

I Believe: Israeli Arabs – Lost in a Sea of Identities*

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims at making the dream of peace real in the Middle East, concerning the constant conflict over “the holy land,” thus building up a conceptual apparatus of checks and balances. For this hope to be fulfilled, a second thought regarding the internal legal-social problems of the state of Israel ought to be considered. Hypocrisy has led us to believe that political and social problems are unsolvable because of their nature as political and social as such. Legal philosophy distinguishes between two theories of law, one expresses the idea of laws enacted by an authoritative body, and the other refers to the good and just law which is binding because it is good and just. The establishment of the state of Israel in 1948 led to the division of Mandatory Palestine, where many Arab families were expelled and others were deported, many fled and others decided to leave whether because of the coercive circumstances or by free will. Those who remained within the new established state called “Israel” have become Israeli citizens, and they constitute nowadays 20% of the Israeli population. And it is with their multiple identities that I concern.

Keywords: Citizenship, Nationality, Freedom of Expression, Equality, Dignity, Israeli Arabs, Constitutional Democracy

1. Introduction

Around early January 2007, walking around the dining room of Massey College at Devonshire Place street, in the city of Toronto, Canada, I was introduced before several Canadian judges, thus stating: “My name is Mohammed, an Israeli Arab.” All of a sudden, an amazement facial expression was reflected before me by one of the gentlemen there, who asked me: “How possible!?” “Mohammed” and “from Israel!” Naively, I replied: “In Israel there are Jews, Muslims, and Christians.” However, naive I am not; nor was the gentleman. Eventually, what crossed the gentleman’s mind, in asking his question, was

the absence of the word “Palestinian” in my answer, since most Israeli Arabs describe themselves as Palestinians who hold the Israeli citizenship [1].

This event led me to deliver a very sharp and provocative speech, at the Munk Centre [2], on March 6th 2007, entitled: “Being an Israeli Arab.” Since then, I delivered tens of speeches on this topic.¹ However, it was not until July 2008 that my views were exposed before the Israeli media, when an Israeli journalist interviewed me in Berlin [3]. Few days after, I returned to Israel to find a thorny carpet spread out for me.

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¹1) The University of Toronto Radio State, News and Current Affairs Program “Take 5,” Toronto, Canada (July 19th, 2007): “The Refugees from Darfur and the Sudan in Israel.” 2) Israeli Radio in Arabic, “The Talk of the Week,” Israel (August 26th, 2007): “Civil Service for Israeli Arabs.” 3) The Israeli Embassy, Berlin, Germany (July 21st, 2008): “The Future of the Peace Process in the Middle East.” Interviewed by: Margaret Limburg from the *Deutschlandfunk* Radio; Karlen Vesper from the *Neues Deutschland*; Benjamin Dierks from the “Financial Times Deutschland;” Flora Eder from the “Jungle World;” and Eldad Beck from “*Yedioth Ahronoth*” Israeli Newspaper. 4) Radio-Magazine “Zündfunk,” Public Radio of Bavaria, Germany (January 2009): “The War on Gaza and the Future of the Peace Process in the Middle East.” 5) Radio Bayern 2, Radio Station of Bayerischer Rundfunk, the Public Service TV and Radio Broadcasting Station in Bavaria, Germany (February, 2009): “The 2009 Elections in Israel: Results and the Future Vision of Peace of Reconciliation.” 6) Indigenous Law Journal Conference, Toronto Faculty of Law (The John and Mary A. Yaremko Forum on Multiculturalism and Human Rights), Canada: “Indigenous Law and Legal Systems: Recognition and Revitalization” (January, 2007): “Israeli-Arabs: Between the Nation and the State.”

My views risked my life. To this risk I have never responded. Time for me now to reaffirm my arguments; time for me today to challenge my assertions; and time for me here to reply to those who articulated theories of conspiracy against me; to challenge those who superficially criticized my views; and to face those who with ignorance and hypocrisy responded to my contentions.

