

Rosemary's Baby

SINCE I witnessed the rise of the Nazis during my childhood in Germany, my nose always tickles when it smells something fascist, even when the odor is still faint.

When the debate about the "one-state solution" began, my nose tickled.

Have you gone mad, I told my nose, this time you are dead wrong. This is a plan of the Left. It is being put forward by leftists of undoubted credentials, the greatest idealists in Israel and abroad, even certified Marxists.

But my nose insisted. It continued to tickle.

Now it appears that the nose was right, after all.

THIS IS not the first time that a kosher leftist plan leads towards extreme rightist consequences.

That happened, for example, to the ugliest symbol of the occupation: the Separation Wall. It was invented by the Left.

When the "terrorist" attacks multiplied, leftist politicians, headed by Haim Ramon, offered a miracle-solution to the problem: an impassable obstacle between Israel and the occupied territories. They argued that it would stop the attacks without recourse to brutal actions in the West Bank.

The Right opposed the idea vehemently. To them it was a conspiracy to fix the borders of the state and promote the two-state solution, which they saw (and still see) as an existential threat to their designs.

But suddenly the Right changed its tune. They realized that the wall offered a wonderful opportunity to annex large tracts of West Bank land and turn them over to the settlers. And that is what happened: the wall/fence was not put up along the Green Line, but cuts deep into the West Bank. It takes away large areas of land from the Palestinian villages.

Nowadays leftists are demonstrating every week against the wall, the right is sending soldiers to shoot at them, and the two-state solution has been set back.

NOW THE rightists have discovered the one-state solution. My nose is tickling.

One of the first was Moshe Arens, former Minister of Defense. Arens is an extreme rightist, a fanatical Likud member. He started to talk about one state from the Mediterranean Sea to the Jordan River, in which the Palestinians would be granted full rights, including citizenship and the vote.

I rubbed my eyes. Is this the same Arens? What has happened to him? But this apparent mystery has a simple solution.

Arens and his companions are faced with a mathematical problem that seems insoluble: turning the triangle into a circle.

Their aim has three sides: (a) a Jewish state, (b) the whole of Eretz Israel, and (c) democracy. How to combine these three sides into one harmonious circle?

Between the sea and the river there now live about 6.5 million Jews and 3.9 million Palestinians – a proportion of 59% Jews to 41% Palestinians (including the inhabitants of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem and the Arab citizens of Israel.) This number does not include, of

course, the millions of Palestinian refugees who are living outside the country.)

Several "experts" have tried to dispute these numbers, but respected statisticians, including Israelis, accept them with tiny changes here and there.

The proportion, alas, is rapidly changing in favor of the Palestinians. The Palestinian population is doubling every 18 years. Even taking into account the natural increase of the Jewish population in Israel and the potential immigration in the foreseeable future, one can predict with almost mathematical precision when the Palestinians will constitute the majority between the Jordan and the sea. It's a matter of years rather than decades.

The inescapable conclusion: one can reconcile between any two of the three aspirations, but not all three at once: (a) a Jewish state in the entire country cannot be democratic, (b) a democratic state in the entire country cannot be Jewish, and (c) a Jewish and democratic state cannot include the entire Eretz Israel.

Simple. Logical. One does not have to be Moshe Arens, an engineer by profession, to see this. Therefore the Right is looking for another logic that would allow the creation of a Jewish and democratic state in the entire country.

LAST WEEK Haaretz published a stunning sensation: prominent personalities of the extreme Right – indeed, some of the most extreme – accept the solution of one-state from the sea to the river. They speak about a state in which the Palestinians will be full citizens.

The rightists quoted in Noam Sheizaf's article do not hide their reasons for adopting this line: they want to obstruct the setting up of a Palestinian state alongside Israel, which would mean the end of the settlement enterprise and the evacuation of scores of settlements and outposts throughout the West Bank. They also want to put an end to the growing international pressure for the two-state solution.

Among some leftists in the world, who advocate the one-state solution, the news was greeted with great joy. They pour scorn on the Israeli peace camp (leftists enjoy nothing more than deriding other leftists) and heap praise on the Israeli Right. What magnanimity! What readiness to break out of the box and adopt their opponents' ideals! Only the Right will make peace!

But if these good people would read the texts, they would discover that it ain't necessarily so. To be precise, it's the very opposite.

ALL OF the six rightists quoted in the article are united on a number of points which deserve consideration.

First: all of them exclude the Gaza Strip from the proposed solution. Gaza will no longer be a part of the country. Thus, the number of Palestinians will be reduced by 1.5 million, improving the menacing demographic balance. (True, in the Oslo agreement, Israel recognized the West Bank and the Gaza Strip as one integral territory, but the rightists consider the Oslo agreement anyhow as the tainted product of leftist traitors.)

Second: the one state will, of course, be a Jewish state.

Third: the annexation of the West Bank will take place at once, so that the building of settlements can go on undisturbed. In a Greater Israel, the settlement enterprise cannot be limited.

Fourth: There is no way to grant citizenship to all Palestinian forthwith.

