

A Dangerous Club To Be Part Of

Contributed by Moshe Kempinski

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President Obama seems to be trying to do it, unwittingly. He is precariously close to entering a prestigious and historic club of world leaders.

In our shop ,in the old city of Jerusalem, we have a shirt designed by Jerusalem historian Ken Spiro called the Nations. It is essentially a graph that is titled;

"Civilizations, nations and empires that have tried to destroy the Jewish people. Underneath are a list of nations and next to each nation, its status.

Ancient Egypt-gone, Philistines-gone, Babylon-gone. The Greeks, the Romans , the Byzantines, the Crusaders, the Nazis and the Soviet Union, all gone.

The last entry is Iran ..followed by three question marks.

Underneath, the text reads the following;

The Jewish People, the smallest of nations but with a Friend in the highest of places...So Be Nice

We are in the midst of a difficult time in Jewish history. In the Hellenistic mindset that has defined most of western thinking for over two thousand years, "Time" is viewed as a linear line moving from point a to point b.

The Jewish and Biblical view of the world, views specific dates and appointed times as gates through which time flows through in a cyclical and upward spiral fashion. Therefore the Passover season is not only a commemoration of the liberation that once was but it is rather a time that is ripe for renewed liberation from all the slavery and imprisonments that still confine us. Sukkoth is not only a commemoration of wandering through the desert for forty years and living in booths but is rather a time that is ripe to strengthen our faith and belief in a G-d that is intimately involved in our lives.

Therefore a time wherein Jerusalem has been attacked ravaged and threatened for generations is one of those appointed times. Yet all those that wittingly or unwittingly used the hidden power of such a time to victimize the city of Jerusalem quickly lost power and control.

Last year, when campaigning for the presidency, Barack Obama called for Jerusalem to remain the undivided capital of Israel. The next day, he retracted that statement, but then insisted that the issue of Jerusalem was one for final status talks between Israel and the PA. Now, however, he is not even adhering to that watered-down position: instead, he is weighing in on the matter on behalf of the racist Palestinian demand that Jews be barred from moving into a section of Jerusalem that the PA has decided it wants to retain for itself and ensure that it be free of Jews.

In response Prime Minister Netanyahu said, "I would like to re-emphasize that the united Jerusalem is the capital of the Jewish people and of the State of Israel. Our sovereignty over it cannot be challenged; this means – inter alia – that residents of Jerusalem may purchase apartments in all parts of the city. This has been the policy of all Israeli governments and I would like to say that it is indeed being implemented because in recent years hundreds of apartments in Jewish neighborhoods and in the western part of the city have been purchased by – or rented to – Arab residents and we did not interfere. This says that there is no ban on Arabs buying apartments in the western part of the city and there is no ban on Jews buying or building apartments in the eastern part of the city. This is the policy of an open city, an undivided city that has no separation according to religion or national affiliation. We cannot accept the idea that Jews will not have the right to live and purchase in all parts of Jerusalem. I can only describe to myself what would happen if someone would propose that Jews could not live in certain neighborhoods in New York, London, Paris or Rome. There would certainly be a major international outcry. Accordingly, we cannot agree to such a decree in Jerusalem. This has been the policy of Israeli governments over the years and it is also the policy of our Government" (‘PM Netanyahu's Remarks at the Start of the Weekly Cabinet Meeting,’ Prime Minister’s Office [Jerusalem], July 19, 2009).

This is all occurring during this difficult spiritual period in our people's journey into destiny.

Yet an Eternal people have no fear of the long voyage.

President Obama can choose to join the club so dramatically portrayed on the T-Shirt or he can join the truly prestigious club of King Cyrus, Lord Balfour and President Truman.

It is his call.