Oslo agreement. And I thought it was great because we were going to have peace. The accepted wisdom was that giving up territories was the price to pay for peace. Any rational person would say, you know what, it's a tradeoff. It's the price to pay.

It might be emotionally painful – for some people less than others because a lot of people in Israel actually do not give a damn about giving away Hebron and the Temple Mount because it doesn't mean anything to them, but for a lot of people it does mean a lot. But you would not only get peace, you would also get a new Middle East, because I remind that at the same time Shimon Peres wrote this book that was describing an entirely new reality where the Middle East would be turned into Western Europe.

So if all you had to do for that was to give up a little bit of land, what a great deal. Who in his right mind wouldn't go for that? And this is why you had so many Jews, both in Israel and in the Diaspora, who went for it. And immediately it became obvious that there was something wrong with the theory, because the first thing that Arafat did after he signed these agreements was to say in Johannesburg that what he did was identical to what the Prophet did with the Koreish tribes of Mecca: he signed the agreement because he had no choice, but he tore it apart and killed his enemies as soon as he became stronger.

What Arafat was saying to his people was: what do you want from me? Ten years ago, the Israeli Army kicked me out of Lebanon and I had to go to Tunisia and I'm bankrupt because I supported Saddam Hussein during the Gulf war, so the Gulf states are not funding me anymore and I'm on the American black list because I supported Saddam Hussein, and I have no political power. The Israelis just saved my life for a second time. The same way that the Israelis left saved my life ten years ago by demonstrating against Menachem Begin, and by having him fire Ariel Sharon. And 10 years later they saved my life again. Why shouldn't I sign? Of course I signed. But don't worry: as soon as I'm in there I'm going to take care of our cause, which he did.

Now, the first thing he did when he came into Gaza was to smuggle in weapons and bring all his terrorist buddies and build up a whole educational system to tell the youth that they would liberate Palestine from the crusaders, and that Jews were the sons of pigs and monkeys and should be slaughtered. This is what has been taught for over 10 years.

Israel had two options at that point, at the very beginning of the Oslo process: either tell him, okay, fine, that's it, you're going back to Tunisia; we made a mistake;

it's over. Or Israel could ignore what Arafat was saying and doing. The Israeli left's reply was: He has to say that to gain legitimacy. And we fell into Arafat's trap and there was no way out because what Arafat would do, and which was very smart, was to say, you know, I'm weak. You know, it's either me or Hamas. And so the Israelis would go, hey, he's weak; it's either him or Hamas. So, true, what he's saying and what's he's doing is really horrible. The Palestinian television and educational system are obviously not educating towards peace. And, yes, he's smuggling in weapons, and, yes, he's preparing the war against Israel, but it's either this or Hamas.

The question is: what's the difference between this and Hamas? There is no difference. And whenever you would tell people: don't you realize that there's something wrong going on, the Left's standard and favorite reply was: Well, what's the alternative? My answer is that the alternative to disaster is less than a disaster. In other words, if my choice is between not having a solution to a problem and being alive or not having a solution to a problem and being dead, I'll go for the first option.

I was at the time at the Hebrew University. And the whole atmosphere there was, I assume, similar to the one on American campuses in the '60s and '70s. If you did not subscribe to the theory of absolute truth, well then you were against peace, the same way that in Cuba, if you opposed Fidel Castro, you were not against Castro but against social justice. So if you questioned the wisdom of cutting a deal with Arafat, it's not that you questioned the wisdom of cutting a deal with Arafat; you were just against peace.

When, on the ground, Arafat was building up his military capability and preparing the war, the Israelis started realizing that something wrong was going on. Arab terrorism against Jews started over 100 years ago the moment Jews started coming back to their homeland, and in 1929 there was a massacre against Jews in Hebron, masterminded by Hajj Amin al-Husseini. And after Israel was established, there were huge waves of terrorism against Jews, which is why Ariel Sharon at the time was picked by Ben-Gurion to set up this Unit 101 for counterattacks against terrorism in Gaza. So obviously terrorism did not start in 1967, with the so-called occupation, as Arab propaganda would like us to believe. And the fact is that as soon as Israel started putting an end to the so-called occupation, we had a new wave of terrorism. The first Hamas suicide bombing was in 1994, after Israel handed over Gaza and Jericho. And then you had this wave of terrorist attacks in '95 and '96 against Israeli civilians. When Israel was just giving away whatever Arafat was asking for.

And yet the general theory (among the intellectual elite and the left) was still: well, this is because Yitzhak Rabin has been murdered, so Arafat doesn't feel he has a partner to make peace. There is always an explanation. And then when the Israelis were getting murdered every day by Arafat's terrorism in '96, they decided with a very, very small margin, to elect a different prime minister.

