

# Israel and America

## Parallel Lives, Similar Mistakes

by Ivan Eland



James Lukaski

In the 2000 presidential campaign, George W. Bush promised a more humble U.S. foreign policy. Five years later, that pledge has turned out to be nothing but disingenuous rhetoric used to contrast his campaign with the activist foreign policy of the Clinton-Gore administration. Of course, the Bush administration would claim that September 11 changed everything. Yet Paul O'Neill, President Bush's former treasury secretary, and Richard Clarke, his former chief counterterrorism advisor, have revealed that the administration was champing at the bit to invade Iraq well before September 11 and in spite of the fact that the threat of Al Qaeda was far more pressing. This indicates that President Bush never had any intention of adopting the promised, "more humble" foreign policy.

Similarly, early on, the administration noted that both sides in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict appeared unwilling to take real steps to solve it. Its initial rhetoric indicated that it would take a more "hands off" approach to the conflict—in contrast to Bill Clinton's frenetic efforts to reach a solution. Yet the Bush administration then flip-flopped again and adopted a more activist policy that its predecessor, thus continuing the political tradition of criticizing your predecessor during the election and adopting his policies after taking office.

On both general U.S. foreign policy and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, President Bush would have been better off if he had followed his own advice. The bold Bush policy of preemptive (really, preventative) war is an attempt to imitate the offensive doctrine of the small state of Israel—on which the administration has slathered admiring support. This offensive strategy is

likely to be equally disastrous for both nations.

Despite being on the opposite side of the globe, Israel's security situation, in some ways, is a microcosm of that faced by the United States. Israel is a regional superpower that no longer has a peer rival in the Middle East. Her existence has not been threatened since 1973, and the U.S. occupation of Iraq has enhanced her security. Similarly, the United States, a global superpower, faces no equivalent adversary after the demise of the Soviet Union. Like Israel, with her nuclear and conventional-military predominance in the Middle East, the United States is the most dominant military power, both relatively and absolutely, in world history. A peer military competitor for the United States is likely to be 20 to 30 years away.

Both the Israeli and the U.S. security establishments overrate the general threat from "rogue" states with "weapons of mass destruction" (WMD's). Israel worried about Syria, Iraq, Iran, and Libya getting such weapons. The United States worried about all of them plus North Korea. The concern was exaggerated. The WMD moniker usually refers to nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons, but only nuclear weapons are true and reliable weapons of mass destruction. They alone combine destructive power with reliability, but nuclear weapons require fissionable material that is difficult to obtain and requires sophisticated equipment, infrastructure, and expertise to generate. None of the "rogues," except North Korea, is suspected of currently possessing nuclear weapons. Both Israel (regionally) and the United States (globally) have nuclear dominance that should deter the use of the few warheads that those relatively poor countries could muster.

Although the threat to the existence of both Israel and the United States has greatly diminished, lesser but still significant threats have recently become more challenging for both countries. Their change-resistant military establishments continue to invest excessively in weapons to combat old threats, however,

---

*Ivan Eland is the director of the Center on Peace and Liberty at the Independent Institute ([www.independent.org](http://www.independent.org)) in Oakland, California, and author of Putting "Defense" Back Into U.S. Defense Policy: Rethinking U.S. Security in the Post-Cold War World.*

while remaining stymied by guerrilla warfare and terrorism. In Vietnam and now in Iraq, the United States has been befuddled by inferior guerrillas using hit-and-run attacks and then melting back into the jungle or urban setting. Similarly, despite Israel's tough tactics against terrorism over the years, it has become, if anything, a bigger problem for that nation.

Hezbollah and other Islamic fighters used guerrilla tactics and terrorism to beat back the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in the 1980's and then to compel Israel to withdraw from Lebanon altogether. Guerrilla warfare, insurrection, and terrorism also compelled Israel to recognize and negotiate with the PLO in 1993. But the geography of the West Bank has permitted Palestinian attackers, unlike those of Hezbollah, to create a strategic threat to Israel's main cities. During the last 17 months of Israel's military occupation of southern Lebanon, only 21 Israeli soldiers were killed. By contrast, during the first three years of the second *Intifada*, almost 900 Israelis lost their lives, most of them civilians.

---

If a change in U.S. policy caused Israel to reach a consensual settlement with the Palestinians, the Israelis would be more prosperous and secure. Getting rid of the "terrorism as war" paradigm and substituting a "terrorism as a crime" framework would be more effective and less dangerous for Israel.