In this article I delineate a map of hopes, aiming at making the dream of peace real in the Middle East, concerning the constant conflict over “the holy land,”^[4,5] thus building up a conceptual apparatus of checks and balances. It is my view that for this hope to be fulfilled, a second thought regarding the internal legal-social problems of the state of Israel ought to be considered. It is my personal view that hypocrisy has led us to believe that political and social problems are unsolvable because of their nature as political and social as such. To say, a conceptual and substantive understanding of the institute of “Law” - as distinguished from “law” - can be of great help to us in assessing the utmost influence of legal thinking as a mean for solving arguable unsolvable political and social problems.

Legal philosophy distinguishes between two theories of law. One term is “law”, which expresses the idea of laws enacted by an authoritative body. The other term is “Law”, which refers to the good and just law, which is binding because it is good and just [6-8]. Whereas “law” embraces solely formally enacted legal norms by the leg-

7) 14Pth Annual Canadian International Law Students’ Conference: “Canada Global Bystander or Global Citizen: Evaluation of our Performance in the International Legal Order,” Toronto Faculty of Law, Canada (February, 2007): “The Puzzle on Israeli-Arabs.” [Discussion panel with the Israeli Ambassador to Canada, Alan Baker; Chaired by Prof. Ed Morgan]. 8) Munk Centre for International Studies at Trinity College, Toronto, Canada (March, 2007): “Being an Israeli Arab” [Chaired by Prof. Emanuel Adler]. 9) Hillel of Great Toronto & The Bina Initiative, Toronto, Canada (March, 2007): “The Dilemmas of Israeli Arabs: A Scholarly Perspective On Citizenship in Israel” [Chaired by Prof. Emanuel Adler]. 10) Temple Emanu-El, Toronto, Canada (April 2007): “Breaking Up the Paradigm on Israeli Arabs” [Chaired by Mark Sandler]. 11) New Israel Fund of Canada, Canadian Jewish Congress, and Narayever Congregation (April, 2007): “Being an Israeli Arab” [Montreal, Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom, Chaired by Dr. Victor Goldbloom (National Executive CJC)], [Ottawa, Soloway JCC, Chaired by Rabbi Steven Garten (Temple Israel)], [Toronto, First Narayever Congregation, Chaired by Prof. Ed Morgan (National President, CJC)]. 12) University of Freiburg, Freiburg, Germany (January, 2008): “A Vision of Citizenship: Arabs in a Jewish and Democratic State” [Sponsored by: *Deutsch-Israelische Gesellschaft Freiburg; Colloquium politicum* of the University of Freiburg; *Freundeskreis Stadttepartnerschaft Freiburg-Tel Aviv e. V.*]; Chaired by Mr. Hillebrand]. 13) Hadassah International Medical Relief Association, Ltd.; Conference on “*Können Gegensätze verbinden?*” (“Can Opposites Connect?”), Munich, Germany (June, 2008): “I Believe...” [Keynote speaker with Mr. Efraim Lapid. Chaired by Prof. Andreas Bönle]. 14) The Karl Liebknecht House BAK Shalom, Berlin, Germany (July, 2008): “A Vision of Peace & Reconciliation.” 15) Moriah-Haifa Rotary Club, “Israel as a Jewish and Democratic State – Models of Reconciliation,” Haifa, Israel (April, 2009). 16) Private Event for an Intellectual Evening, Haifa, Israel (October, 2009): “On the Hierocracy in the Middle East.”

islature, “Law” is composed of *inter alia* laws, but also of other higher principles of morality, fairness and justice – as vague as these terms may sound [9,10].

Underscoring my arguments and analysis is my personal understanding and views of the historical-factual circumstances in the Middle East concerning the history of the establishment of the state of Israel. The establishment of the state of Israel in 1948 led to the division of Mandatory Palestine, where many Arab families were expelled and others were deported, many fled and others decided to leave whether because of the coercive circumstances or by free will. Those who remained within the new established state called “Israel” have become Israeli citizens, and they constitute nowadays 20% of the Israeli population [11,12]. And it is with their multiple identities that I concern.

