

ESSENTIAL ESSAYS

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No. 1



## **Democracy for Peace**

Natan Sharansky

*Deputy Prime Minister of Israel*

# Democracy for Peace

*Natan Sharansky*

American Enterprise Institute

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WASHINGTON, D.C.

2002

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American Enterprise Institute  
1150 17th Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20036  
*Printed in the United States of America*

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## Foreword

This essay is the text of a speech delivered on June 20, 2002, by Natan Sharansky, deputy prime minister of Israel, at the AEI World Forum in Beaver Creek, Colorado. The World Forum is an annual conference of government officials, legislators, business and financial leaders, and academics; it is sponsored by the American Enterprise Institute and hosted by former president Gerald R. Ford.

Mr. Sharansky's address is notable, apart from its intrinsic intellectual force and stirring eloquence, for the circumstances of its delivery and its relationship to immediate political developments. It came at a crucial moment in the U.S.-led war on terrorism—following several days of suicide bombings in Israel that had left thirty citizens dead and dozens injured, and preceding a major statement of U.S. policy regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that President George W. Bush was scheduled to deliver the following week. Mr. Sharansky took the occasion to deliver a thorough exposition of the “Sharansky Plan” for achieving peace between Israel and the Palestinians—a plan that would establish democratic institutions, accountable leadership, and civil freedoms among Palestinians as the precondition of Israeli-Palestinian reconciliation. In so doing, he made a larger and more fundamental argument: The conflict between Israel and Yasser Arafat's Palestinian Authority, he said, is not a tribal war between Jews and Arabs but rather one front in the global war against terrorist states and organizations. The new war—like the earlier, cold war against Soviet communism, in which Sharansky himself had played a prominent role as political dissident and prisoner—is in reality a struggle between democracy and tyranny, and must be understood as such if terrorism, like communism, is to be destroyed.

Although the Sharansky Plan had previously been neglected or scorned in Israel, the United States, and elsewhere, the plan—and the relationship between national tyrannies and international terrorism—had been receiving increasing attention in the weeks preceding Mr. Sharansky’s address, as President Bush’s public statements had emphasized the importance of democracy to undermining terrorism at its political roots. Then, four days after the address, President Bush made a fundamental shift in U.S. policy, calling on the Palestinian people to “build a practicing democracy” and “elect new leaders not compromised by terror”—effectively embracing central elements of the Sharansky Plan (“President Bush Calls for New Palestinian Leadership,” June 24, 2002; [www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/06/20020624-3.html](http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/06/20020624-3.html)). In the following weeks, President Bush extended his call for democratic freedoms to other areas of the Middle East, notably Iran, that are sources of terrorist organization and financing (“Statement by the President,” July 12, 2002; [www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/07/20020712-9.html](http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/07/20020712-9.html)). Mr. Sharansky’s essay stands as a deep and compelling argument for what is now a central strategy in the war against terrorists and as an important historical document in the development of that strategy.

CHRISTOPHER DEMUTH  
President  
American Enterprise Institute  
for Public Policy Research  
September 2002

# Democracy for Peace

Natan Sharansky

Presented at the AEI World Forum, June 20, 2002

President Ford, ladies and gentlemen, friends:

It is a true pleasure to be here at this beautiful resort with such a wonderful audience and to have the opportunity to speak at this conference. But, frankly, at this moment it is very difficult for me to concentrate on a purely academic speech. It was difficult leaving Israel yesterday.

While driving here today, I received regular updates about the terrorist attack that was perpetrated a few hours ago in Israel. Another family of four was murdered, and dozens more were injured. As we sit here at this very moment, doctors are struggling to save and heal today's victims, while the dozens of wounded from yesterday's blast, which killed seven, are still lying injured in the hospital. And yesterday's injured are lying side-by-side in the hospital with the fortunate ones who survived the horrific blast the day before yesterday, which killed nineteen. And still there is no letup.

We are a very small country, and the terror is not academic. It is not a remote occurrence; it is very real and touches each and every one of us personally.

One of the injured yesterday was my secretary, Dina. And while I was flying here, my staff was at the hospital, sitting at her bedside.

The day before yesterday, a bus explosion killing nineteen took place just a few hundred meters from my home, barely two or three minutes after my elder daughter, Rahel, left for school. My wife, Avital, rushed out to check up on her. Rahel was not at the bus stop; she had taken a car pool that morning. A dozen

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other daughters and sons, who were also on their way to school that morning, had been murdered.

