



Canadian Institute for Jewish Research  
Prof. Frederick Krantz, Director

## ISRANET DAILY BRIEFING

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### **YIZKOR: BARRY RUBIN, TRUE SCHOLAR & STAUNCH DEFENDER OF ISRAEL (1950-2014)**

*“Let us try to preserve as much as possible of the rapidly disappearing Jewish people. And if you want to boycott someone, why not start with those who insist on remaining our enemies and who would like to murder us?”*

—Barry Rubin, *Jerusalem Post*, Apr. 1, 2012

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### **HONORING A HEROIC JEWISH SCHOLAR: FOR BARRY RUBIN Z”L**

***Frederick Krantz***

Feb. 7, 2014

It is often thought, as the great German sociologist Max Weber put it in two influential essays, that politics as a vocation [*Beruf*, “calling”] and scholarship as a vocation were inimical, indeed antithetical. Scholarship, he thought, demanded an objectivity distorted by necessarily partisan power-political engagement; while politics, committed to transforming reality, required practical compromises in contradiction with truly dispassionate scholarship.

This tragic antinomy between thinking and doing is, rarely, overcome in the life and work of exceptional individuals. Barry Rubin, a truly outstanding contemporary student of Middle Eastern society and politics, was such a remarkable individual, whose life and work exemplify this overcoming. He was the rare academic able to maintain the highest standards of scholarship while engaging in a public discourse capable of playing a role in the realm of politics and power.

Barry recognized the key role true scholarship can play in the arena of public opinion as an analytic instrument in the political give-and-take of Israel's unending struggle against both Arab and Palestinian enmity, and the often-hypocritical stance of "the international community". His books and articles and teaching, his editorship of scholarly journals and chairing of research centers, and his media work, blogs and public appearances, trained generations of students and developed a remarkable, appreciative, and influential following.

In recent years, his often-caustic and sometimes parodically humorous eviscerations of American Middle Eastern and Israeli policy, and of the Obama Administration's obtuseness and dishonesty, in particular, were beacons of sanity in an increasingly irrational political, diplomatic and media universe.

Barry was, out of knowledge, a realist about the Middle East: the relative backwardness of the Arab-Muslim states was endemic, despite the efforts of Western leftists and "post-colonial" apologists to paper over their contradictions and airbrush the essential brutality of their dictatorial governments. The UN was a hopeless, and toothless, entity, whose muddled interventions usually served only to worsen matters; and anti-Semitism, far from disappearing after the Holocaust, had taken on renewed life in ever-changing left-, right-, and on-campus forms—not least of which the boycott and BDS movements, the hypocrisy of which Barry mercilessly exposed.

Israel, to which he had made *aliyah*, was, despite its own faults and mistakes and constant Arab and Muslim enmity nevertheless an admirable, embattled democracy. Embodying the great legacy of the historic Jewish people, it was well worth a principled and intellectually powerful defense, one indeed demanded by our own integrity as scholars and as Jews.

With the advent of the computer and internet, the ether abounds today with self-appointed commentators and pundits of all kinds, both independent and institutionally-related, all claiming remarkable insights and unique "points of view". Most of this self-servingly termed "first draft of history", uninformed by knowledge, is passing *Zeitgeschichte*, what Plato long ago called *opine*, mere uninformed, and transient, opinion.

Barry Rubin's work, however, is informed by a deep knowledge of history, politics, and language, of both Israel and the Arab world and of Western diplomacy in the region. Informed by a high scholarly standard, and by a drive to make such knowledge an instrument not only of understanding, but of politics in the deepest sense, it is the negation of such journalistic opinion, a scholarly *oeuvre* which will long endure.

It is my honor, and duty, to dedicate this issue of *CIJR's Isranet Briefing* to Barry—he fought for Israel down, almost literally, to his last breath, addressing the current "peace process" charade with all his waning strength and energy. He exemplified a rare, courageous and, I am afraid, declining breed, the engaged intellectual and, increasingly, the even more rare consciously Jewish and pro-Israel scholar. He bridged Weber's distinction, and in so doing both illuminated the field of Israel and Middle East studies, and defended the well-being of the Jewish State and People. He will be deeply missed: and we will not, I fear, see his likes soon again.

(Prof. Krantz is Director of the Canadian Institute for Jewish Research,  
and Editor of the Daily Isranet Briefing)

[Prof. Rubin authored and edited many books--three of which will be published posthumously--and hundreds of articles. The following is a selected bibliography of Prof. Rubin's books, his articles are available at the following [link](#) –ed.]