---

Guerrilla warfare is the most effective form of warfare in history, and terrorism does not require a territorial base. As Mark Heller of Tel Aviv University notes, traditional offensive preemptive tactics do not provide a satisfactory solution to such low-intensity conflict. Militants have developed suicide attacks (against civilians and military targets alike) to strike at the stronger party. Because the attackers are zealous, use cheap and unsophisticated means to attack, can secretly move into the stronger party's vulnerable rear areas, and have no home address to hold at risk, they are hard to deter, intercept, or defend against. Their attacks are designed to be spectacular and generate fear well beyond their destructive power. Although not existential—even if the attackers bought, stole, or built and effectively employed a nuclear or biological weapon—this threat is still substantial to the Israeli and U.S. homelands.

Dissimilarities do exist. The population from which the attackers arise lies very close to or, in some cases, is inside Israel. In contrast, the population spawning the attacks against the United States is half a world away. Terrorists, however, have made numerous attacks on U.S. facilities overseas and closer

to the attackers' base of operations. The terrorist threat to the relatively small Jewish homeland comes largely from the confined, and soon to be completely fenced, areas of Gaza and the West Bank. The Israeli military can fairly easily monitor and conduct operations in that relatively small region. By contrast, the threat to the global American empire—the large, target-rich U.S. homeland and its numerous overseas targets—is the worldwide terror network of Al Qaeda and affiliated groups.

Israel and the United States have chosen to fight a broad "War on Terror" in the same way—with aggressive, offensive preemptive and preventative military attacks, in contrast to most other countries, which view terrorism as a *crime*, to be fought more quietly with intelligence and law-enforcement resources. After September 11, the Bush administration joined Israel in countering terrorism by using a "war," rather than a "crime," metaphor. The idea is to take the fight to the terrorists' home turf—to keep them occupied while destroying their networks and infrastructure—so that they cannot launch attacks on the U.S. or Israeli homelands.

In the short term, this strategy has the advantage of potentially reducing the number of such attacks. After Prime Minister Ariel Sharon ordered Israeli forces into the West Bank and Gaza, the number of suicide attacks in Israel proper dropped. In the case of the United States, U.S. forces did take out Al Qaeda's sanctuary and training infrastructure in Afghanistan. But the Bush administration's 2004 campaign claim—that this offensive strategy has resulted in no significant terrorist attack on U.S. soil since September 11—differs from its own officials' warnings that it is a matter of "when, not if" another major strike will occur. Furthermore, Al Qaeda and other Islamic groups normally infiltrate the target area and then lay low for a long period so that they have time to plan the attack, and everyone gets used to their presence. So the absence of a major event on U.S. soil since September 11 proves nothing. The rash of attacks on friendly and allied nations during that same period—in Turkey, Morocco, Indonesia, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Spain—indicates that Al Qaeda is still active and dangerous to the United States.

The continuous presence of Israeli forces in the occupied territories allows more intelligence to be gathered on terrorist cells and military action to be taken on that information to kill or capture the attackers or strike at their infrastructure (training facilities, bomb-making laboratories, and safe houses), and curfews impede the movement of the terrorists. The U.S. Army sent personnel to Israel to learn aggressive counterterrorism tactics, which are now being applied in Iraq. Such tactics include destroying buildings used by terrorists and the houses of families of suspected militants, holding those families hostage until terrorists turn themselves in, quarantining towns, and using heavy firepower in urban areas.

Applying such techniques necessitates violating certain norms of civilized behavior that both Israel and the United States have pledged to uphold. International human-rights groups have criticized Israel for excesses that include "unlawful killings, obstruction of medical assistance and targeting of medical personnel, extensive and wanton destruction of property, torture and cruel and inhumane treatment, unlawful confinement and the use of 'human shields'"; destruction of homes, public buildings, and infrastructure; seizing Palestinian land to expand the settlements; using massive bombs against targeted individuals in Palestinian residential areas; and holding hundreds of detainees in administrative detention on the basis of

secret evidence, “which neither they nor their lawyers were allowed to see or to challenge in court.”