This is the reality of Israel. Every day we are in the midst of a struggle for our survival, and every day there are new victims of the cruel terror.

But we know well that it is not a tribal war between Jews and Arabs in the Middle East. We are in the midst of the first world war of the twenty-first century, waged between the world of terror and the world of democracy, between a civilization in which human life is held in the highest value and one for which human life is merely an instrument to reach certain political aims.

The world of democracy will win this struggle. But in order for the victory to be everlasting, it is crucial, but not sufficient, to destroy the terror. It is imperative to expand the world our enemies try to destroy, to export democracy.

This is not simply a slogan for me; it is my life's focus. Let me take you directly to the very distant and very small political prison of Chistopol on the border between Europe and Asia, about twenty years ago.

### **The Struggle against Communism**

Those of you who have not experienced prison life probably do not know that one of the most important things in prison is the communication between cells—one of the most basic needs of the prisoner, and hence the gravest violation. If you are caught communicating, you are immediately placed in the punishment cell.

There are different ways of communicating. Some of them are more effective, some less; some more dangerous, some less so. The one that is least effective, but also least dangerous, is tapping on the wall in Morse code.

[Mr. Sharansky tapped out a Morse code.]

That's your name, President Ford, in Russian letters.

The most effective, but also the most dangerous, means of communication is through the toilet. If you siphon all the water out of the toilet with a piece of cloth, and place your head deep into the toilet bowl, you can talk as if by telephone; sometimes the line is even better. But, though the line might be good, it is also

very dangerous—a passing guard, seeing you in this rather unnatural and upside-down position, will send you immediately for fifteen days to the punishment cell.

There was one day, however, on which we threw caution to the wind, when we were all tapping Morse at a breakneck speed and jumping headfirst into the toilets to talk to those in the punishment cells. There was something that everyone needed to hear—even those in the punishment cells who did not have the privilege to read the daily *Pravda*. That was the day that the official Communist Party newspaper spewed its wrath upon President Ronald Reagan, who dared accuse the Soviet Union of being the “Evil Empire.” That was the day when we knew that the days of communism were numbered, that communism would be defeated, because finally the spade had been called a spade. There was finally a clear, moral position; there would no longer be any confusion between the world of evil and the world of good.

Indeed, communism collapsed soon thereafter. For some, it seemed like the end of history—as one of the two diametrically opposed poles around which all the dialectics of the world had always revolved suddenly disappeared.

Very soon, however, we were to return to the world of two poles: democracy and terror. Today, it is no longer the heavy shadow of communism, but rather the shadow of terror, that looms over us. If we are to prevail over it, we must learn very quickly—from both our great achievements and our great mistakes. We must do so not in order to write another academic book, and not for the annals of history, but in order to apply the acquired historical knowledge in today’s quickly developing reality.

Let me take you back to 1972. It was a time of grave concern for us dissidents in the former Soviet Union. We felt that we were about to witness the free world’s acceptance of the Soviet Union, its appeasement of the country that we knew to be the Evil Empire. The West was on the verge of recognizing the borders of occupation of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union’s privilege to control the peoples of the Baltic Republics. The West was about to accept the Soviet Union’s right to exist as a communist dictatorship—and, at the same time, to receive its friendship by

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bribing it with most-favored-nation trading status and a great amount of economic assistance.

Very few spoke out against this tendency. It seemed to us that the clarion call of the late Andrei Sakharov to the West could not have been clearer: *Do not trust governments more than governments trust their own people*. Link all ties with the Soviet Union to the encouragement of democracy and human rights inside Soviet Union. But very few heard him.

We understood the arguments of those who wanted to appease the Soviets, the arguments of those who created this wonderful, but very dangerous, word, *détente*. Instead of relying upon the wisdom of Andrei Sakharov, they were relying upon the philosophy of the nineteenth-century French diplomat Talleyrand: Every people has the government that it deserves. Hence, Soviet communism is par for the course of the Homo Sovieticus.

The proponents of this theory, who visited us as the emissaries of the U.S. State Department or the White House, no doubt had a great deal of love, sympathy, and admiration for the Soviet dissidents. But behind their smiles and pats on the back, their message was simple: Wake up and smell the coffee. The Soviet Union is not a passing episode. For a thousand years, the great Russia has never been a democracy, nor will it be a democracy for hundreds of years to come. The Soviet people do not want change, and there will not be a change in the system.

