

THE INTERNET JERUSALEM POST

Taming European hutzpa

By Emmanuel Navon

August, 28 2001

(August 28) - Since its 1980 Venice Declaration, the European Union has claimed to hold the formula for a peace settlement: Israeli recognition of the PLO, Israeli withdrawal to the pre-June 1967 borders, and the establishment of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza.

After former prime minister Ehud Barak endorsed this formula after Camp David II, French Foreign Minister Hubert Vodrine congratulated Israel for finally following the wise advice of France and the EU. A final peace, Vodrine, contended, was now a matter of days.

The European formula produced the very opposite of what it was supposed to deliver. But instead of revising their theory, European leaders and journalists have been blaming Israel for the violence launched by Arafat a year ago. And, while subscribing 100% to Arab discourse, Europe applies to itself the very opposite of the policy it has been "advising" to Israel.

Faced with the renewal of IRA terrorism, the British government is considering retaliatory measures against its "peace partner." The Economist (July 7) called upon the British government to "reimpose direct rule from London" to Northern Ireland "unless the IRA disarms," and pointed out that having "turned IRA gunmen into government ministers" had made the British government "look a dupe."

In France, Prime Minister Lionel Jospin is facing growing criticism for going ahead with his autonomy plan for Corsica despite the intensification of Corsican terrorism. Exactly a year ago his interior minister, Jean-Pierre Chevenement, resigned from the government because, he said, "a responsible government cannot negotiate under fire." President Jacques Chirac, who opposes his prime minister's soft stance on terrorism, ordered a bloody assault in 1988 against the pro-independence leaders of New Caledonia, a far-away island in the Pacific.

Spain is adamant not to grant more autonomy to the Basques, as clearly stated by the prime minister after his recent meeting with Juan Jose Ibarretxe, the would-be-separatist premier of the country's Basque region.

Turkey (a long-time EU applicant) ruthlessly silences the separatist aspirations of its Kurdish population and continues to occupy Cyprus.

While calling upon their leaders to be tougher on the terrorist organizations that act within their own borders, European opinion-makers are outraged by Israel's refusal to give in to PLO, Hamas and Islamic Jihad terrorism. Yet, as opposed to the PLO, European independence movements only fight for the rights of their constituencies and not for the destruction and gradual eradication of their opponents. The FLNC (Corsica's independence movement) does not deny the right of France to exist, nor does the IRA question the very legitimacy of the United Kingdom.

Israel has proved its readiness to depart from its historical homeland for the sake of political realism and peaceful coexistence with the Palestinians. But, tragically, this readiness is irrelevant in light of the PLO's true intentions, which were blatantly revealed after Camp David II. Yet, Europe refuses to admit that the current stalemate is not due to Israel's alleged

"intransigence" but to Arafat's refusal to recognize the right of the Jews to have a sovereign nation state in what he considers to be exclusive Palestinian property.

Former prime minister Menachem Begin used to castigate European leaders for their hypocrisy and double standards. He more than once reminded the French government that, while its policy towards the Corsicans was more "intransigent" than Israel's policy toward the Palestinians, France's historical tie to Corsica was far less obvious than Israel's connection to Hebron or Shechem.

Then-president Francois Mitterrand admitted during the government's weekly meeting on February 24, 1982: "He's right. After all, Corsica is French only since 1768. That's more recent than Abraham!"

It is time for the Israeli government to remind European leaders and opinion-makers of certain basic truths, and its polite silence is both harmful and immoral.

(The writer is a lecturer in the Political Science Department of Bar-Ilan University.)

An advertisement banner with a dark background. On the left is a small, somewhat blurry image of a person. To the right of the image, the text "Dieting 101" is written in a bold, white font. Below that, in a larger, white font, it says "Lose 10 pounds by Oct 1st!".

This article can also be read at <http://www.jpost.com/Editions/2001/08/28/Opinion/Opinion.33537.html>

[Back to the article](#)

Copyright © 1995-2001 The Jerusalem Post - <http://www.jpost.com>