

May 5, 2003

FLAWED TO THE CORE

It is wrong, it is demeaning, it is pure folly for the Israeli government to discuss the so-called road map with its perpetrators. Its fancy name does not lend charm to the obnoxious fact that it is a diktat - such as is handed by a triumphant victor to his enemy defeated in war.

Israel has not been defeated in war and yet the road map contains the terms for its surrender. Condoleezza Rice, the US National Security chief, described it as 'not subject to negotiation.' British Prime Minister Tony Blair, the most active public promoter of this essentially anti-Israel document, said loftily that Prime Minister Ariel Sharon 'evidently does not understand that there is no room for discussion.'

Already, while the war in Iraq was in progress, Blair was proclaiming passionately that implementing the road map was just as important as winning the war in Iraq. No less.

For Mr. Blair this may well be true. His support for the US going to war, and Britain's participation on the battlefield were opposed from the outset by an evidently large majority of his fellow countrymen. He consequently may have been risking a vote of no confidence in parliament.

A move on his part, therefore, which would hamper, hurt or cripple Israel would counteract that charge, and, in the climate of anti-Semitism prevailing in Britain today, surely win much commendation.

Moreover, nobody can deny the permanence of at least a soupcon of vengefulness toward Israel in the British establishment - ever since our tiny state was born, in defiance of the repressive Attlee-Bevin government in 1948.

No wonder the Palestinian Authority, undoubtedly briefed by the Saudis - who contributed to the contents of the 'map' - jumped for joy at its coming, and at the prospect of a silenced Israel being ordered to submit unconditionally to a program which contains what are essentially the Arab demands.

The euphoria was enhanced by the Palestinians' realization that all their crimes, the murder of hundreds of Jews, and the thousands maimed for life, was to be repaid by landing them a great historic victory over Israel.

The PA, in celebrating, at once issued a threat of violence to Israel if it did not accept the complete road map. Rice's remarks in particular (speaking on behalf of the Quartet) bore an eerie sense of *deja vu*: It emerges that Israel has been given precisely the same treatment as Czechoslovakia at Munich on September 29, 1938.

While the deliberations were going on among the four statesmen who made the Munich Pact, which was to decide Czechoslovakia's future, the Czech diplomats, headed by Hubert Masarik, waited in an anteroom.

Finally, they were called in and told that the four statesmen had decided on Czechoslovakia's future. They were also told (as later reported by Masarik) that no response or declaration was required from them; and, in fact, that the four statesmen 'regarded the agreement as accepted.'

As for the contents of the road map, far from heralding a new vision it will be found that its core is exactly the same as that of its predecessors - among them the Rogers Plan, the Kissinger strategies, the Carter campaign, the Reagan notes, James Baker's Madrid agenda, the Clinton timetable, and the Mitchell Plan.

Indeed, from a waggish source has come the Yiddish comment on the road map: the same yenta, only with a different veil.

ALL THESE plans are flawed to the core. They are founded in a gigantic hoax, perhaps the hoax of the 20th century.

The Arabs do not want or intend to make peace with Israel. They could have had peace and a state - instantly - in 1947. That is what the UN offered them. They refused it.

At any time between 1947 and 1967, when the areas in question - Judea, Samaria and Gaza - were actually in Arab hands, cooperation among the Arab states could have brought about a state, and peace, had they wanted it.

In 1967, after Israel's stunning victory, Israel made the no less stunning offer to hand back the captured territories in return for peace. This too was refused.

After the Arabs had waged two major wars against Israel and blazoned to the world the message that their war aim was the 'annihilation' of the Jewish state - what possible reason was left for the nations of the world to assume that, of all things, the Arabs were longing for peace with living Israel?

Since then, and never more fiercely than today, what is the Arab-Muslim message, coming out of every Arab radio station, every Arab television channel, booming out of every Muslim mosque, and, most significantly, every Arab school textbook?

The claim of the Arabs that the whole Land, 'from the river to the sea' belongs to them, and that Israel took it from them and introduced its settlers has led to the demonization of the settlers.

The Jews who have settled in Judea, Samaria and in the Gaza district are utterly and immaculately legal. They are legal in the strictest interpretation of international law, and they are legitimate by the strictest test of historical right - not to mention their civic residential rights.

Any attempt from outside to move them would be a threefold crime, first of all against the Jewish people. The end of the road map chapter should thus be: President George W. Bush breaks off the unholy liaison with his ugly bedfellows, persuades Blair to cool down the passion of British anti-Semitism, and orders Colin Powell to think afresh.

The road map itself can be left by the roadside.