Since you have to live with this dictatorship, our friends in the West told us, let's make sure that it is a friendly one, that it does not threaten the stability of the free world. A friendly Russia will have most-favored-nation status and military agreements that will make Moscow feel secure. There will be more stability in the world, and then we in the West will also be able to help you.

Our response to them was clear: Do not be concerned about us; be concerned about the future of the world. Despite what you think, communism will not last forever, but will inevitably crumble and in the near future.

Andrei Amalrik, an outstanding dissident writer and friend of mine, wrote a book in 1969, entitled *Will the Soviet Union Survive until 1984?*, the year described in George Orwell's famous masterpiece. In

his book, *Amalrik* describes the Soviet Union as a state that uses all its productive power to control the lives and the minds of 200 million people, with nothing remaining to generate any useful product. With all that power wasted upon suppression, that state looks for an enabler, an external source of energy. That source is the West. As long as this source of energy flows, the state can survive, but if this source of energy should cease to channel the necessary energy, the state will fall apart. Like the soldier, *Amalrik* wrote, with a gun aimed at a prisoner, day and night, the muscles will eventually weaken, the gun will drop, and the prisoner will escape. Without an outside enabler, the soldier will lose his focus. Without the understanding and support of the West, the Soviet Union will collapse. And then their prisoners—we—will escape.

We believed in this vision, and we were imploring the West to realize that the Soviet system could not survive without its support. We demanded to link any assistance to the Soviet Union to the question of human rights, to the question of democracy. We tried to explain that this was not only in our interests—that, first and foremost, this was a basic interest of the West.

Senator Henry “Scoop” Jackson heard our entreaties. He understood these dangers and stated that there would be no free movement of goods without the free movement of people. For the first time in history, the Jackson-Vanik Amendment created the direct linkage between international relations and human rights; the issue of human rights was no longer an issue only of internal affairs.

Then followed the Helsinki Accords. Could that agreement, in reality, have been a sellout, many asked, a betrayal of the fundamental principles so important to us? The fear was that the Soviet Union had won recognition of its occupation of Poland, Germany, and all of Eastern Europe, as well as a great deal of potential economic assistance, in exchange for a piece of paper. But some of us understood the potential in the Helsinki Agreement: It created a real linkage between human rights and foreign policy. It placed the Soviet Union under a magnifying glass and carefully monitored the human rights situation therein.

President Ford, I am very grateful to you, the president who signed the Jackson-Vanik Amendment and signed the Helsinki

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Accords. I have to say that there is no doubt that these acts speeded up my entrance to prison because, in my sentence, the Jackson-Vanik Amendment and Helsinki Accords are mentioned more often than my own name! But there is no doubt that these were the two central milestones leading toward the collapse of communism.

But then the West again became hesitant, as the Soviet Union attempted to undermine this clear and simple concept; it tried to convince the West that the principle of “human rights” should be redefined, that perhaps the focus should only be on economic rights and obligations.

Thankfully, with the entrance of President Reagan into the political arena, it became abundantly clear that the United States would insist on the linkage between human rights and foreign policy. The Soviet Union realized that it had no choice.

In 1985, Mikhail Gorbachev came to power. He found out that as rivalry with the West increased, the tension inside the Soviet Union grew. To control the people, he needed more and more external energy sources, which were not being made available to him. There was no financial aid from abroad, no free trade, no favorable agreements, no cooperation in the sciences and technology.

He had no choice. He said that he would give the people a little bit of freedom, never understanding that there is no such a thing as a little bit of freedom. The moment you give people a little bit of freedom, they want it all; the moment the virus of freedom is set loose, there is no way back. The soldier with the gun was tired. President Reagan would not help him keep it steady, and the prisoners—the peoples of the Soviet Union—ran away. Communism simply evaporated, and that was the greatest victory of the free world.

### **Betrayal of Democratic Principles**

What a powerful weapon, democracy! What a drug for the people! Give it to them, and it will be the best guarantee of security.

But how sad it is that almost immediately, the leaders of the free world abandoned the Sakharov principle: *Do not trust governments more than governments trust their own people.*

When I met President George H. W. Bush in the early 1990s, he asked me what needed to be done to keep the Baltic republics and Ukraine inside the Soviet Union; how should the United States prevent them from separating from “Mother Russia”? His point was that we have this guy, Gorbachev, on whom we can rely—so why open ourselves up to someone with whom we do not have a relationship and who may be dangerous to us?

