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## Trends. Facts and Conclusions in the Mideast

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Abstract: This article discusses relations between Israelis and Palestinians, and a United Nations report involving the Jenin refugee camp.

One of the concerns expressed by Israeli political representatives concerning the recently rescinded initiative of the United Nations to effect a mission that would issue a report concerning recent fighting in the Jenin refugee camp involved the difference between facts and conclusions. Specifically, the Israelis were advocating that only facts and not conclusions be included in the report. Whether one is an a priori believer that the Israelis engaged in a massacre/mass killing of noncombatants (as alleged by representatives of the Palestinian National Authority), that the Israelis engaged in counterterrorist operations in close quarters inhabited by noncombatants, or that some other scenario occurred, one might note that there is little if any difference between a fact and a conclusion.

Facts and conclusions are but interpretations of the world. Neither necessarily possesses a more privileged status as to correspondence to some objective reality, to some resonant or consensual discourse, or to some comparative adaptive advantage among other value-laden criteria. Both can be constructed out of thin air for political advantage. Even if the above were not the case, a fact can spontaneously and irresistibly induce a conclusion as well as the converse.

In conclusion and in fact as to Jenin, the constructs of Palestinian disinformation, an Israeli counterterrorism hypersensitive to avoiding noncombatant death, and other political psychological phenomena may or may not be both or either fact and conclusion. (See Kalish, C., Weissman, M., & Bernstein, D. (2000). Taking decisions seriously: Young children's understanding of conventional truth. *Child Development*, 71, 1289-1308; Krause, M.S. (1973). What it is to learn a fact. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behavior*, 3, 92-99; Machado, A., Lourenco, O., & Silva, F.J. (2000). Facts, concepts, and theories: The shape of psychology's epistemic triangle. *Behavior & Philosophy*, 28, 1-40; Schmemmann, S. (April 26, 2002). Arafat court said to convict 4 Israel seeks. *The New York Times*, <http://www.nytimes.com>.) (Keywords: Israel, Middle East, Noncombatant, Palestine, Political Violence, Terrorism.)