

Daniel Pipes on what Israel should do next

By Neville Teller

DANIEL PIPES has a clear-eyed view of the world. There is no equivocation in his new book *Israel Victory*, and very little uncertainty. He analyses the component elements of the historic and intractable Jewish-Arab dispute and its transformation over time, identifies the successes and past failures of Israel's governments, its military and security establishments, and assesses the nation's current circumstances. The very process of doing so, avoiding ambiguity and ambivalence in Pipes's characteristic fashion, finally brings to light the logical way to break the persistent Israeli-Palestinian logjam – the way, to quote from his subtitle, for Zionists finally to win acceptance, and the Palestinians to unshackle themselves from the chains of rejectionism that have thwarted their development for decades.

To state it starkly, Pipes believes that today, as in 1948, 1956, 1967 and 1972/3, Israel is in a struggle for its very existence. The vital difference between then and now, he asserts, is that the nation has psychologically lost the will to defeat its enemies. He quotes Naveh Dromi of the Middle East Forum, who has written that victory had been the IDF's goal until that was replaced by a reliance "on diplomacy, negotiations and compromise. Even Israel's constant battles on its northern and southern borders, against Hezbollah and Hamas respectively, were fought more in line with the diplomatic clock than any military strategy."

Fighting by the clock, says Pipes, became especially evident after October 7, when the US government demanded a timetable for the ending of hostilities. Pipes does point out that after October 7 prime minister Benjamin

Netanyahu never abandoned his call for "total victory", quite reversing the impression he obtained in his meeting with the prime minister in 2017, which was that Netanyahu talked the talk, but would never walk the walk.

Pipes maintains that conciliation, always deeply embedded in Zionist philosophy, has been the dominant factor in Israeli political action for many years despite the proof, time and again, that it never produces a positive outcome. Nor have Israel's equally weak-kneed and continuous efforts to placate the enemy.

For example he believes the Oslo Accords have had the opposite effect

of what was dreamed of by then-US President Bill Clinton and Israeli prime minister, Yitzhak Rabin. By creating areas in the West Bank where Palestinians live under Israeli military occupation, it has inflamed Palestinian hostility. Moreover, he demonstrates that Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, speaking to his Arab audience, declared that he never intended the Oslo agreements to be anything but a stepping stone to the eventual elimination of Israel – words that never registered, or were studiously ignored, by the West.

Pipes believes that during this continuing lacuna of self-confidence within the security establishment, there is a real danger that the forces ranged against Israel – the left-wing anti-Israel consensus dominating the western world; the administrative and judicial organs of the United Nations, subservient as they are to the anti-Israel forces monopolizing it – could indeed finally succeed in delegitimizing the nation.

Pipes devotes a fair section of his book to discussing the purpose of warfare and the na-

ture of victory. Quoting a variety of military experts going back to the Chinese Sun Tzu in about 350 BCE, he concludes that war is a contest of wills, and that victory requires the psychological collapse of the enemy. He demonstrates how the West has muddied this age-old wisdom by a growing equivocation about the purpose of war and the meaning of victory.

Pipes quotes Israeli economist Robert Auman, who has written that Israel must repeatedly fight for its existence because it "has never been allowed to end war by decisively defeating its enemy, crushing its will and forcing it forever to abandon the idea of destroying Israel."

In the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, Pipes maintains, Palestinians were never part of the Western ambivalence about victory while Israelis, integrated into the West, lost their way. This intellectual background helps explain what he calls "the stunning range of Israeli errors that culminated in the disaster of the Oslo Accords; it also points to the way ahead, namely the return to victory."

So Pipes asserts that Israel simply must reacquire its will to win, and set as its essential goal victory over its enemies. He devotes the latter part of the book to analysing and reinterpreting the essence of the Israel-Palestinian conflict. In doing so, he perceives the real possibility of Israeli victory over the rejectionist forces of the Palestinian leadership, already weakened, he believes, by the Abraham Accords agreements between Arab states and Israel. Such an outcome, he believes, would represent a genuine win-win situation for both Israel and the Palestinians.

Israel Victory is a no-holds-barred, clear-sighted analysis of the historic predicament facing Israel, which leads, inexorably, to what seems an obvious conclusion – the action that Israel must take to resolve the dilemma. Crystal clear in its reasoning and conclusion, this is a book demanding to be read by anyone concerned about Israel and its future. ■



Israel Victory: How Zionists win acceptance and Palestinians get liberated

Daniel Pipes

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Daniel Pipes on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem.