

September 9, 2024 Updated Version

White Paper: The Non-Zero-Sum Solution to the Palestine Crisis

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Expanded from Guest Editorials in the Philippine Star (the country's leading daily newspaper).

Part 1 <https://www.philstar.com/opinion/2024/02/17/2333964/only-remaining-possible-solution-palestine-problem> and

Part 2: <https://www.philstar.com/opinion/2024/02/18/2334133/only-remaining-possible-solution-palestine-problem>

Complete Set of YouTube Videos Paralleling this White Paper:

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Part 1 of 4: The Non-Zero-Sum Solution to the Palestine Crisis: Prisoners of Their Expertise

Given the ongoing turmoil in Palestine, almost all countries on earth now support The *Two-States-Side-by-Side Solution*.

All of them are wrong.

STATESPERSONS advised by *EXPERTS* started the Palestine Problem over a hundred years ago. For 75 years *STATESPERSONS* and *EXPERTS* have tried to solve it, and have failed miserably. The manifold reasons for failure can be encapsulated in one thought: each side has measured the attractiveness of a deal not in terms of how much benefit they respectively got, but in terms of how much pain and inconvenience they could impose on the *other* side. They view the Palestine situation as a Zero-Sum Game.

Now let an outsider point out the obvious Non-Zero-Sum Solution, that doesn't seem to have even been considered by the experts.

But first, a little history.

The Jewish people inhabited Palestine since before 1200 BCE. ("Palestine" is derived from "Philistines", who were probably Greek, unrelated to the Palestinian Arabs of today.) Following a failed revolt against the Roman Empire, by around 100 C.E. the Jews almost all abandoned the region but preserved their culture in widely-scattered communities.

Around 1500, Palestine and adjacent regions, now occupied by Arabs, were subjugated by the Ottoman Empire. Then, during the First World War, the British promised various Arab factions, as well as the Palestinians, independence if they would support the Allies against the Ottomans.

Those deals directly gave rise to most of the oil-rich Arab states or regimes of today, a point which we will return to later. In the case of the Palestinians, however, the British never intended to honor this promise. Under the 1922 Palestine Mandate after World War I, with financial backing by wealthy Jewish interests in the UK, they began a long-term project to bring in Jewish immigrants and eventually establish a separate Jewish state in Palestine.

Almost exactly the same time in 1922, the British government was also busy figuring out how to give most of Ireland independence, while carving out six Pro-English counties to keep as Northern Ireland. This was their version of a "Two States Side-by-Side Solution." (Thence the cumbersome official name, "The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland".) That led to 80 years of guerrilla warfare in Ireland, mass incarcerations and executions, terrorist bombings, and political animosity up to today — thereby proving conclusively that whoever was in charge in Britain around 1922, they and their experts were very, very stupid.

The movement for a Jewish homeland had arisen in the 19th Century and was called Zionism. It drew support from influential people and governments for reasons ranging from the sincere "Jews should have a homeland" to the strategic "Give the Arabs something to worry about", to the sneaky "We don't want them either, let's send them somewhere else".

The Arabs could see where this was heading — the dismemberment of Palestine. For 30 years after World War I the entire Arab world resisted the Zionist movement. But in 1947, with many countries feeling guilty or sorry about the Jewish Holocaust, Presto! Israel was born, and given roughly half the land area of Palestine.

This was a Huge Injustice to the Palestinians, and (as proven by the past 75 years) a Very Grave Mistake from the viewpoint of world peace.

The remaining Palestinian share of Palestine was casually gerrymandered in unconnected halves and quarters. Today, Palestinians are crowded into just the Gaza Strip (365 square kilometers), run by Hamas, an Iran-backed terrorist group not especially popular even among Palestinians; and the unconnected West Bank (5800 sqk), effectively run by Israel. Israel now has 22,000 sqk, plus the West Bank plus about 1000 sqk in the Golan Heights, both seized in the 1967 Six-Day War and occupied ever since. (30,000 sqk total area for Palestine makes it about the size of Taiwan.) Flouting international law, Israel has encouraged settlement in both areas.