I was shocked. How could it possibly be—just when it had become clear that the idea of trying to build peace with friendly dictators had failed, when the concept of strengthening global security by linking democracy to international relations had triumphed, when we were living in a world with only one source of power—that we were suddenly rushing back to rebuild the old concept? Do we want to give friendly dictators the opportunity to control the entire second and third worlds?

In the same vein, after saving the Saudis and Kuwaitis from impending doom following the Iraqi invasion of the Gulf War, when these countries were entirely dependent on the United States, one would have expected America to use just a drop of its immense political capital to demand the beginning of democracy in these countries. But there was nothing. “Saudi Arabia is not about democracy. Saudi Arabia is about oil; it is about stability in that part of the world,” we were told. “We need Saudi Arabia because that’s what can guarantee our stability.” Again, relying on the friendly dictator and the personality of the given dictator.

The dangerous notion that it is the individual leader that defines a regime, rather than the relationship between the leader and the people, is deeply seated in today’s political reality. Just recently, former Senator George Mitchell was asked, in a public lecture, to what extent Yasser Arafat’s personality is essential for progress in solving the Middle East conflict. His answer was that, in international relations, personality is everything.

To support his statement, he pointed to Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia. In Czechoslovakia, the president was Václav Havel; in Yugoslavia, it was Slobodan Milosevic. Czechoslovakia, he said, was split into two countries without any violence, and Yugoslavia

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was overrun by a horrendous war. “Imagine for a second,” he suggested, “what would have been the case if Havel had been in Yugoslavia and Milosevic in Czechoslovakia. Everything would have been different both with Czechoslovakia and with Yugoslavia,” he argued.

Perhaps for some American politicians, everything to the east of Germany is more or the less the same—it is the “Eastern Bloc.” But those of us who lived in that bloc appreciate the immense difference between Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia. Czechoslovakia, even when it was part of the Soviet Bloc, elected Alexander Dubček through Communist elections. Democratic structures, in a virtually underground form, existed there always.

Yugoslavia, on the other hand—even after Stalin’s death—was to remain a cult-based totalitarian regime, under the rule of Marshal Tito. It never changed. The people there had never tasted or smelled democracy.

Havel could have been elected only in Czechoslovakia; he could not have been elected in Yugoslavia. Milosevic could have appeared only in Yugoslavia; he could not possibly have emerged in Czechoslovakia.

By far the most striking and tragic example of our abandonment, and betrayal, of the principles of democracy and lessons of the cold war was the Oslo Agreement.

The logic of Oslo was simple. We need peace and security in the Middle East. We are tired from all of these wars. Take a dictator from Tunis, bring him to the West Bank and Gaza, give him control over 98 percent of all Palestinians, offer him territory, legitimacy, money, an army, and economical tools—and, as a result, he will be so interested in playing the role of a leader of his people that he will become our partner. That was the idea.

And the fact that Arafat is a dictator was not deemed to be a problem; on the contrary, it was viewed as an advantage. As our late prime minister Yitzhak Rabin said a week after the Oslo Agreement was signed, Israel would subcontract its security to Arafat, who, unencumbered by the constraints of “a Supreme Court, human rights organizations and free press,” would guarantee Israel’s security. Without the shackles of democracy, it was argued, Arafat

would have an easier time than we in dealing with the Hamas terrorists.

Rabin and almost everyone else ignored the lesson we learned so well during the cold war—that there is a fundamental difference between a democracy and dictatorship. In a democracy, leaders depend on their people; in a dictatorship, the people depend on their leaders.

In a democracy, the leader has to be concerned about the well-being of his people. For him, war is always the last resort, because people want to avoid war at all costs. A dictator, however, does not depend on his people; the people depend on him. His primary goal, and greatest headache, is how to keep the people under control. To do so, he always needs an enemy, against whom he can constantly mobilize his people. The enemy can be an external one, an internal one, or if the dictator, like Stalin, is particularly adept, both external and internal concurrently.

For Arafat, there is only one natural enemy—Israel. And that's why, exactly as some of us predicted, he used every dollar, every pound, and every shekel for one purpose—to strengthen hatred toward Israel. That was the only way he could survive. And, oh, were we all dedicated to his survival! His strength, Western and Israeli leaders argued, was the sole guarantee of peace. As a result, we funneled a great deal of money, which rightfully belonged to the Palestinian people, into Arafat's private account. The logic was clear: Even if he misuses the funds, even if these funds are used to create his own private armies, he will be able to control the Hamas terrorists far better than we could.

