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## ASSAD AND A MEMORY OF AUSCHWITZ

THERE appear to be no limits to the insults heaped on our collective intelligence by the leaders of the nation, who find no difficulty in lying outright on the most crucial questions of Israel's future. The outstanding culprit is, regrettably, the prime minister. At the very moment of this writing, he came through "live" on radio, speaking in Jerusalem to a rally of the religious sports organization, Elitzur.

He gave his audience some reassuring information on the future of Jerusalem, repeating the by-now obligatory promise that Jerusalem would remain undivided under Israeli sovereignty. He added, moreover, that Jerusalem would not be a subject for negotiation. But the Arabs have been promised the exact opposite.

Under US pressure, the Rabin government promised Jerusalem Arabs the right to vote for the autonomy institutions, just like the Arabs of Judea and Samaria. Emphatic Jerusalemite Faisal Husseini was then accorded recognition as leader of the PLO delegation to the "peace talks." And government statements, in refusing (so far) to include Jerusalem in the interim arrangement talks have made it clear that Jerusalem would be part of the agenda in negotiations for the "permanent arrangement." Moreover, Yasser Arafat has promised, repeatedly and firmly, that in a year's time Jerusalem will be the capital of a Palestinian state. No rebuttal or rebuke has come from the Israeli government.

Rabin was surprised by the angry reactions from his Elitzur audience. He evidently forgot that he wasn't talking to a bunch of ignorant backwoodsmen but to knowledgeable youngsters who doubtless pray for Jerusalem three times every day of their lives. He had evidently forgotten something else.

Three days earlier, speaking to a gathering of some 3,000 high-school pupils in Tel Aviv, the premier replied to the criticism that he had broken his pre-election vows decrying the proposal for withdrawal from the Golan. Defiantly, he stated: "I never said the Golan was an inseparable part of the State of Israel!" Nobody had suggested that he did say it. (He had said withdrawal would endanger Israel's security.)

Those 3,000 youngsters concluded that Rabin was trying to pull the wool over their eyes. Nor was the Clinton-Assad meeting helpful to Rabin. The reports that emerged from that meeting succeeded only in emphasizing once more the inanity of the notion that Israel should (for the alleged sake of peace) give up the Golan.

A Syrian newspaper report of what Assad said to Clinton (broadcast on Israel Radio) is so nearly identical to what Assad told president Carter in 1977 that it is clearly authentic. Replying to Clinton's complaint that Syria was promoting terrorism and harboring terrorist organizations, Assad delivered his usual lecture. These, he said, were not terrorists, they were fighters for freedom, for the liberation of Falastin from the hands of the Jewish invaders and occupiers of their land.

Moreover, the Jews must not only relinquish the "occupied" lands, they must take back the Arab refugees of 1948. Nothing authoritative has been published of what Clinton said in reply. THE PRESS conference that followed the Assad-Clinton meeting must surely have been among the most bizarre episodes since the charade on the White

House lawn.

Assad, who demonstrated his contempt for Israel and the Jews by demanding that no Israeli journalist be allowed to take part in the conference, didn't even try to utter the formula about establishing normal relations with Israel that Clinton was manifestly expecting from him. Whereupon Clinton gave the answer for him - and thereafter proclaimed that Assad had made a "momentous concession." As American columnist Charles Krauthammer put it, Clinton and his Mideast peace team seem intent on achieving "another signing ceremony on the White House lawn