

# **HOLY LAND PROTECTORATE (HLP)**

## **IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES**

It is hoped that those who support this proposal will contribute their best thoughts as to how to bring about the transformation of a region of passionate conflict (on behalf of unworkable models of sovereign statehood) into one of peace under international administration. Kindly contact the author with your thoughts.

*Please consider these questions and answers to get the ball rolling.*

### **Q - Who exactly is going to bring about the new world order envisioned in this proposal? the U.N. or some consortium of interested nations?**

The United Nations is a forum, not an instigator, when it comes to diplomatic changes of this magnitude. But it could certainly be an important player in the adoption and implementation phases of the plan. It took initially twelve interested, persuasive, and determined nations to declare the existence of the extra-national territory that we know today as Antarctica. It was done by fiat. It was simply a declaration by a group of nations whose voices really counted.

A similar group of determined nations today would probably be needed initially to craft and sign a treaty among themselves declaring their intention to recognize no claims to national sovereignty in The Holy Land, effective on a date to be determined. They would proclaim instead something along the lines of Article 1 of the aforementioned Draft Treaty:

Effective the first anniversary of the signing of this treaty, the areas currently known as Israel and Palestine shall be named and known as The Holy Land Protectorate (HLP). No nation which subscribes to this treaty, modeled on the Antarctic treaty, shall either assert a claim of sovereignty in the region, or recognize such an assertion by any other nation.

It is likely that with the major powers, the E.U., and the Arab League behind this proposal, most of the remaining nations of the world would quickly become “acceding” States and ratify the treaty.

At that point, major diplomatic initiatives would be launched through the United Nations to recall and rescind any form of statehood for the residents of the HLP. But concurrently the greatest possible humanitarian efforts would also be made to guarantee the well-being of the residents of the region and to ease their transition to the pioneering status of World Citizens. The UN would be the competent authority to issue World Citizen passports. With strong economic incentives and international security guarantees, the path to peace could be made so inviting, that it would be hard to resist.

### **Q – What makes you think that Israel, in particular, will accept its own disestablishment?**

A – This will come about peacefully only through persuasion: the pressure of international public opinion, coupled with a consensus of the Israeli population itself that this kind of settlement, including universally honored World Citizenship, truly is in their best long-term interest. The peace and security of Jewish (and Muslim, and Christian) communities in the Holy Land would, for the first time ever, be guaranteed by the signatory States, which could well include those Arab states traditionally most opposed to the State of Israel’s existence.

Remember that there are over 13 million Jews spread around the world, of which only about 4,965,000 are in the Israeli-controlled territories of the Holy Land region today, according to the current (2004) edition of *The World Factbook*. This proposal in no way is aimed at reducing the Jewish presence in The Holy Land, nor in interfering with the observances of those of the Jewish faith, nor in undermining their security and prosperity. It simply asks them to be good World Citizens rather than good Israelis from now on. It lifts from their shoulders, once and for all, the burden of having to defend the unfortunate (and

obsolete) doctrine of Zionism, while still granting them every possible freedom, including the right to live safely as Jews, in Jewish communities of their own choosing, in the Holy Land.

**Q – How would non-violent, peaceful means be used to achieve this end?**

A – As Norman Cousins might have put it, this is a challenge to our “moral imagination.” If diplomatic efforts and persuasion were to fail, the signatory and acceding States, working with the United Nations, would send an irresistible message. They would orchestrate an international boycott of all official contact with the State of Israel and the Palestinian Authority. By a series of graduated sanctions, including the severing of diplomatic ties and the freezing and redirecting of financial assets, coupled with the offer of attractive incentives, such as all the financial support necessary to convert Palestinian and Israeli businesses into HLP enterprises, it is likely that a peaceful transition would, in time, occur. Non-violence is the key. Patience too.

**Q – What about the Israeli Defense Forces?**

A – The aim of the HLP will be to create and maintain a demilitarized Protectorate, with security provided by a permanent U.N. Police Force. Most of those who are currently in the IDF and the Palestinian Police could be offered new jobs working for the U.N. Police. Hebrew and Arabic speaking police would be greatly needed. The United Nations could create a transitional authority to negotiate for the purchase (and possibly the destruction) of excess weapons belonging to the police and defense forces of both nations. Since everyone in the region would be moving to a higher level of citizenship (World Citizenship), with security guaranteed by the major powers, we hope that there would be no need to defend previous arrangements by force.

**Q – What about the fanatical elements on both sides? Muslim and Zionist zealots who would rather die than give up their dream of total victory?**

A – No reasonable person should minimize the disruptive power of the zealots. But world public opinion in the information age, coupled with the free flow of information, has proven to be more successful in the long run than any zealotry in defense of the status quo. The peaceful fall of apartheid in S. Africa and the peaceful dissolution of Soviet communism are grounds for hope. Let’s see if we can offer the young zealots in Palestine a just society in the Holy Land worth living for, rather than a fanatical, violent one with no prospect of either viable statehood or true peace.

**Q – What would happen to the political structures and the employees of the State of Israel?**

A – Most of the agencies in which these people work would need to be reconstituted under the new U.N. Administration. Names might change on buildings, but wherever possible the social services would continue to provide their assistance to local communities. The only real difference might be in the scope of responsibility of the various extant agencies. They would expand, since all communities in the HLP would need to be served equally. The aim of the exercise would be to assure continuity of employment in the same or comparable jobs, and the creation of new ones catering to tourism in particular.