2. The Charter of Personal Belief

I believe that Israel is a Jewish and democratic state, as it was established, as it exists, and as it shall be in the future. This is a fact, it has become an international truth and a constitutional maxim [13]; it shall not be challenged anymore; and it shall be comprehended by the Arab world, all the more so by the Arab citizens of the state of Israel.² This has been recognized not only by the United Nations, but also explicitly by leading Arab countries, such as Egypt and Jordan, and implicitly by other Gulf Arab countries, as well as Syria, Lebanon, and the Palestinian Authority. Furthermore, Hamas seeks that Israel withdraw to the 1967 borders, and Hezbollah demands that Israel withdraw from *Shabaa’* farms; they are not challenging Israel’s self existence.

However, one shall not ignore the potential threat of several Arab extremists that endangers the simple existence of Israel as a Jewish entity, nor that of other extremists Jews, which risks Israel’s existence as a democracy, thus imposing fear and horror among Israel’s Arab minority citizens.

I believe that Israel’s Jewish-ness does not (and should not) contradict its commitment to democratic values of human dignity and equality [14,15]. Are not Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar defined as Arab states? Are they not all members of the Arab League? Why is possible for Egypt to define itself as a Muslim republic, while it impermissible for Israel to define itself as a Jewish state?

I believe that the right to return for Jews [16] is the golden key granted to the Hebrew Nation as such in order to enter the Israeli house [17]. As a Jewish state, Israel is the homeland for the Hebrew nation,³ thus entitling them

²Every single new member of the Israeli Parliament – including Arab members of the Israeli Parliament – has taken the oath of respecting the state of Israeli and its laws, which include the Basic-Law: Human Dignity and Liberty that defines Israel as a Jewish and democratic state.

to a special key to enter the house. However, Israel's democracy is as important as its Jewish-ness, and therefore the latter must not, by any means, undermine Israel's commitment to fundamental democratic values of dignity and equality. Every legal citizen in Israel, being of the majority as well as of the minority, has a right to be treated equally by the state [18]⁴.

I believe that Israeli Arabs are simply Israelis but not Palestinians. Being a Palestinian is a matter of citizenship but not of nationality. Israeli Arabs are citizens of the state of Israel; they have never been citizens of the Palestinian Authority. The historical nexus with other Palestinian families does not make them Palestinians, exactly as the historical nexus with other Syrian or Jordanian families does not make them Syrians or Jordanians [19-22].

I believe that Israeli Arabs do not have to be Zionists, nor do they have to be patriotic to the state of Israel, yet must they be loyal. Patriotism expresses solidarity, which crosses all political, national and international boundaries, whereas loyalty embodies a contractual relationship between the state and its citizens [23]⁵. Israeli Arabs' nationality as Arabs does not (and must not) undermine their citizenship as Israelis, nor does their citizenship vis-à-vis their nationality. I also believe that the state of Israel must be loyal to its Arab citizens, thus refrain, for instance, from shutting the voice of the minority by guns and bullets, as regretfully was the case in October 2000, when 13 Arab citizens of the state of the Israel were killed by the Israeli police forces upon marching against the Israeli Occupation in the Palestinian Territory and against the visit of Ariel Sharon to Temple Mountain.

I believe that Israeli Arabs have the absolute and inherent right to feel solidarity toward their Arab brothers from other Arab countries [24]. In the course of expressing their solidarity, Israeli Arabs may (and should be allowed to) invoke all legitimate legal, social and political means. But still, they may not raise an arm in the face of the state of Israel, exactly as the state of Israel should not have raised an arm against its Arab citizens in October

³Again, there is a view that "Jewish-ness" is also a national identity. I do not share this view.