On October 7, 2023 Hamas conducted a Raid that killed or took hostage almost 1500 innocent Israelis. This was horrifying and inexcusable. But the original dispossession of the Palestinians in 1947-48 was also inexcusable, as is Israel's punitive war that has already destroyed over half of Gaza and killed some 40,000 people, mostly civilians. EVERYONE is at fault.

Apparently unable to learn from history, most world leaders are seeking a truce based on the so-called Two-State Solution, the creation of an independent Palestinian nation within Palestine, side-by-side with Israel.

Translation: Give the Palestinians yet another false promise. Slice up Palestine AGAIN, by convincing Israel to cede territory it currently controls, for the purpose of creating a hostile sovereign state right beside it.

This is just a re-tread of past peace plans, which asked both sides to make major concessions against their self-interest. As a "plan", it hardly even merits the term, since no one can identify a piece of Palestine that the Israelis would be willing to give up, that an economically viable Palestinian nation

could be built on. Gaza alone? — a wasteland that no foreign lender or investor would support. Gaza and the West Bank? — ungovernable and in any case politically unlikely considering the half million Jews now occupying the West Bank.

It should be obvious to anyone who can read maps or Benjamin Netanyahu's lips that, especially after the October 2023 Raid, Israel now perceives a need to control all of Palestine, "from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea." Curiously, Palestinians have exactly the same slogan.

Israel might pause to negotiate for hostages or let world opinion cool down, but its long-term goal is crystal-clear, and that goal excludes the Two-State Solution as currently understood by world leaders.

As for the Palestinians, there is no reasonable chunk of Palestine where they can have a self-sustaining economy. This was true in 1947, and it is even more true today. Pre-Hamas-Raid, the Palestine economy consisted largely of foreign grants. Palestine has no mineral resources. There is practically no rainfall in the West Bank, and no way to impound rainfall in Gaza, whose coastal aquifer is badly deteriorated and polluted. That rules out agriculture. (By the way, for all its breast-beating about making the desert bloom, Israel only ekes out 1% of its GDP from agriculture.)

Result? No matter how Palestine was re-sliced territorially, a large part of a supposed sovereign Palestine's population would wind up unemployed or performing menial jobs for next-door Israel. The state would be "independent" but substantially dependent on continuous foreign aid and an inferior-client relationship with Israel.

Sovereignty without self-respect is a sham.

It should also be obvious that with some 40,000 Palestinians killed and about 100,000 more injured or permanently maimed in the Israeli military response since October 7, a larger corps of Israel-haters is inevitably arising. Do we think Israel doesn't understand that? Then why do so many world leaders

urge Israel to accept a "solution" whose essence is to set up a now-much-more hostile state immediately adjacent, which Iran and Hamas could then re-arm for the next round of massacres?

Under the current paradigms, there is no Long-Term Peace possible. There may be temporary or even lengthy cease-fires, but the War will continue indefinitely, until one side is simply eliminated.

Part 2 of 4: The Non-Zero-Sum Solution to the Palestine Crisis: The Real Art of the Deal

Any Two-States-Side-by-Side Solution is a Non-Starter for more tangible reasons than mutual hatred and Jewish strategic preferences. Palestine is topographically an unpromising candidate for political subdivision. Though it slopes down toward the Dead Sea, the region consists of mostly flattish desert with no forest cover, and has no internal natural boundaries or military choke-points that could justify or define a secure, defensible territory carved out from within it.

STATESPERSONS advised by EXPERTS started the Palestine Problem over a hundred years ago, and for 75 years STATESPERSONS and EXPERTS have tried to solve it, but have failed miserably. That's because they view Palestine as a Zero-Sum Game, and are now mental prisoners of their expertise.

Once the Very Grave Mistake of dispossessing the Palestinians in 1947-48 was committed, the succeeding history has proven conclusively the foolishness of hoping that Palestinians and Israelis could happily share adjacent territory. Yet this is the "Solution" being flogged by countries such as the US, Russia, the UK, France, Canada, Germany, China, Singapore, Argentina, Nigeria, Indonesia, Australia, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Mexico, most of the Arab countries — in fact almost every country on earth of whatever ideology or political persuasion.

EVERYONE refuses to see the obvious. Now let an outsider point out the obvious.

The Obvious Non-Zero-Sum Solution is not TWO-STATES-SIDE-BY-SIDE.