Rubin, Barry. *Nazis, Islamists, and the Making of the Modern Middle East*. (2014), *Israel: An Introduction*. (2012), *Lebanon: Liberation, Conflict, and Crisis*. (2010), *The Muslim Brotherhood: The Organization and Policies of a Global Islamist Movement* (2010), *The History of Islam*. (2009), *The Truth about Syria* (2007), *Hating America: A History*. (2005), *The Long War for Freedom: The Arab Struggle for Democracy in the Middle East* (2005), *Yasir Arafat: A Political Biography* (2005), *Anti-American Terrorism and the Middle East: A Documentary Reader* (2004), *The Tragedy of the Middle East*. (2004), *A Citizen's Guide to Politics in America: How the System Works & How to Work the System* (2000), *Dedicate and Celebrate! A Messianic Jewish Guide to Hanukkah* (1999), *The Sabbath: Entering God's Rest* (1998), *You Bring the Bagels, I'll Bring the Gospel: Sharing the Messiah With Your Jewish Neighbor* (1997), *Revolution Until Victory?: The Politics and History of the PLO* (1996), *Assimilation and Its Discontents* (1995), *Istanbul Intrigues/a True-Life Casablanca* (1989), *Paved with Good Intentions: The American Experience in Iran* (1981), Rubin, Barry & Walter Laqueur (eds.). *The Israel-Arab Reader: A Documentary History of the Middle East Conflict, 7th Edition* (2008)

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## THE HOPELESSNESS OF VICTORY

*Barry Rubin*

[Jerusalem Post](#), Jan. 19, 2014

*“So, let me just say, it went bad for us over there, but that was our job. That’s what we did. We didn’t complain about it.”*

– Former Navy SEAL Marcus Luttrell

US President Barack Obama’s administration is engaging in over a dozen failed operations in the Middle East, and reason shows just why they’re failing: The Islamist philosophy is totally different from theirs. The Islamists are indifferent to the cost of victory. Clearly, the Obama administration does not understand Middle Eastern regimes and terrorist organizations, and if it doesn’t remedy this, it will continue to meet miserable defeats.

Luttrell, on the other hand, does understand the mindset of the terrorists, and how to bring victory – at least as close an approximation as there can be to victory – to the Middle East. “Hopelessness really never came into it,” Luttrell said, “... [b]ecause there was never a point where we just felt like we were hopelessly lost or anything like that. We never gave up. We never felt like we were losing until we were actually dead.” Moreover, the Obama administration’s goals have not been consistent. If you can’t depend on someone for consistency in times of trouble, you can’t depend on them at all. The US has become an untrustworthy ally, as many Middle Eastern regimes can attest to.

Let’s look at how Egypt has played its cards over the past three years. You could say, as probably a Western statesman like Vice President Joe Biden would, that the Muslim Brotherhood “couldn’t win.” But they don’t need to – all they need to do is block others’ victories. If the Brotherhood, or al-Qaida for that matter, never gives up, they deny the enemy victory. That is a strategy for triumph. After having published an article on the Brotherhood in which I generally analyzed their situation, I received a very nice critique from Egypt’s chief Brotherhood magazine, which completely understood my argument and yet concluded from it that the Brotherhood’s strategy was correct. They understand us better than we understand them. If they never

despair, and spend as much blood and treasure as it takes, Allah – in addition to other measures – will give them victory.

What Obama and his administration do not understand about the Middle East is that in this part of the world, he who wins is he who compromises less, not he who compromises more. This principle is the same everywhere in the Middle East. Iran is willing to risk negotiations falling apart, as is Hamid Karzai's government in Afghanistan – thus, in Middle Eastern terms, they win. Politics in the Middle East is like a game of chicken, not a game of bridge. A new story has just emerged in Tunisia: the government fell apart due to the army's pressure. That was the quiet end of Tunisia's democratic dream. And, in fact, all true Arab, Turkish and Iranian democracies have fallen apart. The same has been true of the Iraqi democratic dream. Iran, not the US, is the country that has played the game well there.

In another example, the West thinks the Syrian political opposition, politicians and terrorists actually care how many people die, when in fact they are all willing to sacrifice millions. The West simply cannot understand that these people are fighting for different stakes, and persists in the delusion that materialistic considerations and pragmatism determine their decision-making. Yet everybody who knows the Middle East knows the problem is that you need to think the Middle Eastern way, not the Western way. Or perhaps to cite another Western leader, "You come with a rock, we come with a knife. You come with a knife, we come with a gun." The closest thing in American politics to Middle East politics is that of Chicago or Boston, with its bridges and outlets.