The author of the article summarizes their positions thus: "a process that will take from about a decade to a generation, and at its conclusion the Palestinians will enjoy full personal rights, but the state will remain, in its symbols and spirit, Jewish...This is not a vision of 'a state belonging to all its citizens' and not 'Isratine' with a flag combining the crescent and the Star of David. The one state still means Jewish sovereignty."

IT IS worthwhile to listen well to the explanations provided by the initiators themselves (emphasis added by me):

Uri Elitsur, former director general of the Judea and Samaria Council (the leadership of the settlers, known as "Yesha"): "I speak of a Jewish state which is the state of the Jewish people, and in which there will exist an Arab minority."

Hanan Porat, a founder of Gush Emunim (the religious settlers' leadership, and the man who called upon the Jews to rejoice after the Baruch Goldstein massacre in Hebron): "I am against the automatic citizenship proposed by Uri Elitsur, which is naïve and could lead to grievous consequences. I propose the application of Israeli law to the territories in stages, first in the areas in which there is (already) a Jewish majority, and within a time-span of a decade to a generation in all the territories."

Porat proposes dividing the Palestinians into three categories: (a) Those who want an Arab state and are ready to realize this by terrorism and struggle against the state – they have no place in Eretz Israel. Meaning: they will be expelled. (b) Those resigned to their place and to Jewish sovereignty, but not ready to take part in the state and fulfill all their obligations towards it – they will have full human rights, but no political representation in the institutions of the state. (c) Those who declare that they will be loyal to the state and swear allegiance to it – they will be granted full citizenship. (They will, of course, be a small minority.)

Tzipi Hutubeli, a Member of Parliament on the extreme fringe of Likud: "On the political horizon there must be citizenship for the Palestinians in Judea and Samaria...That will happen gradually ...This process must take place over a long time, perhaps even a generation, in the course of which the situation on the ground will be stabilized and the symbols of the Jewish state and its character will be anchored in law...The question mark hovering over Judea and Samaria will be removed...First comes my deep belief in our right over Eretz Israel. Shiloh and Bet-El (in the West Bank) are for me the land of our ancestors in the full meaning of the term...At this moment we speak about conferring citizenship in Judea and Samaria, not in Gaza. Let it be clear: I do not recognize political rights of Palestinians over Eretz Israel...Between the sea and the Jordan there is room for one state, a Jewish state."

Moshe Arens: "The integration of the Arab population (inside Israel) into Israeli society is a prior condition, and only afterwards can one speak about citizenship for Palestinians in the territories." Meaning: Arens proposes focusing on the integration of the Arab citizens of Israel – something that has not happened in the last 62 years – and only afterwards thinking about the question of citizenship for the West Bank population.

Emily Amrussi, a settler who organizes meetings between the settlers and the Palestinians of the neighboring villages: "Don't describe me as one pushing for the 'one state'. In the end we may arrive there, but we are still very far from there. Let's talk first about one country...We don't talk about citizenship, but in terms like relations between neighbors... First let them become my good neighbors, and then we shall give them rights... In the far future, it will be necessary to move towards citizenship for everybody."

Reuven Rivlin, Speaker of the Knesset: "The country cannot be divided...I oppose the idea of a state belonging to all its citizens or a bi-national state and am thinking about arrangements of joint sovereignty in Judea and Samaria under the Jewish state, even a regime of two parliaments, Jewish and Arab...Judea and Samaria will be a co-dominion, held jointly...But these are things that take time...Stop waving demography in my face."

THE REGIME described here is not an apartheid state, but something much worse: a Jewish state in which the Jewish majority will decide if at all, and when, to confer citizenship on some of the Arabs. The words that come up again and again - "perhaps within a generation" - are by nature very imprecise, and not by accident.

But most important: there is a thunderous silence about the mother of all questions: what will happen when the Palestinians become the majority in the One State? That is not a question of "if", but of "when": there is not the slightest doubt that this will happen, not "within a generation", but long before.

This thunderous silence speaks for itself. People who do not know Israel may believe that the rightists are ready to accept such a situation. Only a very naive person can expect a repetition of what happened in South Africa, when the whites (a small minority) handed power over to the blacks (the large majority) without bloodshed.

We said above that it is impossible to "turn the triangle into a circle". But the truth is that there is one way: ethnic cleansing. The Jewish state can fill all the space between the sea and the Jordan and still be democratic – if there are no Palestinians there.

Ethnic cleansing can be carried out dramatically (as in this country in 1948 and in Kosovo in 1998) or in a quiet and systematic way, by dozens of sophisticated methods, as is happening now in East Jerusalem. But there cannot be the slightest doubt that this is the final stage of the one-state vision of the rightists. The first stage will be an effort to fill the entire country with settlements, and to demolish any chance of implementing the two-state solution, which is the only realistic basis for peace.

In Roman Polanski's movie "Rosemary's Baby", a nice young woman gives birth to a nice baby, which turns out to be the son of Satan. The attractive leftist vision of the one-state solution may grow up into a rightist monster.