It is TWO-STATES-BUT-FAR-APART.

Two. States. But. Far. Apart.

One side must move. This is not an ideal solution morally, but it is the only solution now available.

The Palestinians inhabited Palestine for 2000 years and if anything have better territorial right than the Jews, whose claim was 2000 years stale-dated by 1947-48. However, the fact is that the Israelis won't leave, and there is no conceivable inducement by which the world could persuade them to do so.

Therefore, however unfair or unjust, it will have to be the Palestinians who move, who behave as the adults in the room. This is not a proposal for a forced ethnic relocation (as the US imposed on many Native Americans in the 19th Century, and as Canada did — for all its holier-than-thou posturing — with its indigenous citizens, as recently as 1967 (!)). (See https://www.learnalberta.ca/content/aswt/healing_historical_trauma/documents/relocation_of_aboriginal_communities.pdf.) Rather, it is a chance, for those who want it, to build a new life in peace somewhere else. If offered good-enough inducements, enough Palestinians might conclude that in their own self-interest they should move.

A sovereign New Palestine can be established. Just not in the old Palestine.

Obviously there are enormous financial, logistical, and emotional hurdles in moving large numbers of people and building a New Palestine somewhere else. But this would still be more feasible than building a new Palestinian state amidst the rubble (— who would provide funds for that proposition?), while 2 million Palestinians (if they are lucky) live in tent cities in Gaza for decades into the foreseeable future, and 3 million other Palestinians live in the increasingly-contentious West Bank. All would remain under constant threat from not just Israel but also Iran-funded Hamas, whose aim is not to serve the Palestinian people, but to keep making trouble.

Here are some of the relevant considerations for a Two-States-Far-Apart Solution:

1. Whatever practical problems are foreseen with a New Palestine Somewhere Else, the same or worse problems apply to a Palestine Rebuilt Amidst the Rubble.
2. Just as some people initially resist moving out of a hurricane's path, some Palestinians will not want to move. But that's okay.
3. Fortunately, majority Palestinian agreement isn't required, any more than it was necessary that a majority of the world's Jews move to Israel in 1948, or that they even be consulted. Israel was a case of "If we build it, they will come", and so is New Palestine. A few hundred thousands are enough for an economically and politically viable state. Iceland has a reasonably self-sustaining economy with 350,000 people. Israel declared independence in 1948 with 850,000 Jewish inhabitants. Today, there may be enough Palestinians tired of war and willing to try something else. Others will follow eventually.
4. No Peace Plan can come from or hinge on the US or anyone else in the West. Arab pride won't allow it.
5. Therefore, the initiative and the wherewithal for a Two-States-But-Far-Apart Solution must come from the Arab world. Ideally, one country would step forward and take charge.
6. Luckily, the oil-wealthy Arab states collectively have US\$ 4 Trillion in accumulated oil wealth, and a proven willingness to spend some of that wealth to enhance their prestige and influence.
7. Various Arab-ethnic countries have land they don't use or at any rate could easily spare.
8. In varying degrees, those countries could use some money.

As I learned as a banker peddling custom-made derivatives, there's nothing like a little healthy competition and Fear of Missing Out to arouse the deal-making urges of the most recalcitrant seller.

Let's make a deal.

Let's make a deal that's based not just on political wishful thinking, but on human nature, financial realities, self-interest, development economics, and the various arts of bargaining and persuasion.

More specifically, let's have a kind of auction.

Part 3 of 4: The Non-Zero-Sum Solution to the Palestine Crisis: If We Build It, They Will Come

Unlike previous Peace Plans from Kissinger to Kushner, the Two-States-But-Far-Apart Plan does not ask various parties to make major concessions against their self-interest, but instead maximizes everyone's benefit, while limiting or at least isolating each party's perceived costs and concessions.

The "Art of the Deal" does not, as certain theorists believe, consist of extracting maximum concessions from the other side. It consists of identifying the benefits that your side values most, and finding how to achieve those objectives through concessions that the other side values least.

