

## An Early Test

Yasser Arafat's death makes it possible for the Palestinians to choose peace. It also makes it possible for them to re-package and continue their existing policy – misleadingly named 'the peace process' – of ensuring that the murder of Jews remains institutionalised and legitimised by the international community.

To ascertain (and also to influence) which of these options the Palestinian body politic is going to choose, it is essential that any agreement with them be conditional on early progress on certain issues, most importantly the disarming and disbanding of terrorist organisations and the introduction of a liberal-democratic system of government. All concessions to them, not only by the Israelis but by the Americans too (except possibly for purely symbolic negotiations), should follow, not precede, their compliance with these conditions.

Whether the new Bush Administration sees it that way will itself be an early test of whether they are serious about achieving peace in the Middle East, and indeed about winning the war on terror.

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## peace possible?

Yasser Arafat's death makes it *easier* for the Palestinians to choose peace. They could have chosen peace already. Is it significantly easier now? I'm not convinced.

-- Elliot Temple

<http://www.curi.us/>

by [Elliot Temple](#) on Mon, 11/15/2004 - 03:10 | [reply](#)

## Difficult condition to achieve

I might be too pessimistic but...

Taking into account the fact that it is next door to impossible for "Palestinian leaders" whoever they are now to stop violence against Israelis we have to come to terms with the fact that the violence will not stop and the preliminary condition for peace talks is just the

way to stop any peace talks in general. In a similar way "right to

return" is just a way of refusing to negotiate at all from the Palestinian side. So, it is pointless to ask for that on both sides. On the other hand it absolutely pointless to negotiate in such situation. Having the other side saying in arabic "we don't want peace with Israel at all, we want only better position to attack them" makes all "reasonable attempt to save lives" a waist of time. The only choice in this situation should be to either separate from Palestinians or re-occupy them. The last option has already been tried on (after 1967) and failed. Having the only possible choice of separating completely we need to forget about peace talks, preliminary conditions etc. It only contributes towards unfulfilled child dreams and provoked public opinion which always favors peace talks. Let's be realistic.

by a reader on Mon, 11/22/2004 - 11:25 | [reply](#)

## **Re: Difficult condition to achieve**

We think that is indeed too pessimistic.

We agree with **Natan Sharansky** that genuine democracy is an attainable goal for all the peoples of the world.

by **Editor** on Tue, 11/23/2004 - 18:28 | [reply](#)