Hussein uses Palestinian cause for personal gain
Column by Andrew Yablon

Saddam Hussein and his apologists have recently sought to draw a parallel between the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and the current Iraqi occupation of Kuwait. Saddam argues that the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait is part of some great Mid-Eastern crisis directly related to some peculiar manner to the Israeli occupation of the West Bank, and that in order for an agreement to be reached in Kuwait, the latter must pull out from the West Bank. This line of reasoning is absurd and is clearly an attempt by Hussein's propaganda machine to portray him as a champion of the Palestinians. By playing on world-wide anti-Semitism for the Palestinians, he claims the high ground.

The invasion of Kuwait, however, has nothing whatsoever to do with the Israeli occupation of the West Bank. Saddam has violated international law in countless ways. He has invaded a sovereign nation with no provocation; he has set loose his soldiers who have literally raped and pillaged Kuwait; he has used foreign nationals as hostages and human shields; and recently, he has invaded several foreign embassies, effectively invading those nations as well. Regardless of one's opinion of the evil Sabah regime in Kuwait, or of the military deployment in Saudi Arabia, the invasion was thoroughly unjustifiable and inherently evil.

By contrast, the West Bank was secured by Israeli forces in a legal and necessary military action, as Soviet and American design was conducted in defense of their homeland during the Six Day War of 1967. The Israelis attacked first, but only in response to an enormously large buildup of Arab forces along its borders. It would be foolish to suggest that the sudden building of Arab forces was not intended to be used in an effort to recapture the nation of Israel. But the Israelis failed to seize the initiative, Israel may not have survived, there would have been many more casualties on both sides, and the war would have dragged on like the Yom Kippur War of 1973.

One might think that Israel ought to pull out of the West Bank on the grounds that it is an inherent part of the state of Jordan as determined by international borders. This argument is absurd, since Jordan's borders are arbitrary partitions created by colonialism when the Ottoman Empire was divided the Osmanen Empire. There is no historic state of Jordan and there is no Jordanian ethnic group inhabiting the West Bank. The West Bank is inhabited by Palestinians who fared worse under the Jordanian occupation than under the current Israeli occupation. The nation of Jordan has no legitimate claim to the West Bank. Saddam's argument is that he would be given full autonomy. The problem with this reasoning is that it is two-fold. First, the Palestinians have traditionally been hostile to the state of Israel. Then, as a people, are more prepared to accept the presence of Israel today than when they rejected a generous partition plan which would have created a Palestinian state in 1947. These people raised Jewish settlements, established communities of Jews who had fled the Nazi Holocaust and shed Jewish blood long before there ever was a Jewish homeland and during the war for Israel in independence in an effort to prevent Jewish auto](original text was cut off)

Furthermore, the current Palestinian leadership has no serious desire to be part of the Palestine Liberation Organization that it had renounced terrorism, earlier this year a splinter group assassinated the Israeli prime minister at mass murder. The Palestinians have systematically rejected diplomatic initiatives in favor of more violent means of expression. The current PLO leadership reflects this attitude, and is factional and dangerous, dominated by violent thugs who have tended to abuse the moderates within their ranks. The leadership continues to sponsor terrorism through-out the world, has aligned itself with Saddam, and would probably support the Palestinians in the West Bank political autonomy is a strategic one. Before Israel captured the West Bank, the top hard of Israel was connected to the lower half by a thin strip of land only nine miles wide. Consider the fact that Saddam's emboldened Jordanian forces to fortify artillery shells over the territory of Israel, into the Mediterranean Sea. You don't need to be a military strategist to recognize that this is an extremely precarious strategic situation, and it placed the nation of Israel at great risk. When the Israelis engaged the Jordanian and Iraqi forces in battle during the Six Day War, they truly fought with their backs to the sea. The continued belligerence of Israel's neighbors, particularly Iraq and Syria, demand that this strategically correct strategy. The invasion of Kuwait has raised the stakes of the conflict until the military threat from the east reemerges.

Finally, Saddam's argument for an Israeli pullout from the West Bank equates the invasion of Kuwait, air plane hijacking, or some other terrorist act. The hijacking at Entebbe (1976), the murder of Israeli airliners in Munich (1972), and the recent Palestinian terrorist raid near Tel Aviv were all committed in an effort to force Israel into creating a Palestinian state. Saddam's is perpetuating this violent yet traditional method of expressing political opinion by holding the entire nation of Kuwait hostage in exchange for an Israeli pullout from the West Bank. The tactic is diabolical, and is fit to be called the same scale.

What is the answer then? Should the Israelis pull out? Should the Iraqis pull out? Clearly it is imper-}

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