⁴Underlying the reference to the "Hebrew Nation" is my assumption that Jewish-ness is a religious identity but not a national one. The *Koran* speaks of the sons of Israel in more than one occasion, see: the *Koran*: *Al-Baqarah*: 40, 47, 83, 122, 211, 246; *Ali-Emran*: 49, 93; *Al-Maedah*: 12,32, 70, 72, 110; *Al-A'araf*: 105, 134, 137, 138; *Yunis*: 90, 93; *Al-Esraa*: 2, 4, 101, 104; *Taha*: 47, 80, 94; *Al-Shuara'a*: 17, 22, 59, 197; *Al-Namel*: 76; *Al-Sajdah*: 23; *Gafer*: 53; *Al-Zakhrif*: 59; *Al-Dokhan*: 30; *Al-Jathyah*: 16; *Al-Ahqaf*: 10; *Al-Saf*: 6, 14. Note: the word "Palestine" does not appear in the *Koran*. However, this cannot serve as a platform for arguing against the rights of current Palestinian people to establish a state of their own. The establishment of the state of Israel and of the future Palestinian state is grounded on international political and diplomatic compromise, but not on religious theories of ownership.

⁵In another place I have addressed the conceptual distinction between "nationhood" and "statehood" in depth.

2000.

I believe that Israel is a constitutional democracy, lending itself to values of reason, fairness and justice. Israel is not a regime of Apartheid. Not only was Israel established as a democracy, but it has quickly become a constitutional democracy, lending itself to values of reason, fairness and justice. In this process, the Supreme Court of Israel has played a very significant role, granting minorities, especially the Arab minority, civil rights, including the right to vote, the right to establish political parties, freedom of expression [25], religious autonomy, and separate educational systems. This should not be understood as a trivial process, nor should it be perceived as self-evident [26-29]⁶.

⁶HCI (High Court of Justice) 316/03 *Bakri et al. v. Israel Film Council et al.*, 58(1) P.D. 249 (decided on 11/11/03) [After IDF (Israeli Defense Force) operations against the terror infrastructure in Jenin (a Palestinian city) in April 2002 ("Operation Defensive Wall"), Mohammed Bakri filmed the responses of local Palestinians and edited them into the film "Jenin, Jenin." After advance screenings, both domestically and abroad, and in anticipation of the film's domestic commercial screening, Bakri requested the approval of the Israel Film Council. The Council denied its approval. Bakri claimed that this decision violates fundamental constitutional rights and Israeli administrative law. The Court held that that freedom of speech constitutes one of the fundamental principles of a democratic society. Even so, the freedom of speech is not an absolute right and, under certain conditions, it may be infringed. The Court decided that, under the circumstances, the decision of the Israel Film Council unlawfully infringed the constitutional rights of the petitioners] HCI (High Court of Justice) 769/02 *The Public Committee Against Torture in Israel, et al. v. The Government of Israel, et al.* (not published yet) (decided on 13/12/2006) [The Court rejected the petition against the Israeli Government's "Targeting Assassination" policy, holding that the Court shall refrain from deciding a general rule, neither that the "Targeting Assassination" policy is always permissible, nor is it always contrary to international law. The Court noted that each case must be examined individually, in an *Ad-Hoc* manner, and within the specific circumstance of each case. Chief Justice Aharon Barak (ret.), who wrote the opinion of the Court, concluded that: "The question is not whether it is possible to defend ourselves against terrorism... The question is how we respond. On that issue, a balance is needed between security needs and individual rights... Not every efficient means is also legal. The ends do not justify the means. The army must instruct itself according to the rules of the law." (see: paragraph 63)]. See also: HCI (High Court of Justice) 4764/04 *Physicians for Human Rights et al. v. Commander of the IDF Forces in the Gaza Strip* 58(5) P.D. 385 (decided on 30/5/2004), HCI (High Court of Justice) 7957/04 *Zaharan, et al. v. The Prime Minister of Israel, et al.* (not published yet) (decided on 15/9/2005) [The Court accepted a petition by several Palestinians, who approached the Court contending the illegality of the security fence (or, the "separation fence"). The Court held that regarding the particular part of the fence, upon which the petition was submitted, the fence was constructed illegally, since the state of Israel did not adhere to the less coercive means available within the proportionality test. However, the Court did not accept the International Court of Justice decision on the illegality of the security fence as a matter of principle, holding that the state of Israel has a right to construct the fence on Israeli territory, thus protecting its security against the terrorist attacks with which it struggles in a daily basis]. See and compare: Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice at the Hague: *Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Advisory Opinion* (International Court of Justice, July 9, 2004), 43 IL M 1009 (2004). See also: HCI (High Court of Justice) 2056/04 *Beit Sourik Village Council v. The Government of Israel*, 58(5) P.D. 807 (decided on 30/6/04).