I remember the [October 1998] peace negotiations at the Wye Plantation. I have to tell you, frankly, that our biggest problem was not with Yasser Arafat and his team; after all, it was clear where he stood and what his objectives were. It was with the American team. Arafat managed to play them like a harp. Each time we pressed him to abide by any of his signed obligations, he would turn immediately to the U.S. delegation, threatening them with Hamas. "If I am forced to fulfill the obligations, that will weaken me and will only strengthen Hamas," he would argue.

And the U.S. delegation was all too willing to play his game. It

tried hard to convince Israel not to demand anything of Arafat. That is how, step by step, the world permitted Arafat to build nothing less than an Autonomy of Terror—with an educational system that teaches three-year-olds to kill Jews, a corrupt and protection-money-based economic system, and a military intelligence system dedicated to terror. That is how we created for ourselves a “partner” who would never want peace.

The moment of truth (and the moment that caused me to resign from the Israeli government) was Prime Minister Barak’s offer to Arafat of a state, with Jerusalem as its capital. Arafat would not—could not—accept it. For him the only way to survive was to continue the struggle, and he responded as a dictator always does when he feels that the other country is weak. He launched the attacks of terror, which continue to this day and which have already killed many hundreds of innocent citizens. The Israeli and the Palestinian people suffer, and the dictator preserves his position.

We have made our mistakes, and we now understand the person and the system. I believe that it will be a tragic mistake if, just in the midst of this campaign of terror, the president of the United States rewards Arafat with a declaration that he deserves to head a state. There is no doubt that such a state would be a terrorist one. We will all suffer from it—Americans, Israelis, and Palestinians alike.

### **No Peace with Dictators**

It is my hope that our post-cold-war love affair with “friendly dictators” ended on September 11. This awful tragedy immediately made it clear to the world that our “local” struggle in the Middle East is an integral part of a global war between the forces of terror and the forces of democracy.

The United States launched the war against the Taliban in Afghanistan and did not follow the unfortunate examples of the past, namely to replace unfriendly dictators with friendly ones, but rather is striving to encourage the beginning of a democratic process.

The first step was to utterly uproot and destroy the terror. The second step, perhaps even more important than the first, is to encourage the emergence of democratic institutions, representing

the true will of the people. This effort in Afghanistan constitutes an extremely important precedent.

Nevertheless, the West's policy toward dictatorships still has a long way to go. We see, even today, that Saudi Arabia—the source of Islamic fundamentalist ideology and the country that bankrolls the vast majority of Islamic fundamentalist institutions and terrorist groups—is viewed as a very important factor of stability. And Syria heads the UN Security Council. The country that harbors the headquarters of many of those organizations declared by the U.S. president to be terrorist organizations, responsible for the murder of thousands of innocent citizens all over the world, heads the UN Security Council!

Appeasement today is no less dangerous than appeasement was yesterday. Appeasement yesterday guaranteed the survival of communism; appeasement today will guarantee the survival of terror.

Some argue that there can be peace with dictators. I am often asked: Didn't Israel make peace with Jordan and Egypt—countries that are not exactly bastions of Western democratic principles?

My answer is that our diplomacy with those countries it is a process, a continuum, one in which there is a direct correlation between the depth of democracy and the warmth of our relations. This statement is not merely an abstract academic hypothesis; it is strongly supported by the facts on the ground in the Middle East.

Look at Israel's neighbors in the Arab world: The most friendly one is Jordan, a country where Israeli tourists travel freely. It is followed by Morocco, a country occasionally frequented by Israeli tourists, and then Egypt. The most hostile are Syria and Iraq.

Now look at the marks these countries are given by the Freedom House index of political and civil freedoms. Many factors are taken into account by Freedom House; relations with Israel, of course, is not one of the criteria. None of these countries, I should note, is top rated. Jordan, however, is partially free, with a mark of 4 on the scale of 1 to 7, followed by Morocco with a 4.5 and Egypt with a 5.5. Iraq and Syria are rated 7—absolute dictatorships, with not even a modicum of freedom.

There is, as one can see, a direct link between the level of freedom in the country and the type of peace that can be reached with it.

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Another oft-heard argument is that democracy is not for everybody. For the past ten years, my own countrymen, from the Left and the Right, criticized me, telling me that I simply do not understand the Islamic world. The Islamic world is “different,” I am told regularly; it has a “different system of values”; “you cannot export democracy to the Arab world.”

I remember, from my own experience, the envoys of the U.S. administration deriding the Jackson-Vanik Amendment and trying to convince us, dissidents in the Soviet Union, not to push for it. Why? Because democracy is not for Russia. For a thousand years there has been no democracy, and therefore there never will be.