Netanyahu's policy was allegedly based on reciprocity. The Palestinian Authority launched its first war against Israel in 1996. There was an agreement between the Wakf, (the Moslem religious authority of Jerusalem, which is PLO-controlled), and the Israeli government about the opening of this tunnel under the Temple Mount excavations, and yet Arafat used this as an excuse to launch his war.

What Netanyahu did at the time was very simple. He said, either you stop or I come in with my tanks and you're going back to Tunisia, and he, (Arafat), stopped. Netanyahu picked up his phone and he said, Mr. Chairman, you have two hours to stop. There was a silence at the other end of the line, and he said, I got you. And within two hours it was over. Surprise, surprise.

But then the incitement continued and the Israeli government tried to deal with it at the Wye Plantation negotiations, but Israel was trapped. It was trapped in the same logic of dealing with the PLO and the two-state solution and land for peace theory. Either you go against the theory or you go with the theory, but you can't go halfway. And the Israeli government was kind of in between, saying, well, obviously there is something wrong with that theory, but we have to go with the stream. And the Israeli media and academics were saying over and over that the Israeli government was spoiling this great peace that we had been building since 1993. And Ehud Barak came in and said just vote for me and I'll solve the problem.

And I remember that this very same year, in 1999 you had two Israeli historians – Avi Shlaim and Benny Morris – who published a new history of the Arab-Israeli conflict. The two books were published basically at the same time. Avi Shlaim's book was called "The Iron Wall: Israel and the Arab World," and Benny Morris's book was called "Righteous Victims." Basically, what they were saying is that Israel is the aggressor. Israel is responsible for that conflict and is responsible for ending that conflict, and has the ability to end that conflict. How? It's very simple. Just give back what you took and you'll have peace.

Here you had these two very thick books with a general theory of how to end the conflict, and here you had an Israeli Prime Minister who went exactly according, not to the book, but to the books. He went to Camp David and without even meaning to do so, he called Arafat's bluff. He said, okay, you want the West Bank and Gaza and half of Jerusalem? Here, have it. And Arafat did not expect this to happen to him.

Many people think that Adolf Hitler was very happy in 1938 when France and England signed the Munich Agreement, but he was actually upset because he wanted war. He thought he was ready for war. His generals thought otherwise, but Hitler had already made the decision to go to war. He looked for an excuse but it didn't work. It took him another year.

When Arafat came to Camp David he didn't think that Barak would do what he did, and he was confused. So Arafat pulled out his old Arafat trick, which is propaganda. He said that Barak didn't offer anything at Camp David and that he was obnoxious.

And it worked. The propaganda started with the Muhhamad Al-Dura blood libel. Then you had this picture on the front page of the New York Times that said "Israeli soldier beating up Palestinian on the Temple Mount." Well, there was a gas station in the background, and, you know, there is no gas station on the Temple Mount, plus the so-called Palestinian was a Jewish kid from Chicago who was learning in Yeshiva for the year.

And so people in Israel woke up, but they were confused. They were confused because the old question was coming again: So what is the alternative? And when you ask this question, people just look at you with wide eyes and they don't know what to answer.

Which brings me to the Herzliya Conference. It was started in 2000 by Uzi Arad, a brilliant mind who was with the Mossad (Israeli intelligence) for many years, and served as Binyamin Netanyahu's foreign policy advisor when he was Prime Minister. And one of the reasons why he started this conference and his think tank is because there is no strategic thinking in Israel. Many of people today in the Knesset accuse the Herzliya conference of running the show, and the answer is you're right because you guys are not discussing these issues, so we need to have a parallel institution to discuss the real issues facing Israel because the Knesset is not doing it. Not only that, but the Knesset members, with all due respect, are not the most impressive people in the world, so we need to invite experts to the Conference in order to discuss the main issues facing Israel, which is what the Herzliya conference has been doing for the past seven years.

The same way that there is a Washington consensus, I would say that there is a Herzliya consensus. And the reason I mentioned Uzi Arad is because Uzi Arad could not be accused of being part of the Israeli left wing agenda of self delusion and intellectual terrorism. He's not part of them. And the message of Herzliya was: obviously we are in a war and the Oslo paradigm is not working; we have to think differently. How?