I believe that Israel is not the Republic of Utopia, but it is also not a banana republic. Of course Israel is far from being Utopia, but towards Utopia Israel is marching with diligence [30]. Within fewer than sixty years of its existence [31], and in the absence of a formal written constitution, Israel has achieved what most western enlightened legal democratic systems still aspire to achieve.⁷ Israel is a very diligent constitutional democracy; to a great extent due to the Supreme Court justices who sit back there in Jerusalem. But for this to remain, we shall defend the Israeli Judiciary from those who aim at weakening it.

In any case, the picture is not as rosy as I would like to believe; there are many gaps to bridge: in many cases, Israel still acts as a national state not only as to the right to enter the state but even inside the state, which leads one to think of Israel as a discriminatory regime in several contexts. However, discrimination is one thing and apartheid is another. Yet, Israel, like many other countries, is a multicultural country. In Israel there is discrimination between Arabs and Jews, between Arab Muslims and Arab Christians and Druze, between religious Jews and secular Jews, between Ashkenazi Jews and Sephardic Jews, and between indigenous Jews and immigrant Jews. In Israel there is also discrimination based on age, gender, and sexual orientation. In Israel there is discrimination like other forms of discrimination that exist everywhere in the world.

However, this should be true for Israeli Arabs exactly as for Israeli Jews that we are all insiders to one organized state; we are not outsiders. As such, we may face these forms of discrimination by adhering to legitimate means of political power, judicial review, and other permissible social and administrative methods of struggle. I am not suggesting that we should be satisfied with such discrimination. But this is why political parties, the government and the judiciary exist.

I believe that not only is the Israel's Arab minority required to be active in patching up the gaps, but so is the Israeli Jewish majority, and above all the State itself. Patching up the gaps between the majority and the minority shall not be solely the concern of the minority, who must, day and night, give up their rights, suffocate their freedoms and limit their liberties. This must also primarily be of the utmost concern of the majority, who must strike a balance between its own interests and the rights of the minority; they must express tolerance and compassion toward the minority. In diverse states, such as Israel, the urgent involvement of governmental power is required in order for all means of reconciliation to be

achieved. Minorities must be protected in their dignity; they shall not be humiliated [32-36]. This becomes truer when 99.99 percent of such minority has never taken any act of hostility against the State. Israeli Arabs do not impose any strategic danger to Israel, as recently stated by the Israeli Prime Minister then Mr. *Ehud Olmert*.⁸

To this extent, Israeli Arabs cannot (and shall not) be inherently suspected, thus being degraded upon entering and leaving Israel via its international borders. Throughout the 60 years of its existence, these were not Israeli Arabs who betrayed the state of Israel, but rather *Mordechai Vanunu*, an Israeli Jew, former nuclear technician, who revealed details of Israel's nuclear weapons program to the British press in 1986, and subsequently was convicted of treason. This was *Elhanan Tannenbaum*, an Israeli Jew, former military officer, who caused Israel troubles for his own joy and benefit in drug business. This was *Yigal Amir*, and Israeli Jew as well, who assassinated former Prime Minister *Yitzhak Rabin*. These were not Israeli Arabs who committed massacre against Israeli Jews, but rather *Baruch Goldstein*, an Israeli Jewish physician, who perpetrated the 1994 Cave of the Patriarchs massacre in the city of Hebron. This was also *Eden Nata-Zada*, and Israeli Jew, who opened fire in a bus in the northern Israeli town of *Shfaram*, thus killing and wounding Israeli Arabs.

In any case, the terminology must be changed. It is impossible that whenever an isolated Israeli Arab is suspected of committing any kind of wrong against the State, then he is presumed terrorist, all the more so the entire Israeli Arab population, whereas in the case of an Israeli Jew, then he is presumed insane (*Meshoga'*).

I also believe that Israeli Arabs are not completely innocents in this saga. I can identify several instances where Israeli Arabs were ready to raise an arm against Israel. For this not to happen, not only does the Israeli intelligence need to work harder, not only ought the Israeli Government to embrace its Arab citizens warmly, treat them with equality, respect and dignity, but primarily the politicians in both sides need to calm down, thus refrain from preaching for hatred.

I believe that it is the duty of every Israeli citizen to wave the Flag and sing the Anthem [37]. But I also believe that both the Israeli Anthem and the Flag must speak to all Israelis alike. If the Israeli Flag and Anthem are symbols of the State, then they must reflect the statehood identity of Israel, namely, its Israel-ness, not its national identity as a Hebrew/Jewish state. This way, Israel does not negate its Hebrew-ness/Jewish-ness, since as such Israel is defined as a Jewish and democratic state, and at the same time, it embraces not only the Jewish

⁷Compare the American history toward the question of discriminating American Black citizens by adhering to the so-called "separate but equal" doctrine, with the Israeli *Qa'adan* case on the same regards.

⁸November 2008.

citizens but all Israelis alike. To this extent, the Anthem must speak of the “Israeli spirit” - not the Jewish spirit - “is yearning deep in the heart” and the Flag must be reformed into a more universal symbol.

I believe that it makes no sense that a Jewish soldier has to fight to death in protecting Arab citizens, while the latter are relaxing on their beds without a worry. I believe that Israeli Arabs must serve in the Israeli army, or alternatively provide a civil service to the Israeli community as a whole, being an integral part of it, or at least to their Arab communities. If Israeli Arabs want Israel to protect them in times of war, then they better first protect themselves. In a country where military service is mandatory, it must be mandatory for all [38,39]. It is a matter of loyalty that citizenship requires. This should be the case for Israeli Arabs, but also for Israeli orthodox Jews, who are exempted from military service because they study the Bible and pray to God. If we become all orthodox Jews and if we become all Arabs, then it will come as no surprise if the State is shortly defeated. But here a note shall be made: Is Israel really willing to absorb Israeli Arabs in the army!?

Finally, I believe that the question of the right to return for Arabs to the state of Israel must be resolved this way or the other, led by principles of fairness, proportionality, and reasonability. While the question of the right to return to the Palestinian territories is a matter of negotiation between the state of Israel and the Palestinian Authority, the query regarding the right to return to Haifa, Jaffa, and other nowadays Israeli cities must be concluded between the state of Israel and a representative body of Israeli Arabs and other Arabs in the Diaspora who argue to have rights over lands within the territorial integrity of the state of Israel. The outcome of such negotiations must be a compromise between acknowledging justice but also realism [40]⁹.

3. Outcomes of Reconciliation

To conclude, allow me to tell the following anecdote, and my apology in advance for its sexual nature: an Egyptian handsome gentleman meets a pretty American lady in Cairo; they drive to an isolated place near the Pyramids, and make love inside a fancy car. A policeman shows up, arrests them, and brings them before a police officer at the nearest police station, who decides, surprisingly, to release both of them, telling the handsome gentleman:

⁹*Consider*: The Reparations Agreement between Israel and West Germany (*Luxemburger Abkommen*), which was signed on 10/9/1952, and entered into force on 27/3/1953. According to the agreement, West Germany took on itself the obligation to pay reparations to the state of Israel for the damages caused to Jews during the Holocaust by the Nazi regime. Consider as well: Merih Anil, “No More Foreigners? The Re-making of German Naturalization and Citizenship Law, 1990-2000,” *Dialectical Anthropology* 29 (2005).

