National archives made public by Britain today have revealed that Palestinian Liberation Organization chairman, Yasser Arafat, was unsure as to whether to establish an independent Palestinian state in the Gaza Strip and Judea and Samaria. According to British Foreign Office cables, UK diplomats had been trying to discover whether Arafat was intent on pushing for an independent state, and what the reaction of other Arab states would be to its creation. Arafat feared Israel would claim sovereignty over any future state to ensure its own security was not compromised.

Quote: *"One cable released by the National Archives on Friday records a meeting a diplomat had with Rashad al Shawa, a Palestinian leader in the Gaza Strip, in February 1974, shortly after Shawa had met Arafat to discuss independence. "Rashad rejected the suggestion made to him by Yasser Arafat on the grounds that any attempt to form an independent Palestinian state would provide the Israelis with an opportunity to insist on maintaining their sovereignty over the whole of Palestine for security reasons," the diplomat wrote. "Rashad says the vast majority of the people of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank are in favour of the formation of an independent Palestinian state because of their hatred to the Jordan regime but they do not realise that such a state would not survive without foreign help."*

During the 1970s, Israel was offering peace with the Arab nations in exchange for a return of the territories of the Sinai, Gaza, Judea and Samaria, captured during the Six Day War. But the Arab League rejected Israel's offer of peace, stating there would be no peace, no recognition of Israel and no negotiation with the Jewish state. In 1972, Egyptian President Anwar Sadat boldly proclaimed that he was willing to sacrifice one million soldiers to forcefully take back territories captured by Israel in the previous war. In 1973 the nations of Syria, Egypt and Iraq led a combined attack on Israel during the holiest day of the Jewish calendar - Yom Kippur. Other nations involved in the conflict included Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Lebanon, Kuwait, Libya, Morocco, Algeria, Sudan and Tunisia. Sadat promised to give the territories of the Gaza Strip, Judea and Samaria to Yasser Arafat in the event of an Arab victory in the war. The attack took Israel by surprise, and Israel suffered heavy losses during the first two days of war. Despite being vastly outnumbered, Israel recuperated the losses and took the battle deep into the heart of Egypt and Syria. The United States was calling for a ceasefire, but the Soviet Union rejected these efforts and was engaging in a massive airlift to re-supply the Arab armies. The US then began an airlift of its own to Israel. Two weeks later the Arabs were saved from a crushing defeat, when the United Nations finally called for an immediate ceasefire.

Following the catastrophic defeat, Jordan was fearful that Arafat might move to declare an independent state, which could threaten the stability of the Hashemite Kingdom. Jordan had captured Judea and Samaria during the War of Independence in 1948, and still claimed it as part of its territory. King Hussein offered Arafat a top government post in Jordan in an effort to

quell the unrest among the Palestinians, but this offer was apparently rejected. Hussein later ceded Judea and Samaria 1988, so that a Palestinian state would be established on Israeli land rather than on Jordanian territory.

Quote: *"Arafat aimed to create an independent Palestinian state and strongly advocated the Right of Return for the refugees in Jordan. Hussein later ceded all of the West Bank in 1988, a move meant to ensure that any Palestinian state would be set up on land occupied by Israel and not by Jordan.*

After Arafat's untimely death, world leaders lamented his failure to establish his dream. But as we can see, Arafat's dream was less of a struggle for Palestinian independence, and more of a struggle against the Jewish people. An Israeli disengagement from Judea and Samaria will not bring peace. It did not in 1948, 1956 or 1967. It will not in 2007. The Lord said He would make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people (Zechariah 12:3), and all the nations of the world are presently grappling with this issue in a desperate bid to solve it. Current efforts by Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert to make peace with Israel's neighbours will result in a troublesome time for the Jewish people.

Zechariah 12:2
Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah [and] against Jerusalem. And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it.

Source Reuters , Jewish Virtual Library , Jewish Virtual Library , Jerusalem Post