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## Days of Remembrance, Independence and Fear -- 5766

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**H**ow do Israelis feel on their Independence Day? For the past number of years, the most apt comparison would be to the feeling of a birthday party celebrated at the bedside of a terminally ill patient. You can't not attend, you can't not express your good wishes and you can't not celebrate -- at least for outward appearances.

The events of the past year of Israel's independence have only intensified this feeling. The pogroms of Gush Katif and Amona followed by the election victory of the most revolting clan of hoodlums in Israel's political history makes many Israelis eager to forgo the contrived party. There are those who go so far as to claim that it would have been best if the patient had never been born.

But what about you? Let's make you an offer you can't refuse:

1. Total safeguarding of what has already been built.
2. Immigration rights to Israel for Jews based strictly on Jewish law.
3. Authorization to settle all parts of the Land of Israel on both banks of the Jordan.
4. Absolutely no threat of destruction of settlements.
5. Restoration of personal security and solution to terror.
6. No corruption.
7. Olmert and his cohorts will not govern the country.

There's only one catch. Israel will be a British state. What is more important to you? The Land of Israel? Or the State of Israel?

Israel's chance to continue to exist despite the tremendous challenges that it faces is determined by the answer to that question. It is determined by how the belief-based public relates to it. There is no other populace today in Israel that as a group shoulders all-encompassing responsibility for the fate of the Nation of Israel. There is no other sector that

regards our sovereign presence in Israel as national *destiny* and not merely as meaningless existence. It is vital to Israel to ensure that this public -- the State's lifeboat -- continues to thrive.

But in reality just the opposite has happened. It is specifically the belief-based public that has been denounced by the State of Israel through its political, judicial, security and cultural institutions as the enemy. The Amona pogrom momentarily removed the smokescreen from the war that the State has declared on its most loyal citizens. But the assault continues all day, every day. The State of Israel has consciously decided to eliminate the public that affords it its only chance to survive.

This means that the struggle of the belief-based public is not sectarian. It is the battle for the existence of the State. The youth at Amona did not fight against the State. On the contrary, they defended it from its would-be destroyers.

The war that the State of Israel is waging against its most loyal citizens did not begin in Gush Katif or Amona. We can identify its roots in the very establishment of its national holidays. Their central theme is denial of Jewish *destiny* in the Land of Israel while eternalizing mere *existence*. These days create a perspective that makes the belief based public irrelevant and promotes the war against it.

Let's begin with Holocaust Memorial Day. Israel continues to use the Holocaust to justify its existence. Instead of building the Temple of our *destiny* on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, the State of Israel has constructed the Temple of *existence* in the Holocaust memorial, Yad Vashem. In this way, the memory of the Holocaust was cynically hijacked in order to perpetuate our status as weaklings (and therefore just). Every VIP that visits Israel is ceremoniously led through the halls of the horrors of the memorial. When he re-emerges into the daylight, he is not supposed to have any more questions on our right to the Land of Israel or how we are more just than the Palestinian children who want to be liberated from our conquest. If there is no state there are crematoriums instead, and please do not bother us any more.

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This may have worked in the beginning, but the lemon has been completely squeezed and is bone dry. Holocaust Memorial Day and the entire official endeavor to preserve it are tools that serve the Zionist ethos. On the one hand we are weak and therefore just, and on the other hand we are strong and beautiful. (That is why Holocaust Memorial Day is on the day of the rebellion in the Warsaw Ghetto.) No mention of the Biblical Amalek and his war against G-d. No mention of the roots of anti-Semitism. The Holocaust could have happened to anyone and actually -- we are also Nazis. The proof? Just look at the settlers. The manner in which the State of Israel chose to commemorate the Jewish nation's most traumatic event in recent history emasculates the true significance of the Holocaust and allows for its use as a battering ram against the belief based public.

The next commemorative day is Memorial Day for Israel's fallen soldiers. This day, which on the surface reflects the widest consensus in Israeli society, transmits one clear message. The fallen soldiers did not fall for any goal. They fought for existence --or in nicer words -- for peace. In this way, the difference between a soldier killed in heroic battle and a soldier killed in a car accident or a citizen killed in a terror attack is blurred. They have all "fallen in Israel's battles." No glory for those who fell to fulfill a longed-for destiny. Instead, we have a day of mourning for the victims of the war of survival -- those heroes who obligingly absorbed the bullets aimed at us all. This leads to a clear conclusion: there is nothing worth dying for except safeguarding existence -- and it is only those settlers that are forcing us into eternal wars.

Finally, we reach Israel's Independence Day. Israel's Declaration of Independence opens with the words, "In the Land of Israel rose the Jewish Nation." This Declaration is the basis of Independence Day. But we all know that the opening sentence of the Declaration is a complete lie. The Jewish Nation was created outside the Land of Israel. Abraham, the first Jew, was born outside Israel. He slowly advanced toward the Land so that he could actualize Jewish destiny. The nation as such was formed in Egypt, and came to the Promised Land on a Divine universal mission. The Nation of Israel has a Divine destiny. The very essence of Israel's Independence Day is to deny that destiny, thus promoting war against the public that represents it.

All of this, though, does not diminish the potency of the very fact that the State of Israel

represents the sovereignty vital for the fulfillment of our national destiny. The appreciation of this fact is what makes the belief-based public Israel's lifeboat.

In order to safeguard our sovereignty, we must apply a complex thought process. We must be able to throw out the bath water but keep the baby. We must apply "tough love" -- acting as though we oppose the State -- in order to keep it safe. Simultaneously, we must educate our youth to understand this complexity.

We do not need violence to win this battle. In the end, with G-d's help, we will triumph. It is time to prepare for that day now. We need a new Declaration of Independence based on our national destiny, a new Independence Day (maybe on Passover), a truly significant way to honor the memory of the Jews murdered in the Holocaust and a way to respectfully commemorate those that have fallen in the battles of Israel on its way to fulfilling its destiny in its Land.

All that we need is to understand that the Nation of Israel and the State of Israel are first and foremost -- us.

You can turn the State of Jews into the Jewish State.  
Now is the Time!

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