None of these excesses excuse the slaughter of innocent Israeli civilians, of course. Yet this does present the other side of the argument that the American media often ignores. If the Israelis use a one-ton bomb in a confined residential area to kill one Hamas activist, when does excessive collateral damage become terrorism? If terrorism is defined as “the purposeful killing or harming of civilians to create fear to motivate them to pressure their government or other societal groups to change policies,” then the Israelis may also be guilty of terrorism. It is disquieting that the U.S. Army is looking to Israeli tactics as a model for how to deal with the insurgency in Iraq.

The U.S. Marines, whose specialty is smaller wars, realize that the short-term gains of using such aggressive methods are more than outweighed by the long-term consequences of alienating the local population—the support of which is key to winning a guerilla war. Some current and former high-level officials in the Israeli security services have also reached that realization. Lt. Gen. Moshe Ya’alon, Israel’s military chief of staff, said of Sharon’s use of aggressive tactics against the Palestinians that “The tight closure being enforced on the Palestinians only generates hatred that will explode in our face.” Four former heads of Shin Bet, the Israeli internal-security agency, agreed with General Ya’alon. According to one of them, Carmi Gilon, Sharon “is dealing solely with the question of how to prevent the next terrorist attack” and avoids “the question of how we get out of the mess we find ourselves in today.” One of Ya’alon’s predecessors, Gen. Dan Shomron, had to cut short his tenure as chief of staff when he made the mistake of speaking the truth, during a closed meeting, about the first *Intifada* (1987-90), saying that the insurrection “has no military solution.”

Similarly, U.S. excesses could act (and already are acting) as a recruiting tool for jihadists around the world. In Iraq, the U.S. adoption of combative Israeli tactics will likely fuel the continuing resistance and erode the critical support of the Iraqi population. More broadly, the Bush administration has used September 11 as an excuse to fight a broad War on Terror in order to carry out a veiled expansion of the American Empire into Iraq and Central Asia, which will only swell the ranks of jihadists with volunteers and cash. Foreign fighters are continuously flowing into Iraq to help battle U.S. forces (much the same happened when the “infidel” Soviet Union invaded the Islamic nation of Afghanistan), and numerous post-September 11 attacks by jihadists have occurred around the world.

In the case of Israel, only a consensual settlement involving a “land for peace” swap will curtail the bloodshed. The four security chiefs now endorse a two-state solution involving an Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and most of the West Bank, even if that means a showdown between the Israeli government and its settlers. Through reduced taxes and subsidies, the Israeli government originally encouraged those settlers to migrate to the West Bank and Gaza, hoping to create an irreversible reality on the ground. Something has changed: Even conservative Israelis are now beginning to favor a two-state solution. They know that Arab population increases threaten to make Jews a minority in the area from the Mediterranean to the Jordan River. Jews’ share in the total population within that area has declined from 60 percent in 1985 to 55 percent in 2000. Israel has the choice of giving up territory for a separate Palestinian state

or replacing democracy with minority rule similar to apartheid in South Africa. Israeli withdrawals from those areas and the building of a fence in the West Bank will only fan the flames of the insurrection. The Palestinians believe that the Israelis are trying unilaterally to dictate the terms of a settlement rather than to negotiate one. An Israeli withdrawal will only be acceptable to the Palestinians if it is achieved by mutual agreement. Also, a negotiated settlement with Syria over the Golan Heights and Lebanon is the only solution likely to end the terrorism of Hezbollah.

Similarly, the United States should avoid unneeded military interventions in Islamic nations, pull back her forces from Muslim soil, and withdraw support and aid from both Israel and despot governments in the Arab world. The United States is hated in the Muslim world not because of American culture or political and economic freedoms (as President Bush has alleged) but because of her policies toward the Middle East.

---

Both the Israeli and the U.S. security forces overrate the threat from “rogue” states with “weapons of mass destruction.” Israel worried about Syria, Iraq, Iran, and Libya getting such weapons. The United States worried about all of them plus North Korea.

---

Both Israel and the United States, because of improvements in their overall security situations, can now afford to take risks to alleviate the one remaining threat that they each face: terrorism. Israel’s defense would not require retention of a swath of territory on the eastern side of the West Bank abutting the Jordan River. Although favored by Prime Minister Sharon and his cabinet, a fence encircling the entire West Bank—leaving the Palestinians only 53 percent of the land there and breaking up Palestinian areas into noncontiguous cantons—would not be needed to ensure Israeli security. Virtually the entire West Bank could be given up without security complications. Such Israeli flexibility might make a consensual “land for peace” deal possible. And such a deal would likely drastically mitigate anti-Israeli terrorism.

