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## **SHARON, THE 'EX-MESSIAH'**

There is reason to expect that the Likud central committee will vote Thursday to bring Labor into the government.

This can only boost Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's self-confidence and strengthen the dictatorial tone and content of his behavior toward the people that brought him to power.

He has followed the predictable course of the traditional apostate. Having embraced the beliefs of the Labor Party and the wishful thinking on which they are based, he treats those who have remained faithful to the ideas they had in common with him as though they were ignorant peasants.

These pygmies dare to defy the suddenly great all-knowing, all-seeing panjandrum. At best, they are treated as rebels, and he talks of taking revenge. But even the people whose hurt he is now planning - the Gush Katif victims of his 'painful concessions' - are subjected to his scorn.

See how swiftly, in his recent speeches, he has assimilated even the semantics of the Left (and of the Arabs, and the international opponents of Jewish settlements in Judea and Samaria). He now talks of 'occupation' - which is a lie by any reading of the Fourth Geneva Convention on which (mendaciously or ignorantly) the term is based.

And now he has accused the people whom he personally helped to settle in Judea and Samaria and Gaza of being Messianic. If they are Messianic, what then must he himself be? An ex-messiah?

Sharon did nothing to hush the indecorous, nay disgusting, outburst of triumphalism - on the Knesset floor - from his assorted supporters, after the Knesset recently passed his disentanglement proposal.

Surrounding him at his prime ministerial seat, as depicted on television, was a cheerful, even cheering, cluster of members. There on one side was, notably, Ehud Olmert and, on the other, Labor leader Dalia Itzik, their faces aglow, crowing their heads off, while in the background was Amir Peretz, the Histadrut leader, looking for all the world as if he were going to start literally jumping for joy.

There, on the same television news program, outside the Knesset amidst the Gush Katif protesters, the camera caught a boy, perhaps 10 or 11 years old, weeping bitterly.

YET THE joyful reaction of the supporters of disentanglement - and their uninhibited indifference to the agonies of the expellees - does not conceal their conviction that their major achievement lies not so much in Gaza as in their belief that Gaza presages the fulfillment of their dream of Israel's giving up Judea and Samaria as well - with an accompanying expulsion of Jewish 'settlers' and the creation of a Palestinian state. And thus will come the glorious climax of peace.

They believe that this vision has been brought closer by the death of Yasser Arafat. Yet this is a myth - and for Israel, it is a snare and a delusion - which ignores most of the relevant facts of our modern history.

Arafat's death will ultimately make no difference. The facts were established long before Arafat came on the scene. The theme of destroying Israel was born long before

Arafat started his mission. The evils he brought on Israel, and on the world at large, have not been interred with his bones. His successors in the Palestinian Authority have already spelled that out clearly.

An unknown stripling in his 20s, Arafat had nothing to do with the Arabs' declaration at the UN in 1947 that they would not tolerate the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine. There they refused the offer of an Arab state in a part of Palestine and went to war, so as to get all of Palestine.

Never once during the 19 years that Jordan controlled the territories of Judea and Samaria did the Arab inhabitants ask or demand that Jordan give them the West Bank for a state of their own. They continued to live peacefully as Jordanians, just as they had previously declared themselves Syrian. It was, however, in 1964 while Jordan was still ruling that the PLO was established - with terrorism as its weapon.

But the PLO did not attack Jordan, they attacked Israel. To top it all, when Israel, after capturing Judea and Samaria (and Gaza from Egypt) in the Six Day War, offered to hand over these territories in exchange for peace, the Arab states baldly refused. Even then the Palestinian Arabs, now led by Arafat, did not object to this refusal by Jordan. And there were no Jews in Judea or Samaria, and no settlers and no settlements. The overriding fact was that the Arabs, Palestinian and others, had no use for a mere piece of Palestine.

How often, then, must it be repeated? Their blood-stained claim to a state in Judea and Samaria and Gaza is patently only a part of the tactical policy of phases.

No, the first condition an Israeli government must internalize for a national policy is that not only will a Palestinian state not bring about peace, but it will be the launching pad for the next phase of the campaign for all of Palestine.