At this point in time, what does Israel probably think it most needs? *Secure borders that can't be tunneled under.*

What does the typical Palestinian stuck in Gaza or the West Bank most want? Surely it is not *An Independent Country Right Beside Israel So That the War Can Continue*. After Survival, most Palestinians probably simply want what most of us want — a Chance to Live in Dignity and Security, with Hope for the Future.

What do most of the Arab countries want? They want to put a permanent end to the Palestine Problem and the now-75-years-running War before it jeopardizes their economic interests; they want to derail Iran's ambition to lead the Islamic world; and they want to enhance their stature on the world stage.

Finally, what do the US and the other Western Powers want? This is more complex, but they are all finding that while officially their countries are aligned with Israel, large portions of their electorates sympathize with the Palestinians in Gaza and believe Israel's War immoral or even genocidal. Vietnam War protests toppled a US President. Worsening Palestine War protests could topple administrations

from Washington to Warsaw. Therefore the Western Powers need a quick end to the War, not just any truce, but a long-term solution that gives all sides a clear win, and that satisfies pro-Israel as well as pro-Palestinian voters.

Have I got a deal for all four of you.

Plan A. Saudi Arabia allocates 10,000 sqk, 0.5% of its 2,150,000 sqk, plus substantial development money, to establish a sovereign New Palestine. Saudi Arabia's Red Sea coastline is 1800 kilometers long; a 200 kilometer (coastline) x 50 kilometer (inland) parcel would hardly be noticed. (Gaza's coastline is 40 km; the West Bank is landlocked, and the Jordan River is just a stream in a long gully.) 5 million Palestinians into 10,000 sqk gives 500/sqk population density, similar to Israel's, ten times better than Gaza's 5500/sqk.

Whatever amount Saudi Arabia contributes directly for infrastructure and development, once a sovereign New Palestine becomes a reasonable certainty, others will rush to fund further development — other oil-rich Arab states, Brunei, Japan, China, Singapore, the EU.

Plan A would earn Saudi Arabia more world prestige and influence than all its sports-related schemes and Cities of Tomorrow in the sand. The Palestine Problem would be solved cheaply, easily.

But suppose the Saudis simply won't yield territory?

Plan B is more expensive, but still easily affordable: **Egypt**. With or without Saudi Arabia, other oil-wealthy Arab states buy 10,000 sqk (1% of Egypt's area), then provide funds for infrastructure, etc. Egypt has US\$165 Billion of foreign debt and a moribund economy. It might be tempted by a deal which pays off some debt while also reviving tourism and Suez Canal income.

For the oil-rich Arab states it's an investment for their ethno-cultural legitimacy — particularly vis-a-vis non-Arab Iran, which funded much of the trouble. Would they part with 5% of their accumulated wealth (two years' worth of hedge-fund management fees) to establish peace, reduce uncertainty and risk, and quash Iranian ambitions too? Sure they would. And if they didn't, it would almost surely cost them more in the long run.

Qatar reportedly spent over US\$200 Billion to host the world soccer championships in 2022. Can it spare US\$50 Billion for a much more worthy cause? If it can't or won't, what does that say about all the Arab states' clamors for peace? It seems a fairly sure bet that if any of Kuwait, Qatar, the UAE, or Saudi Arabia plunked down serious money, the others would have to join, if not in solidarity, then to save face. But they would join, or be demoted in the eyes of Muslims everywhere, and to the delight of Iran.

Addressing internal dissenters, the wealthy Arab states could also recall that they owe their sovereignty and their oilfields to serendipitous decisions by the same countries that spawned the Palestine Problem. Call it Divine Providence. Had it not been for the British, Kuwait would have remained a minor Iraqi tribe. (Indeed, for several decades before it found oil, Kuwait waged a rebellion to rejoin Iraq, which was already oil-rich, rather than remain a British protectorate.) And had it not been for the Americans, Saddam Hussein would have made it a minor tribe again, then swallowed the emirates and the Saudi oilfields on the Arabian Gulf (meaning all of them), and he wouldn't have stopped until he got to Djibouti. Repaying 5% to remain in the good graces of Divine Providence would seem only prudent.

Previous overtures asked Egypt to swallow yet more immigrants. It won't, so the time has come to talk not refugee tent camps but sovereign land. Not vague promises from the US and Kushner (who

being Jewish was the wrong person to tell Muslims what to do — didn't anyone in Washington understand that?), but real money from brother Arabs, cash on the barrel.