To push Israel to reach such a trade-off and to reduce her own risk of blowback, the United States needs to change her own policies. U.S. support for Israel underwrites Sharon’s counterproductive (even for Israel) hard-line policies. Israel is the foremost recipient of U.S. largesse—receiving about three billion dollars per year in economic and military aid. The weapons used by Israel to quell the Palestinian uprising have been subsidized by the United States. Also, America’s largely uncritical diplomatic support emboldens Israeli military tactics



and leads to more pressure on the Palestinians to make greater concessions in the dispute. In addition, it is unwise, merely for Israel's benefit, to paint a bull's-eye on the United States by conducting American covert action on militant groups that do not currently focus their attacks on U.S. targets. Hezbollah is as effective at terrorism as Al Qaeda and could again begin frequently attacking U.S. targets. Its attacks on U.S. targets dissipated dramatically after the U.S. Marines withdrew from fighting Muslim groups in Lebanon's civil war during the 1980's. The reduction of Hezbollah's attacks graphically demonstrates the positive effect of adopting a policy of U.S. nonintervention in nonstrategic areas of the globe.

---

The Bush administration has used September 11 as an excuse to fight a broad War on Terror in order to carry out a veiled expansion of the American Empire into Iraq and Central Asia, which will only swell the ranks of jihadists with volunteers and cash.

---

Although unwavering U.S. support for Israel satisfies politically powerful domestic interest groups, it is unnecessary for U.S. security and actually undermines it. If the primary U.S. post-Cold War security goal in the Middle East has been to secure plentiful supplies of cheap oil, loosening ties with Israel and improving them with Arab states is the rational policy. In other words, the United States should become a neutral, honest broker in the Middle East. A new, more evenhanded policy would allow the United States to enhance relationships with Arab states, but on a more equal plane than at present. In addition to terminating aid to Israel, the United States should end patron-client relationships with autocratic Arab states (e.g., Egypt, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia and the other Gulf states) and the concomitant aid.

If both parties to the Israeli-Palestinian dispute become exhausted and want to settle the dispute permanently, the United States could help mediate a settlement from a truly neutral position. America, however, has no strategic or moral imperative to solve this conflict—one of many around the world. It is especially ridiculous for the United States to pay reluctant parties in a dispute on the other side of the world to do what is in their best interest anyway—as the United States did to get the Camp David peace accords, by slathering Israel and Egypt with piles of foreign aid. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is tragic, and both sides would be better off if they made peace. Ultimately, however, it is their responsibility to do so, not that of the United

States. Therefore, counterintuitively, a “tough love” U.S. policy toward each side in the conflict would have the best chance of leading to a viable long-term solution.

A lower and more neutral U.S. profile would put pressure on both sides of the conflict to settle it. As noted earlier, cutting off U.S. aid to Israel would put further pressure on the Israeli economy, and ending U.S. diplomatic cover for excessive Israeli military tactics would undermine their legitimacy. And although the United States currently puts more pressure on the Palestinians than on the Israelis, the Palestinians realize that one of the few restraints on Israeli behavior comes from the United States. If the United States were to take a lower profile in the Middle East peace process, the Palestinians would realize that the more-powerful Israeli side might adopt an even more hard-line policy than it follows now. That possibility could very well encourage the Palestinian side to decide to be more serious about a comprehensive solution to the problem. The current activist U.S. stance inadvertently insulates both sides from pressures that could help, ultimately, to solve the crisis.

Ending subsidization of both aggressive Israeli tactics against the Palestinians and autocratic repression by “friendly” Arab governments toward their own citizens would also most likely reduce anti-U.S. terrorism significantly. Since statements by terrorists and public-opinion polls in the Islamic world indicate that their major gripe with the United States is her policies toward the Middle East, a more humble U.S. foreign policy toward that region would reduce the risk to Americans at home and abroad. And trading a reckless, general, military-centric War on Terror for quieter intelligence and law-enforcement activities targeted specifically against Al Qaeda likely would be more effective and generate less blowback terrorism that further endangers Americans.

If a change in U.S. policy caused Israel to reach a consensual settlement with the Palestinians, the Israelis would be more prosperous and secure. Also, getting rid of the “terrorism as war” paradigm and substituting a “terrorism as a crime” framework would be more effective and less dangerous for Israel.