No extent of compromise is going to cause radical nationalists and Islamists to make real peace. Yes, Islamists can be and are often pragmatic, particularly in order to obtain millions of dollars of trade and nuclear weapons. But that is only if they not required to give much in return. Here's an anecdote. A Western intelligence agent was interviewing captured Afghan terrorists. He asked, reasonably, "Why did you come here?" They responded: "To kill you" – and attacked him with a knife. Several people in the camp were killed. If you don't know why the Muslim Brotherhood will not make peace with Arab regimes, you cannot understand the Middle East.

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## **GROWING ANTISEMITISM AND ANTI-JEWISH HATRED IN THE NETHERLANDS**

*Barry Rubin*

*Gloria Center*, Dec. 12, 2013

The most popular manual on how to raise one's children as proper Muslims published in the Netherlands, in Dutch, includes virulently antisemitic passages, based on Muslim holy texts. After the Jewish community objected to its publication, the authorities forced the publisher to put white tape over the offending passages. The tape, however, could easily be peeled off by purchasers so that these words could be read.

In another incident, a Turkish-Dutch researcher publicized systematic antisemitism among other Muslims in the Netherlands, including a dramatic video that showed teenage boys calling for genocide and praising Hitler. The researcher, Mehmet Sahin, had to go into hiding after being accused by others of being a Jew and a Zionist. This is the pattern of growing antisemitism in Western Europe. The European Union, governments, and the media paste a white tape over the problem to conceal it or pretend to do something about it, but when one peels back the tape, the hatred is revealed as growing and being passed onto the next generation.

In addition, another study in the Flanders region of Belgium—initiated by that country's government—concluded that while only 10 percent of young non-Muslims are antisemitic, 45 to 50 percent of Muslims

are. In fact, that latter number has been interpreted down from 70 percent. While one doesn't want to exaggerate rising antisemitism in Europe—mostly from Muslim immigrants and their children, but facilitated and even reflected by the increasingly intellectually hegemonic left—the growth of anti-Jewish hatred is enormous. Some people view this as fear-mongering, pointing to other developments that show the glass to be half full. Indeed, the hostility of European governments toward Israel has often been exaggerated. The situation is actually better than it was 20 or 30 years ago.

Yet the broader question is one of social trends and the behavior of institutions, especially the mass media and universities, which are generally becoming not just critical but viciously so of Israel and periodically Jews in general. In the case of the Netherlands, a mild-mannered country that prides itself on moderation in all things, the country was traditionally friendly to Israel. While it has always had its antisemites and even—historically—fascists, it had far less proportionately than other European countries. In other words, if things are bad in the Netherlands, they are really bad.

In 2012, in a published interview with the chief rabbi of the Netherlands, he spoke extensively about his love for the country, the good treatment of Jews there, and other such points. Asked at the end, however, whether there was any future for Jews in the country, he replied, “No,” and advised the community to move to Israel. This does not mean the Netherlands is a maelstrom of antisemitism. It isn't, but there is a growing antisemitic sector consisting of two parts: Muslim immigrants and their offspring as well as the far left that is so often dominant in the Netherlands—as in other Western countries.

The Dutch government, unlike others in Europe, has defined Hizballah as a terrorist group, and while less favorable to Israel than its predecessor remains on good terms with Israel. Yet shocking slanders appear about Israel in the mainstream Dutch media. To cite just one example, on March 17, 2010, *NRC Handelsblad*, Holland's most prestigious newspaper, published a front-page article claiming the “Israel lobby” was threatening to defeat President Barack Obama's health plan to blackmail him regarding his Israel policy. While statements on other matters by Israel's government are evaluated in a cynical way, the basis for this story was a single left-wing blogger.

Yet at the same time, the country's leading researcher on radical Islamists, Professor Edwin Bakker of Leiden University, warns that the number of jihadists is growing so quickly that government security services cannot keep track of them. An observer who wishes to avoid exaggerating the problem also warns about: “A rising tide of antisemitism that the top level is unwilling to address out of a fear of being labeled a racist or out of a fear of losing the all-important Muslim vote,” which is vital for the left in elections. There is no effective opposition in the political sphere. The center dithers; some on the right speak out but do nothing effective.

A Dutch person involved in intercommunal work adds, “I know many upstanding young Muslims who are as appalled by antisemitism” and these voices should not be forgotten. It should also be remembered that there have been attacks on mosques over the years. In contrast, though, a moderate left politician described in great detail how her family was forced to leave their neighborhood by verbal and at times violent harassment by Muslim youths there.