Egypt's northern Sinai cannot be the site for New Palestine. It adjoins Israel. No one seems to have understood this, either. A more plausible location would be southwestern Sinai, separated from both Israel and Egypt by empty desert plus mountains, and little use to Egypt as a country. How about a mixed flatland-and-mountain parcel around coastal El-Tor, population 30,000?

By the way, how much should 10,000 square kilometers of more or less empty land cost? Taking EU farmland as a starting-point, US\$ 10 Billion for 10,000 square kilometers. We could negotiate up or down from there, but that's the rough ballpark.

If Egypt can't make up its mind fast enough, **Plan C is Jordan**. This option has a slight drawback but might be easier to negotiate. Jordan has 89,000 sqk; only US\$ 40 Billion of debt; same GDP/capita as Egypt; a respected UK-educated monarch in charge; and a Crown Prince married to a Saudi with royal connections. Jordan's northeastern protrusion is landlocked but essentially unoccupied; the biggest town has a population of 15,000. The entire protrusion was allocated to then Transjordan in 1921-22 solely so an Iraqi-oil pipeline could run to the Mediterranean over British-controlled territory. This pipeline was closed in 1948, so the protrusion's rationale has long been moot, and Jordan has done absolutely nothing with it so far.

The protrusion has sparse rainfall, only 150 mm annually, but the rain can be channeled à la Petra, better than the West Bank's 0 or Gaza's uncollectable 300 mm. There are also emerging technologies for cost-efficient extraction of water from air with as little as 30% humidity (Jordan's typical humidity is 30-40%). The region has pleasant sub-tropical temperatures (like Darjeeling), and better protection from sea-level rise (600+ meters elevation v. Gaza's 14). With intelligent environmentally-aware

development, an idyllic 10,000 sqk New Palestine could be situated in one corner of Jordan's protrusion.

A further incentive that applies to either Plan B or Plan C is that Egypt and Jordan are jointly hosts to several million Palestine refugees from past wars. If a viable New Palestine could be established, some of these refugees could be relocated, easing the burden on Egypt and Jordan.

Plan D: North Africa, somewhat further out but six more countries where a New Palestine could conceivably be located, given the right custom-tailored inducements.

Some of these are more plausible than others, and there are undoubtedly unique problems with each, but chances are that a practical deal can be found somewhere in this long lineup of possible New Palestines.

When it was the lone belle at the ball being badgered by Jared Kushner, Egypt resisted. With Plans A, B, C, and D, there would be nine belles (Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, Western Sahara, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Sudan) and only one dance ticket to be punched. The chances are good that one of these countries can be persuaded to be the hero.

In a Two-States-But-Far-Apart Solution, The Arab peoples would be vindicated in their professed desire for peace. They would gain prestige. They would thwart Iran's ambitions, at what to the oil-rich states is a negligible cost. The rest of the world would get a long-term ceasefire, as the details of the Plan are worked out and implementation begins. That will be a huge task, but the world will be up to it.

The world's best people and companies in their fields probably wouldn't lend support for a hopeless cause in Gaza. However, they might devote money, genius, and energy to a New Palestine, provided it is — Somewhere Else. That's a 100% win for the world, and a lot better than making yet another false promise to the Palestinians — "your future will be bright if we create an independent Palestine somewhere beside Israel."

The Western Powers would avoid electorate polarization and reconcile official state support for Israel with a very positive outcome for the Palestinians.

Israel would have a 90% win, its sole concessions being some world sympathy and (almost certainly) a commitment to pay War Reparations (which could anyway ultimately be paid for by Mr. Kushner's Gaza waterfront development schemes).

The Palestinians would have to make what some of them will consider a major concession, which is to move away from their homeland. But millions already made that decision (winding up in Jordan, Syria, Chile, and many other places), and many more probably would, if they had some place to go to. Compared with living in tent cities or under Israeli rule indefinitely, moving doesn't sound so bad. If a few hundred thousand Palestinians can get over that hurdle, they also would have a 90% win — living space, new infrastructure and buildings, and a sovereign New Palestine, just not inside the original Palestine.