Israel and the United States have similar security situations. Both countries are militarily dominant over all potential nation-state adversaries. The principal threat remaining to Israel and America is terrorism. Both countries have adopted similar aggressive, offensively oriented strategies that are likely, in the long term, to stir up more terrorism than they eradicate. Only by addressing the root causes of terrorism can the two countries hope to reduce it. Because other security threats have declined for both of these dominant powers, they now have the luxury to be able to address such causes and thus reduce blowback terrorist attacks.

Israel must negotiate a consensual settlement with the Palestinians that, in exchange for peace, gives up land for a viable and truly sovereign Palestinian state. To pressure Israel to undertake such an initiative and to reduce anti-U.S. blowback, the United States should end military, economic, and diplomatic support for both Israel and autocratic Arab states. Taking a more neutral and hands-off U.S. approach to the Israeli-Palestinian dispute would remove the barriers that currently insulate both parties from pressures to settle the crisis. Only when both sides are exhausted by the conflict and ready to make peace should the United States mediate a settlement from a strictly neutral position.

# The Greatest Threat to Our Civilization?

Is our civilization in peril? Is it possible that America and the Western world in general—ostensibly more powerful and more affluent than ever—are in mortal danger? Even if you are an optimist who believes that Western culture can be revived, you would be mistaken to think that there is no threat that demands immediate action to save our civilization.

*Chronicles'* Foreign Affairs Editor Srdja Trifkovic believes that the most serious immediate threat to the West is Islam, a teaching that is part religion, part totalitarian ideology, and part blueprint for global conquest. He is not a prophet of doom but a realist who believes that the "War on Terror" is a just and necessary endeavor. But he warns that the war is misnamed: It confuses the jihadist enemy with the terrorist tool. More seriously, it is waged without a proper assessment of the enemy and his beliefs, motives, and past record.

You can now hear Dr. Trifkovic expand on these themes in his brand-new series:

## Islam: The Score

These three alarming one-hour audiotapes or CD's present:

- I.      **The Teaching: Muhammad, the Koran, the Sunna**
- II.     **The Fruits: Thirteen Centuries of Jihad**
- III.    **The Ambition: Infidel Submission**

Dr. Trifkovic's book *The Sword of the Prophet* has sold over 60,000 copies and was described by Jeffrey Rubin, editor of the Conservative Book Club, as "easily the most important (not to mention courageous) book written in response to 9/11 that I've read—perhaps one of the two or three most important books I've read in my nearly six years as Club editor."

This concise series is perfect for journalists, clerics, lawmakers, students and teachers, Church groups, and anyone who needs a careful and well-researched introduction to Islam.

"Dr. Trifkovic understands Islam, knows we were knocking on the wrong door in Baghdad, and is devastating on the absence of historical memory. The problem of historical ignorance in today's English-speaking world, where claims about far-away lands and cultures are made on the basis of domestic multiculturalist assumptions, are hit right on the head by the author."

—Taki, the *American Conservative* (May 19, 2003)

**Special introductory price (includes shipping & handling)**

**Audiotapes—\$30.00**

**CD's—\$35.00**

For a limited time, we will include with each order a free copy of Dr. Trifkovic's 30-minute bare-bones introduction to Islam, "The Greatest Threat to Our Civilization," perfect for anyone who tells you we all worship the same god.

To order, call Cindy Link at (800) 383-0680.

Mention code R04CFIAITSS for audiotapes and code R04CFIAITSSCD for CD's.

# The Christian Zionist Threat to Peace

## Spend Your Vacation Fighting for Israel

by Aaron D. Wolf

In assessing the political conditions necessary to establish a lasting peace in Israel-Palestine, Americans are confronted with a theological question: Does the Bible insist that Christians take a certain view regarding the treatment of the Jewish people in particular, their presence in the Holy Land, or the placement of the borders of Israel?

One particular subset of American Christianity answers that question in the affirmative. Yes, they believe, the Bible does mandate that we treat the Jews—specifically, the Jews of Israel—not merely as another ethnic group of fallen (sinful) people, made in the image of God and in need of the Gospel, but as one that holds God’s unique favor and is deserving of our full, unconditional support. This subset is made up largely of American evangelicals who are committed to something called *dispensationalism*. “The essence of Dispensationalism,” according to Charles Ryrie, a dispensationalist theologian, “Is the distinction between Israel and the Church. This grows out of [our] consistent employment of normal or plain interpretation, and it reflects an understanding of the basic purpose of God in all His dealings with mankind as that of glorifying Himself through salvation and other purposes as well.”