Well, Oslo didn't work because it tried to find a territorial solution to a conflict which is not territorial. So since the conflict is not about territories, you're not going to solve it by giving away territories. On the other hand, holding on these territories forever is demographically suicidal. And therefore, forget about ideology, whether it's from the Left or from the Right. The left wing ideology was peace, peace, peace. Peace was the ideology of the left. Peace is the supreme value, and in order to achieve peace, you can do anything. And giving away territories will bring peace, so why would you be against it?

Now, when it became obvious that this was completely wrong, the realists would say, forget about the ideology of the left, but then also the ideology of the right, which is that the land of Israel belongs to the Jewish people and therefore you don't play with it, you don't trade it.

So we have to emancipate ourselves from the ideological paradigms of the right and of the left and just look at reality as it is. And what is reality as it is? It means realizing that the Arabs have never accepted and will never accept Israel's existence, and giving them territories will just increase their appetite and will just endanger Israel's security. On the other hand, because of the demographics, we cannot hold on these territories. The Oslo paradigm was territories for peace. The Herzliya/realist paradigm was: you have to forget about both territories and peace.

And so Israel will unilaterally withdraw from the Arab-populated areas that were conquered in 1967 and build a wall between Israel and the Arabs, and, basically

we'll let the Arabs bang their heads on that wall and we'll concentrate our energies on our first-class and first world economy and culture. Dan Schueftan was one of the main architects of this project. For 20 years he's been saying: you have to build a wall, and people would look at him and say this guy is nuts. The people on the left called him a racist, and people on the right would say that you can't do that; it's our country; you can't build a wall in our country. So both right and left said he was nuts. But his policy was eventually adopted and implemented.

When Sharon came to power he inherited a situation which was impossible. In the background you had the Herzliya Conference coming back every year repeating the same mantra, and when he came to the Herzliya Conference in December of 2002 and delivered his speech, Sharon said that he had accepted the principle of President Bush's speech of June 2002, which called for a Palestinian state, the first time in American History that an American President called for a Palestinian state. And of all people, Ariel Sharon said he accepted that.

So this was the first bombshell at the Herzliya Conference, and people were in shock. And he did approve the roadmap, which was then adopted as a Security Council resolution. Because the roadmap was unacceptable to Israel, the Israeli Government came up with 14 amendments, which are unilateral and which had absolutely no effect on the roadmap.

In a way, Israel did get a good deal from the roadmap. Why? Because the roadmap said that the Palestinians should have a state but before that they have to fight terrorism. This is like asking al Capone to fight the Mafia. And so Israel could keep on saying: we are in favor of a Palestinian state, but what can you do? They're not implementing the first step of the roadmap. So they are the ones preventing the emergence of their own state –not us.

This could have gone on at least as long as George Bush was in the White House and as long as he had a majority in Congress. Except that, as always, we are our worst enemies. Who started coming up with all these brilliant ideas about solving the conflict? The Israeli Left. They said, well, our government is against peace, so we're going to come up with our own proposals, which was the Geneva Initiative. And then George Bush's speech became the roadmap, which was different from his original speech, and Sharon felt the pressure from inside and from outside, besides the fact of course that the police was on his case and the Israeli press was talking about the end of his regime.

And this was 2003, 30 years exactly after the crossing of the Suez Canal during the Yom Kippur War, and Sharon decided to reenact the crossing of the canal, not literally but diplomatically, and he came to the Herzliya Conference in December 2003 and he threw his second bombshell. He said, look, last year, a year ago exactly, I said that I accepted the roadmap and the roadmap said the Palestinians have to fight terrorism, but they're not doing it. So we're not going to be their hostages forever. It looked like Dan Schueftan had written the speech: We're not going to let them keep us hostages; we're just going to take care of ourselves. We're going to disengage from them, and when they're ready, they can give us a phone call.

In his speech in Hebrew Sharon used the word *hitnakut*, which means literally cutting off – cutting off, which is really what the Israelis want to do. They want to run away from the problem. And this is why he, (Sharon), was so popular in Israel.

And then he came up with the plan itself, which was actually very different from what he had announced because the disengagement plan was only removing all the Israeli villages and structures in the Gaza Strip, and four of them in Northern Samaria, and that was it basically. There was no "cutting off" because Israel was still going to provide the Palestinians with electricity and water, and the Palestinians were going to continue to work in Israel.

In the Summer of 2005 Sharon implemented his plan, which was very traumatic in Israel, and a few months later he had a stroke. And lo and behold, right after Israel pulled out of Gaza, you had missiles pouring on Sderot, and an Israeli soldier was abducted on an Israeli military base, which shows that fences can be bypassed by missiles and tunnels.