“Egypt is proud of you. For the first time, somebody puts Egypt on top and America down.” Then, all of sudden, the American lady broke her silence, saying: “No, I was on top.”

It is my view that there are more serious problems to resolve within Israel’s internal and external affairs. No one needs to be on top, and no one should be down. Ultimately, peace is a mutual interest for all sides, being the powerful one or the inferior side.

It is true that history is an important point of departure for every process, for he who has no past has no present and future. Yet, still is it also true that history is not an end in itself; but rather the end of the beginning. Reconciliation is a compelling interest for both sides of the conflict, being the powerful side as the subordinate one. Reconciliation does not imply forgetfulness, nor does it require forgiveness. Reconciliation demands admission, confession, willingness to reach a new beginning, and readiness to strike balances and to pursue that which is reasonable and proportionate.

In the course of revealing my beliefs in this paper, my brain led me one way, but my heart another; my national identity took me to one place, but my statehood identity to another; and my patriotism swayed me to one side, but my loyalty to another. I was torn between my national identity as an Arab and my citizenship identity as an Israeli. I was torn between my patriotism to the Arab nation and my loyalty to the state of Israel. I was also torn between Israel as a democracy and Israel as a Jewish state. I was torn between stories of Israel as a constitutional democracy and propaganda against Israel as a regime of depression and discrimination. I was further torn between my rights as an indigenous minority and my duties as a citizen. I was primarily torn between me and myself, between the brain and the heart.

Like a school of dolphins, most Israeli Arabs have lost their way deep in a stormy sea. One wave throws them up; another pushes them down to the bottom of the sea. They struggle day and night for their identity. They keep swimming in that stormy sea wishing for the sunny day to come, thus enjoying the glory of the sea; but the sea refuses to accept them, and the stormy waves insist to throw them out to the shore, where they get suffocated and find their death. And the school of dolphins refuses but to struggle against the waves. I have been a step-dolphin. I decided not to fight the waves, but rather to reconcile with them.

It has been said that when weapons speak, the muses fall silent.¹⁰ Nevertheless, it is my view that especially when the cannons roar, the brain must not stop function-

¹⁰A similar idea was expressed by Cicero, who said: *silent enim legis inter arma* (during war, the laws are silent).

ing. I am a proud Arab national. I am also a proud Israeli citizen. I praise the Arab nation for many things, and I compliment the state of Israel for many things as well. At the same time, I criticize the Arab nation for lots of things, and I criticize Israel for further lots of things.¹¹ In both cases, I do this as an insider but not as an outsider. I do this because I care about the Arab nation, exactly as I care about the state of Israel. This is my Nation, and the other is my State. I have no other nation but the Arab nation, and I have no other state but the state of Israel.

However, “we come to beginnings only at the end,”^[41] and “from small beginnings come great things.”¹² Yet, “there are some things which cannot be learned quickly, and time, which is all we have, must be paid heavily for their acquiring. They are the very simplest things.”^[42] You may still wonder who I am: *I am the future of the past generation, but the history for the next generation. I am willing to pass to the next generation a better history than the one I received. I have a dream; I have a vision; I am a dreamer of peace... and it is with hope and desire that dreams become true: May it be a better future for humanity.*

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¹¹I criticize Israel, for instance, for its inherent rejection to the idea of examining the criminal responsibility of members of its military forces for their possible guilt in violating basic rules and principles of the Rome Statute and other provision of the Geneva conventions, thus committing international crimes.

¹²American proverb, author unknown.

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