Nor, apparently, was democracy for Japan. In May 1945, State Department official Joseph Grew explained to President Truman that “the best we can hope for in Japan is the development of a constitutional monarchy, experience having shown that democracy in Japan would never work.” Democracy, it was said, would never work in Confucian cultures such as Korea, Singapore, and Taiwan. It also would not work, according to certain American scholars, in Latin American countries. It was assumed that Manuel Noriega’s Panama could never be democratic, and his friendly dictatorial regime was upheld for many years by the U.S. administration in order to protect the Panama Canal. However, just a few short years after he was removed from power for drug-related crimes, lo and behold, Panama transformed to a free society. All those places, where conventional wisdom predicted that “it would never work,” are now rated totally free by Freedom House.

*Democracy is for everybody.* Of course, encouraging democracy does not mean that people’s lives, mentality, and culture need to be transformed. “Democracy” means one simple thing—the ability of people to express their views, thoughts, and beliefs freely, without the fear that they will be imprisoned as a result.

Notwithstanding all these historic examples, some still resist the notion that democracy can work. They argue that elections will bring extremists to the fore.

It is true that if Yasser Arafat is given the opportunity to hold elections immediately, or in four months as he has declared, there is no doubt that he will be back in power. Elections are not,

and cannot be, the starting point for democracy; they are the *end* of a lengthy process. Free elections must be allowed only after the necessary institutions are in place to guarantee that the people are free to express their views—and not sooner.

That is the basis for the plan I presented to our prime minister for the peace process with the Palestinians. I have proposed a transitional period. After nine years of building the Autonomy of Terror, we need a transitional period in which Israel is responsible for its security, and the Palestinian administration is responsible for all other aspects of the Palestinian people's daily lives. This transitional administration will not be elected, because free elections cannot be held now. It must be appointed by the United States, together with Jordan and Egypt—nations that recognize Israel's basic right to exist.

For a period of three years, the transitional administration must address two primary goals: dismantling terror and building economic infrastructure. This will require a great deal of money—a Marshall Plan for the Palestinians. During this period, the educational, economic, and political systems, as well as the media, must be revamped—and set free from the current propaganda, terror, and violence.

In this new atmosphere, and at the end of this transition period, elections should be held. I am confident that at that point the Palestinians will have leaders who will depend on their people. With these leaders, we can come to compromises and reach a peace agreement, because history has taught us that democracies will make the greatest efforts and the deepest compromises in order to avoid the suffering of war.

Finally, we must understand that it is not only individuals who are equal, but also the nationalities of this world that are equal. They all deserve to live in democracy, to live under a government that depends on them. Sakharov said, "You cannot trust a government more than it trusts its own people." I would propose a corollary: "The world cannot afford to depend on those leaders who are not dependent on their own people." It is not the friendly dictators—but rather the leaders who depend on their people—who can be partners for making the world a more secure place.



## About the Author

NATAN SHARANSKY is currently deputy prime minister of Israel and also its minister of housing and construction, having previously served as minister of industry and trade and minister of the interior. Mr. Sharansky, born in the Ukraine and educated at the Physical Technical Institute in Moscow, became a prominent Soviet dissident in the years following the Helsinki Accords of 1975. Arrested and imprisoned in 1977, he was freed in 1986 and allowed to emigrate to Israel. He is the author of the prison memoir *Fear No Evil* (1988).

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AEI ESSENTIAL ESSAYS

No. 1    Natan Sharansky, *Democracy for Peace*    September 2002

# Democracy for Peace

Natan Sharansky

In this essay, delivered at an American Enterprise Institute conference in June 2002, Israeli deputy prime minister Natan Sharansky argues that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict “is not a tribal war between Jews and Arabs” but rather one front in the global war on terrorist states and organizations. The new war—like the earlier, cold war between America and its allies and Soviet communism—is fundamentally a struggle between democracy and tyranny, and must be understood as such if terrorism, like communism, is to be defeated.

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**Natan Sharansky** is currently deputy prime minister of Israel and also its minister of housing and construction, having previously served as minister of industry and trade and minister of the interior. Mr. Sharansky, born in the Ukraine and educated at the Physical Technical Institute in Moscow, became a prominent Soviet dissident in the years following the Helsinki Accords of 1975. Arrested and imprisoned in 1977, he was freed in 1986 and allowed to emigrate to Israel. He is the author of *Fear No Evil* (1988).

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