And then we had a war with Lebanon, the first war that Israel lost, which I'm sure had Prime Minister Olmert being very happy. Why? Because before he was elected he said, you know, we're tired of winning wars. Well, he must be on a high now, after leading Israel to its first military defeat ever. And this is after Israel unilaterally withdrew from Lebanon, saying basically, you know, let us go out and not be involved in the mess of Lebanon, and whenever we have a soldier who is killed, we have thousands of mothers demonstrating in front of the prime minister's office saying, what are we doing, what the hell are we doing in Lebanon, and when we were in Gaza, whenever a soldier was killed, you had his parents coming to the prime minister saying, why the hell did our son get killed in Gaza? What are we doing there?

And so we said, okay, we'll pull out; fine. And then, true, there would be a terrorist base there threatening Israel, but that's fine: we have our air force. Our air force will deal with the problem. Well, I have news for you: For a month we had Israeli citizens in shelters in Northern Israel being killed by Iran though Hezbollah, and there was nothing we could do about it. We were powerless in front of this threat, the same way that we are powerless today when Gaza bombs Israel.

So obviously the latest brilliant idea didn't work either. We abandoned, in a way, the paradigm of the left. We also abandoned the paradigm of the right. We adopted the realist paradigm, but this didn't work either. And this is why Israelis are so confused. And I think this is also why Americans are also confused, and why Condoleezza Rice, after Israel lost the war in Lebanon, just didn't know what to do because the Americans didn't expect us to lose that war because they needed us to win that war in order to deal with Iran, and this was Iran's first military victory in the Middle East, and the Americans were very upset about this, and rightly so.

And so, what was interesting at the latest Herzliya Conference was that after promoting basically disengagement, the smarties were, well, a bit confused. Now, Dan Schueftan spoke at the conference. Mind you, he's a very brilliant guy. He's a very sharp mind. What he's saying now is basically: we know that there's no solution to that conflict, and the purpose of this engagement was not to solve the conflict,

which is true. He said, basically what we're dealing with today is conflict management and damage control.

Fine, but you cannot just run away behind a wall because Iran is actively getting a nuclear weapon and you have to see the whole picture, which is that Hamas today, which controls the Palestinian Authority, is supported by Iran. You can build all the walls that you want and disengagement might have relieved Israel from its demographic anxieties. But it's not going to solve the root cause of the problem, which is Iran.

And this is where Israel and the United States have to work together, and this is where the tragedy today is that the Israeli leadership is weak and the American public is fed up. And when you think about the tragedy that it would be to give up the fight when we're about to win, and when we could have won this many years ago, it amazes me today how big the gap is between our ability to win and the lack of willingness to do so, because the West – Israel and the West have the ability, the strength and the power to win the war, but we have a psychological weakness.

The enemy is using its strong point, which is a propaganda and psychological warfare, the same way that they did in Vietnam. This is a psychological war, and this is where we have to concentrate our energies because the West cannot afford to lose. And we can win. But for this to happen, we need the American people to realize that running away from Iraq would be 10 times more disastrous than Israel running away from Gaza. It will not solve any problem; it will just make matters worse. And we have to deal with Iran.

It was very uplifting to hear great American leaders at the Herzliya Conference –Newt Grinitch, Mitt Romney, and John McCain. As John McCain said at the conference, one thing is worse than the option of a military intervention against Iran, and that is a nuclear Iran.

And what he said is very true. And I think what is missing today is a strong leadership in Israel, and I would say, explaining to the American public that, yes, the war in Iraq is tough; this is the Middle East, but what happened to you on September 11th is nothing compared to what could happen to you, God forbid, if Iran would have a nuclear weapon, and you have to be aware of this. You cannot just run away, because the two airplanes that crashed in the World Trade Center, it was not in some desert island far away; it was in New York. And I think this is really the message that we have to convey today.

MS. STERN: I would like very much to ask Emmanuel the following question: In know the leadership in Israel does not quite get it. Do the masses understand? I mean, to what extent do you think – is it possible for the “amchah” (the average rank and file Israeli), for there to be some sort of a revolt against their failed leadership. Will they be able to carry the torch of Zionism and fight for what needs to be fought for, or are they also imbued with a sense of moral ambiguity?

MR. NAVON: The relationship between the opinion makers and public opinion is a two-way street because opinion makers also look at polls in order to know what people think, but the way people think is also influenced by what the leaders say and by what the media say.

Take Tzipi Livni, for example. What she says today is literally the opposite of what she was saying a few years ago. Why? Because she is somebody with no ideology and backbone and if public opinion says people want this, she will say it. She is the best spokesperson for the PLO today. Hannan Ashrawi never did as good a job as Tzipi Livni.