**Q – Some of the most intractable disputes in the region relate to conflicting claims of land ownership. Short of draconian measures, how will the HLP defuse such conflicts?**

A – Taken as a whole, there is enough land in the HLP (even discounting the deserts) to provide equitable parcels for everyone who currently resides there. Population density in the proposed HLP region is currently about 357 inhabitants per sq .km. So it is greater than that of Italy (at 196), but less than that of the Netherlands, for example (at 470). Here are the basic geographical facts, as posted on the August 2004 “Knowers Ark Educational Foundation” website:

**Holy Land Protectorate estimated population (2003)**

Israel	6,116,500 (80.1% Jewish)
Gaza strip	
Palestinians	1,267,200
Israeli settlers	7,600
West Bank	
Palestinians	1,856,900
Israeli settlers	380,300
Total	9,637,500

**Holy Land Protectorate area**

Israel	20,770 sq.km.
West Bank	5,860 sq.km.
Gaza	360 sq.km.
Total	26,990 sq.km.

**Population density = approx. 357 per sq km.**

By abolishing the conventional practice of land “ownership” in favor of lifetime (i.e. 99-year) property leases, and by giving the Housing Commission of the Judiciary Service (Article III (1) (b)) broad discretion to “buy out” and relocate families and individuals whose land or property occupancy is determined to be arbitrary, unjust, or prejudicial to peace, the Commission should be able to reach equitable settlements for all.

**Q – How would we deal with the nuclear weapons in Israel’s possession?**

A – Currently, through bilateral agreements, the United States purchases weapons-grade fissionable material from decommissioned Russian nuclear weapons and converts it to fuel for nuclear power plants. As part of an orderly transition to U.N. Administration of The HLP, similar arrangements could be made to purchase at full value the nuclear and other military assets of the State of Israel. “Their swords,” as Isaiah once put it, would be “beat into plowshares.”

**Q – What about the Palestinian refugees, especially those in camps? Would they simply become welfare burdens for the new Protectorate?**

A – This is no small matter. The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics estimates that there are about 4,422,000 Palestinians “living outside Palestine,” i.e. in the surrounding Arab states. Their host countries would either need to naturalize them or to recognize them as World citizens. In the latter case, the host countries would either give them residency status or gradually assist them in finding homes in the new HLP.

The refugee camps in the occupied Palestinian territories today could gradually be emptied and transformed into decent housing and enterprise zones. This is an area where the Arab States, in particular, could provide exemplary financial support and leadership that would give the expression “Allah is merciful” a whole new meaning. It is assumed that under an enlightened land and property management

policy, certain neighborhoods and communities in the HLP (like the traditional quarters of old Jerusalem) would be set up exclusively for those ethnic and religious groups that wished to live among their own kind. So orthodox Jews could continue to have small orthodox neighborhoods within walking distances of their synagogues, and the same for Muslims and Christians. They might not be located precisely in the areas currently occupied, since any new housing arrangements would need to be, by any objective measure, fair and equitable to all.

However the *majority* of the residential and commercial land and neighborhoods in the HLP would be integrated by design and by policy. Quality land leases (and eventually, homes and apartments) would be provided preferentially to those who committed themselves to *peaceful coexistence with their neighbors* in well integrated neighborhoods. World citizenship demands nothing less.

**Q – How do we justify the enormous costs to signatory States (indeed, to the U.N. itself) of creating and maintaining the HLP?**

A – Peacemaking will always be expensive and demand sacrifice, but it will be money well spent. Administering a Holy Land Protectorate should not be nearly as costly in human lives and treasure, in the long run, as coping with the harvest of hatred and terrorism that the Israeli-Palestinian dispute has produced and will continue to produce if nothing is done to move the residents of the Holy Land to a higher level of civilization and civility.

**Q – What about other peace proposals that envision a single governing authority over the region? Why is this one preferable?**

A – The two most discussed scenarios, both involving conventional statehood, are:

(1) A “bi-national” state, where Jews and non-Jews would effectively have different political “weight” or status. Unfortunately this proposal looks too much like former South-African-style apartheid to be taken seriously nowadays.

(2) The merging of Israel and Palestine into a single conventional, self-governing state, possibly to be called “Isratine,” as was recently proposed by Libya’s leader, Gathafi.

While the devil is in the details of this plan—and no practical details are provided at the Web site, I would venture to suggest that a unified, nationality-free Holy Land Protectorate under international administration could very well lead to an eventual self-governing democratic state (like an Isratine). The HLP may indeed be a constructive pathway to the latter, but only after the Jewish, Arab, and Christian communities have demonstrated their ability to coexist peacefully: to care and share alike, to value humanity more than ethnicity, to hope for peace more than power. It may take a generation or more for such a maturation to occur, and the conditions need to favor such an outcome. In the meantime the World community would do well to impose a “time out” on the the present population of the Holy Land: the siblings who are fighting, and who urgently need a chance to cool off—Antarctica-style. That is exactly what the HLP is designed to provide.

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Please send comments/suggestions to  
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