If we build it, they will come.

Unlike the beggar-my-neighbor philosophy of certain self-promoting deal-makers, that's the real "art of the deal", and a genuine Win all around for Israel, Palestine, the Arab World, and indeed the whole world.

A Two-States-Side-by-Side Solution is supported by almost all the countries on earth. All of them are wrong.

For 75 years Palestine peace plans have been concocted by statespersons and "experts" who can't see the obvious, who are mental prisoners of their own expertise, and who ask both sides for major compromises against self-interest. Many of them will object to my Two-States-But-Far-Apart Solution with specious logic and distorted facts.

But the fact that they cannot distort is that all their past solutions have been Negative-Sum constructs and therefore unmitigated, unadulterated long-term failures. Meanwhile, their present solution ("Forgive, forget, just play nice from now on") is simply naive, not to say very, very stupid.

Time to end the Palestine Problem — with the Non-Zero-Sum Two-States-But-Far-Apart Solution.

If we build New Palestine, they will come.

Part 4: The Non-Zero-Sum Solution to the Palestine Crisis: Recapitulation and Rebuttals

Given the ongoing carnage in Palestine, most countries support a *Two-States Solution*.

They are all wrong.

The Two-State Solution would give Palestinians "sovereignty" while living in bombed-out rubble and economic despair, scavenging for foreign aid, performing menial labor for Israel. This "Sovereignty" would be a *Sham!*

Israel would be asked to cede territory to establish an extremely-hostile state right beside it, ready for re-arming by Iran. *Non-starter!*

Sham on one side, Non-starter on the other. Does no one see this?

Since 1948, all attempts to permanently solve the Palestine Problem have failed. Their common denominator? They considered Palestine a Zero-Sum Contest over finite territory.

Now let an outsider suggest the obvious Non-Zero-Sum Solution.

An artful deal gives each side what it most wants, while giving up what it values *least*.

What does Israel most want? *Secure borders that can't be tunneled under.*

Average Palestinians? Surely not "an independent state beside Israel so the War can continue."

Average Palestinians want what most of us want — *safety, material well-being, hope.*

What do the oil-wealthy Arab states want? Peace, to protect their economic interests. *Prestige and influence on the world stage. Derailment of Iran's global ambitions.* Meanwhile, these states have

US\$4 Trillion accumulated wealth, and a demonstrated eagerness to spend money for their long-term objectives.

What do the US and other Western Powers need? They need a Quick Solution that is also Long-Term, in order to be responsive to significant pro-Palestinian sympathies among their electorates. They must be seen to stand by Israel while ensuring a positive outcome for the Palestinians. So far they're not anywhere close. Failure would endanger the current ruling majorities or coalitions and, by splintering the Left and Center, give power to isolationists. That in turn would imperil Ukraine and Taiwan, and ultimately the Free World.

Have I got a deal for all four of you.

The Obvious Non-Zero-Sum Solution is not *TWO-STATES-SIDE-BY-SIDE*, but *TWO STATES FAR APART*.

Here's the Deal: The oil-wealthy Arab states establish a pot of (say) US\$200 Billion for land acquisition and development. This may sound absurdly large to the average person, but not to countries sitting on US\$4 Trillion. Purchase 10,000 square kilometers (roughly Gaza and the West Bank combined) somewhere removed from Israel, on which to establish a sovereign New Palestine.

Saudi Arabia could simply donate some of its Red Sea coast, for humanitarian motives. A cash acquisition possibility is Egypt's southwestern Sinai, isolated by mountains. Another is Jordan's northeastern protrusion, which it has hardly used since receiving it free in 1922. Six more countries in North Africa might have parcels of land they might consider trading for cash.

With nine potential site sources and only one site needed, chances are that one country will step up to be the hero.

Financiers and entrepreneurs have little appetite for war zones. But once the ball is rolling, support from the rest of the world will flow to New Palestine, provided it is — Somewhere Else.