This woman looks at the polls and she sees that she is more popular than Ehud Olmert within her party and within the general Israeli public, and if you want people to vote for you, saying the truth is not a good.

In Israel, if you would say what Newt Gingrich is saying, people would say the guy is nuts. But, no, the guy is not nuts; the guy is right.

And that is the problem today with the people in Israel. They are completely confused, because we don't have a leader who has the courage to say the truth.

So if somebody strong comes up and say, guys, this is the truth, a lot of people would follow him, but we don't; we are lacking such a leader today in Israel, which is part of the problem.

MS. STERN: The Israeli sense of machismo I think is being affronted. And I think unfortunately there has been a kind of challenge to the whole idea of Zionism, thinking that once we had a homeland of our own, we would no longer be hated and reviled by the rest of the world. And to have to acknowledge that, yes, we are hated, we are reviled; it is the same old anti-Semitism, but it is anti-Semitism against the conglomerate of the Jewish people, and, you know, gathered into one target of the Jewish state. So it challenges the whole Zionist philosophy.

MR. NAVON: Right. But it would imply having to deal with the fact that we are Jews, and this is what bothers so many Israelis also. One of the hopes of secular Zionism was to create a "new Jew" without Judaism. But it doesn't work. That's what bothers secular Israelis.

Q: (from audience). I had conversations with a number of Israeli friends that I had, and one of the things that they said to me were talking about potential ways to solve the conflict was, you can't kill them because if you kill them then there is just going to be somebody else who rises up in their place to commit a terrorist act. Now, this is clearly untrue. I mean, if you look at the history of warfare, you win wars by killing your enemies. If you went into a war saying you can't kill your enemy because then there is just going to be somebody else rising up in their place, there is no point in even waging a war in the first place.

So that statement, which came from an Israeli.

MR. NAVON: Right. I'm not surprised.

Q: And somebody who is an active reserve Israeli that does his duty and flies when he needs to and does what he needs to in order to protect the country, he had internalized what was clearly a propaganda message, and the propaganda message was, if you kill one, then another will just rise in its place.

MR. NAVON: You'll have two. It's like the gremlins.

Q: This is a speech out of Yasser Arafat. So by – the question is, by identifying these things, and trying to measure the extent to which their – they influence and permeate the debate, you might be able to, in a sense, inoculate the public from such dangerous ideas, and to identify it as a dangerous idea because, for instance, that one in particular is very dangerous because if you accept it to be true, then it's just a matter of time before you have been annihilated. What I'm asking you is, is there a concerted effort to do this. Are people even thinking this way?

MR. NAVON: Well, first of all, what you are saying is really very true; in other words, that propaganda permeates the mentality of civil society. It's true in Israel; it's true in America. You know, when you hear Americans saying you can't really win that war, or Israelis saying, as you said, you know, you kill one and you have two, these are propaganda messages that permeate the mindset of civil society.

The Vietnamese general who fought the French and American Armies in the '50s and the '70s, General Giap, said that he realized at some point that there was no way for him to overcome 500,000 American troops, but he had a stronger weapon called television. He said that by bringing pictures of the war to each American home every evening, he will win this war, and this is what happened because the Americans won the war militarily, but the public couldn't handle the war anymore. Why? Because of the propaganda, because, when every night you had the same pictures and people telling you, you cannot win that war; you cannot win that war, you cannot win that war.

This is how propaganda works. You just say it once, twice, like drops of water until it permeates the whole body, and it works. Now, the writings of Giap were translated into Arabic by Fatah in the 1970s. And Arafat went to Vietnam a few times and, guess what, where did he get his idea of a two-state solution? From the Vietnamese, because what is the two-state solution? You create two states and eventually one takes over the other.

Thirty years ago, what today is considered mainstream Israeli public discourse was unacceptable. Thirty years ago, imagine an Israeli foreign minister saying we, Israel, have to create a Palestinian state immediately and give up on Jerusalem, and even talk about the refugees. This was the radical, left-wing; it was not a mainstream Israeli foreign minister. And this is the result of propaganda. It works.

One of the last speakers at the Herzliya Conference last week was Professor Israel Aumann, who won the Nobel Prize for Economics last year. He happens to be

religious and he doesn't care about what the Israeli establishment thinks about him because he is 70-plus, and he already got a Nobel Prize, so he really doesn't care.

And what he said basically is that we are our worst enemies. That is the bottom line. If we would just believe in ourselves and believe in what we should be standing for, we would be better off. But we don't. And so, he said, if we don't believe in ourselves don't expect the world to do so instead of us. And that is really the bottom line.