The fruits of this “normal or plain interpretation” of the Bible have raised any number of red flags for conservative theologians of all Christian denominations. Of greater concern to us here, however, is the way in which many popular and powerful dispensationalist leaders apply their apocalyptic understanding of the place of the modern state of Israel on the stage of world history—the “other purposes” by which God must be glorified—in the form of “Christian Zionism.”

When President Bush, himself an evangelical, proposed statehood for Palestine in his 2002 “Road Map,” several key evangelical leaders denounced the plan, hinting that they would withdraw support for him if he failed to reconsider. According to their Christian Zionist understanding of dispensationalism, there simply cannot be a Palestinian state, because God has promised all of Eretz Israel to the Jews—forever. The borders of the state of Israel must extend, literally, to biblical proportions, including all of the land that is now in dispute—the West Bank, Gaza, the Golan Heights, and all of Jerusalem—and we must do everything in our power to make it so.

Addressing this way of thinking is essential to the success of any peace plan for the Middle East that involves the United States, because the sheer size of the umbrella group that we call *evangelical*—there are an estimated 65 million evangelicals in the United States—means that, in a democracy, their deeply held beliefs matter. (President Bush won the White House in November 2004 with fewer than 61 million votes.) Although, obviously, all 65 million evangelicals are not militant Christian

Zionists, many are beholden to leaders who are unflinching supporters of the state of Israel and actively hostile toward the Palestinians. Paul Charles Merkley, author of *Christian Attitudes Towards the State of Israel*, conservatively estimates that Christian Zionists number in the “tens of millions.”

The greatest source of Christian Zionist influence is found in the Christian media. Evangelical Christians are fed a steady diet of dispensationalist/Zionist interpretations of the news every day through the radio and television programs of Pat Robertson (CBN News, *The 700 Club*); Jerry Falwell (the Liberty Channel, which broadcasts, among other things, *Zola Levitt Presents*); John Hagee; Benny Hinn (*This Is Your Day!*); Kerby Anderson (*Point of View*); Jack Van Impe (*Jack Van Impe Presents*); and countless others, with audiences in the millions. Megachurches, which are virtual media centers, hold prophecy conferences all across America and invite rabbis to come and speak to Christians on Israeli history and politics. Perhaps most influential have been the best-selling books of the *Left Behind* series, by Timothy LaHaye and Jerry B. Jenkins. The 12-book series, offering a fictional account of the playing-out of dispensationalist interpretations of biblical prophecy, has enjoyed sales of over 62 million units, eclipsing Hal Lindsey’s dispensationalist fantasy novel, *The Late Great Planet Earth*, the best-selling book of the 1970’s.

The net effect of this constant barrage of media attention focused on Israel as the center of God’s plan for the world is that Christians who may not be experts on the “70th Week of Daniel” or the “Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse” are nonetheless prone to accept any negative interpretation of the Palestinians and are favorable toward the fulminations of politicians and journalists who reject any right of return for Palestinians and the very idea of Palestinian statehood. It means that the neoconservatives and members of Likud who are eager to increase their own power and sphere of influence can easily find an audience willing to listen and organize at the grassroots level in support of their candidates and policies. And it means that Israel-first politicians, Jewish resettlement groups (which bring tens of thousands of Jews from around the world to populate settlements in such hot zones as the West Bank), and far-right Israeli Zionist groups have an American cash cow eager to fund their efforts—efforts that war against any final-status settlement for peace.

Evangelicals are encouraged to lavish money on various pro-Israel groups, such as John Hagee’s Exodus II, which has given over \$3.7 million to finance the immigration of over 6,000 Russian Jews to Israel; or Rabbi Yechiel Eckstein’s HaKeren Leye-didit, which has raised \$100 million over the past eight years; or Pat Robertson’s Bless Israel, in which Christians are asked to “show your support for Israel by blessing their [*sic*] economy.” In addition, they are prodded to attend such spectacles as the Christian Coalition’s “Christian Solidarity for Israel Rally” in

---

Associate editor Aaron D. Wolf is a church historian.