Predictable objections:

Dunning-Kruger Ad Hominem Objection: You, author, are not a Middle-East expert. You don't know the depth of your ignorance. **Ad Hominem Rebuttal:** Most real breakthroughs come from outsiders with uncluttered brains, no intellectual axes to grind, and no "pet" beliefs. In 75 years the experts have utterly failed to solve the Palestine Problem. And their present solution ("Forgive, forget, just play nice from now on") is patently stupid. Simply ask "Which area within geographic Palestine should go to the newly-sovereign state of Palestine?" and from the inescapable practical consequences of any choice, you will immediately see its stupidity.

The Mutual Hatred Runs Too Deep. Precisely why it would be beneficial to separate them.

The Palestinians are too proud, won't leave. Untrue. Millions already left after past wars, and many more would follow, if they had somewhere to go. An immediate majority isn't even needed. In 1948 Israel had 850,000 Jewish inhabitants. It was a case of "If we build it, they will come." So is New Palestine.

Why evict the Palestinians and not the Jews? This is not an eviction, but an incentive. There is no imaginable inducement which would persuade Israelis to move, while a sovereign New Palestine in a decent location would certainly attract many Palestinians. We can keep nurturing a grudge, however legitimate, forever arguing over blighted terrain with very poor prospects for future security and prosperity. Or we can move on.

The oil-rich states won't contribute. If they carefully consider the broader situation, they will. In the Palestine context, the Arab states have postured as "victims of Israeli aggression and foreign meddling". Here is a chance to show the world that they can take assertive, meaningful action and be heroes instead of victims. US\$200 Billion is cheap, less than Qatar spent to host the 2022 FIFA games. The ongoing War and attempts to mitigate the Palestinians' plight are also costing money that would be better spent building New Palestine Somewhere Else. Finally, if the wealthy Arab states don't spend it now, it will cost them more later through Iran's ascendancy. And it will cost the entire world much, much more, if Iranian-style extremism becomes the norm in Nigeria, Turkey, Pakistan, Malaysia, Indonesia, Bangladesh, and eventually the Arab countries themselves.

No deal without considering Islamic access to the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem. Never mind what this issue even is. It is a red herring and a deliberate roadblock, like agreeing to your friend's choice of movie only if you can also get a date with the lead actor. The people who raise this "requirement" are those showing off how much they know, or who don't want a meaningful solution at all. Most of them are not starving in Gaza, but well-fed and free to pontificate from the safety and comfort of Teheran or Berlin.

But this gives Israel almost everything it wants. Zero-Sum Thinking. Instead consider how everyone benefits, compared to the realistic alternatives for each.

This Plan doesn't provide for the release of hostages. Neither does it cure cancer. But it will certainly avert more deaths than continued warfare or an imposed Two States Side-by-Side. Hamas's leaders will be more amenable to releasing hostages as they lose popular support from the Palestinians once a unilateral ceasefire is declared, humanitarian aid starts flowing, and the prospect of a real long-term solution is evident.

Israel still won't agree. So far Israel not been offered anything valuable in exchange for a ceasefire. Given a clear chance to achieve its security goals and indeed all its legitimate goals, it would have to agree, or the world would rightly condemn its War as genocidal rather than defensive in intent.

Hamas won't agree. Their agreement isn't needed. We can hope that most members of Hamas are rational and will consider that New Palestine represents "Mission Accomplished" for them. The irrational elements could still cause disruption with ambushes or suicide bombings, but that risk exists anywhere in the world, regardless of what is supposedly agreed, and would be much higher in an imposed Two States Side-by-Side outcome. Two States Far Apart offers — by far — the lesser risk of continued terrorism or harm to hostages.

Building a country from scratch is impossible. Whatever problems are foreseen for a New Palestine Somewhere Else, they are worse for Rebuilding Palestine Amidst the Rubble. China has routinely built cities for tens of millions in the last decades. So could the US, Japan, and the EU if they were so inclined. The world's best and brightest in their fields, from constitutional law to scientific research to engineering and modular construction, wouldn't support a hopeless cause in Gaza, but might contribute their energy and genius to New Palestine, so long as it is — Somewhere Else.

Hundreds of Palestinians are dying daily, and the world is creeping closer to a broader conflict that will upturn the world order. The decision-makers need to practice some humility; accept sensible advice from an outsider; and start implementing a Two-States-But-Far-Apart Solution. This will give all four parties exactly what they most need, at costs they can tolerate.

If we build New Palestine, they will come.