The issue, then, is not just coming from Middle Eastern politics but also the tensions within Dutch society and how Muslim immigrants and their children interpret their problems. Endlessly told that the Jews are their enemy and that they control society in some way, it is easy to conclude that the Jews might also be behind the harassment or discrimination Muslims face, absurd as this is on a factual level and in countries where the Jewish population is tiny. Here is how one observer recounted this issue: As a journalist I roamed the streets around high schools in Amsterdam the day after 9/11 to catch the “sound of the streets.” I was totally unprepared for all the antisemitic remarks uttered by [Muslim] boys of 11 to 16 years. Later I spoke

with teachers who told me this was an ongoing thing...

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## FRIENDS OF ISRAEL MUST SPEAK UP NOW

**Isi Leibler**

[Jerusalem Post](#), Feb. 5, 2014

US Secretary of State John Kerry no longer pretends to be even-handed in overseeing the negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. His most recent move was to indirectly threaten Israel with boycotts if it refuses to accede to additional demands on issues of borders and security. Despite the fact that he represents our closest ally, Kerry is demanding compromises from us that could impact on our very survival. Defense Minister Moshe Ya'alon rightly responded that a European boycott is preferable to rocket attacks on Ben-Gurion Airport.

Kerry has put no comparable pressure on the Palestinians. He has not insisted that they deviate from positions that he knows are unacceptable to any Israeli government. He has failed to even publicly condemn their ongoing incitement. By selectively pointing the gun at Israel's head, Kerry has reinforced the belief that the Palestinians can only benefit by remaining intransigent. Although Kerry is aware that Congress and the American public would vigorously oppose any initiative that threatened Israel with sanctions, this has not prevented him from encouraging European countries, including Germany, to do so. Kerry is capitalizing on European anti-Israelism, which is proliferating at an alarming rate, as demonstrated by a recent opinion poll indicating that nearly half the citizens of the EU believe that Israel is engaged in a genocidal campaign against the Palestinians. Incredibly, in a recent communiqué about International Holocaust Commemoration Day, EU foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton could not even bring herself to mention the Jews.

Israel's political leaders are contributing to this situation. President Shimon Peres told the Americans that the Palestinians need not concede to Israel's central demand for recognition as a Jewish state – one of the government's crucial demands which the Obama administration had already taken on board. Such behavior by a president does not merely represent a major breach of his constitutional limitations but under the circumstances can only be considered unconscionable. Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu and Economy and Trade Minister Naftali Bennet provided a bonanza for global anti-Israel entities seeking to portray Israel as the obstacle to peace by publicly bickering over whether Israelis could live under Palestinian jurisdiction – a currently utterly unrealistic scenario. Finance Minister Yair Lapid and Justice Minister Tzipi Livni have both made histrionic remarks about the potential economic impact of a European boycott should the peace talks fail, providing grist for the mills of the global BDS movement's propaganda.

A group of leading Israeli businessmen, purporting to promote a non-partisan two-state policy together with Palestinian counterparts via a body called "Breaking the Impasse" also engaged in actions to weaken Israel's negotiating position. While attending the Davos World Economic Forum, they distributed a petition calling for one-sided demands on Netanyahu to be flexible and accommodating to the Palestinians and warning of devastating repercussions to the Israeli economy if peace negotiations fail. Like the panic-stricken politicians, these businesspeople are chanting empty mantras about the value of peace that cynically imply government warmongering and contribute nothing to the real challenge of negotiating a peace accord: how to come to an understanding with duplicitous partners who rule over a criminal society and are committed to the elimination of Jewish sovereignty.

[To Read the Full Article Click the Following [Link](#) –ed.]

**CIJR wishes all its friends and supporters Shabbat Shalom!**

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## ON TOPIC

[How the PLO 'Adapted' Antisemitism as 'Anti-Zionism \(Video\)](#): Barry Rubin, *ISGAP*, Oct. 15, 2009

[Barry Rubin at the Canadian Institute for Jewish Research Gala \(Video\)](#): Barry Rubin, *Youtube*, Mar. 19, 2013

[Time to Wake Up](#): Barry Rubin, *Jerusalem Post*, Dec. 29, 2013—In the spring of 2000, I was friendly with a nice man, the father of my son's friend.

[Revolutionary Salafi Islamists in Egypt: An Analysis and Guide](#): Barry Rubin, *Gloria Center*, Aug. 3, 2013— The overthrow of the Mubarak regime in Egypt in February 2011 unleashed Islamist forces there to the point that the Muslim Brotherhood took over the presidency, parliament, and writing of the new constitution within the next 18 months.

[Jewish, Israeli, Liberal and Cynical in 2012](#): Barry Rubin, *Jerusalem Post*, Apr. 1, 2012— While you probably know what I'm about to write, it is useful to reinforce and pull together the pieces of reality we face.