

Date and Time: Thursday, May 2, 2024 6:41:00PM EEST

Job Number: 223361864

Documents (100)

1. [Israelis surround refugee camp; 3 Palestinians are killed during missile strikes](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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2. [The leadership that's lacking is in the Arab world](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

3. [Let the truth count in country debate](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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4. [Arabs largely unfazed by mutilation incident; The burning and display of American corpses in Iraq last week strikes many as simply just.](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

5. [READERS WRITE](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

6. [Israeli bulldozers flatten Gaza homes](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

7. [Are Suicide Bombings Morally Defensible?](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

8. [Pull out of enclave, some Israelis urge](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

9. [G2: Girls shot as they baked and swept: Palestinian teenagers among growing number of children hit by Israeli snipers during 'Days of Penitence'](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

10. [Bin Laden video: Your security is in your hands ; In a broadcast believed to be authentic, the al-Qaida leader admits his role in 9/11 and says there still are reasons for a 'repeat'](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

11. [*There is no easy cure for Iraq 's kidnap pandemic DAVID GARDNER*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

12. [*Hostage-Takers Teach the French the Limits of Diplomacy*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

13. [*LEADER: DESPOTIC SAUDI REGIME NOW A THREAT TO STABILITY*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
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14. [*WORLD REPORT*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

15. [*Israel suspends pullback from occupied areas: Gun attack on settlers and Arafat's detention of Palestinian militants endanger peace process*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

16. [*We're All Combatants Now*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

17. [*NEWS SUMMARY*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

18. [*Women step forward in West Bank*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

19. [*Smearred in blood, Hezbollah fingerprints all over globe*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

20. [*Islamists join Jordan election contest, providing a fillip for reconciliation after Iraq war: It is unclear whether the polls will succeed in ending criticism of a monarch who since he dissolved parliament in June 1991 has ruled as an autocrat, says Nicolas Pelham in Amman*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

21. [*I just hope I die before I get olde*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

22. [*Bulldozers crush hope in Rafah camp: Palestinians scramble to safety as Israeli attack flattens homes*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

23. [*A tragic loss of Arab dignity laid bare in pictures ROULA KHALAF*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

24. [*READERS WRITE*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

25. [*The Wrong Way to Sell Democracy to the Arab World*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

26. [How not to spread democracy ; Bush's Greater Middle East initiative](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

27. [NEW IRAQ NOT; QUITE A BEACON RESENTMENT MORE WIDESPREAD THAN REFORM](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

28. [The art of biting a helping hand](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

29. [Middle East at the crossroads](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

30. [Syria in their sights](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

31. [*U.S. vetoes resolution demanding U.N. protection for Yasser Arafat*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

32. [*Lives in the balance*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

33. [*Abbas Cancels Meeting With Sharon Over Prisoner Issue*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

34. [*Government Incitement In Egypt and the Sinai Attack*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

35. [*NATION / WORLD DIGEST*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

36. [*Israeli soldier guns down Palentinian; The military calls the shooting an accident and expresses regret*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

37. [Your Say](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

38. [FILM REVIEW The Sinister Evolution of the Most Intimate Form of Political Violence](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

39. [Israeli troops cut off camp in Gaza Attack on homes, buildings in refugee camp leaves three Palestinians dead](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

40. [NEWS SUMMARY](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

41. [THE NEW 'EVIL EMPIRE'](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

42. [*Faithful following on Capitol Hill AMITY SHLAES*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

43. [*A Heresy About Bush*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

44. [*Letters from the people*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

45. [*The ultimate act of will*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

46. [*Charles has lost his bearings in the desert*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

47. [What will Ahmad do? Peaceful soap opera gripped Palestinians](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

48. [Take Elmasry 'to task' over comments: Muslim panellist urges Islamic leader to explain controversial statements](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

49. [U.S. blasts Iraqi homes of suspects; Crackdown on insurgents levels at least 15 houses. U.S. targets homes of suspects in fight against insurgents](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

50. [GOP EXPLOITATION OF 9/11 WAS DISRESPECTFUL, DISGUSTING](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

51. [Logic has got lost in Iraq](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

52. [*Hostages in Iraq : For Europe, it's personal*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

53. [*Jerusalem's Old City is peaceful on Jewish Sabbath*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

54. [*First lady says America can count on her husband; Schwarzenegger also calls the president 'a man of inner strength'*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

55. [*Not a terrorist by any stretch*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

56. [*Palestinians sift through rubble of homes after tunnel raid*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

57. [SEPTEMBER 11: FOLLY TAKEN TO A SCALE WE HAVEN'T SEEN SINCE WWII](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

58. [NEWS SUMMARY](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

59. [Groups think twice before taking checks; Rules for a federal fundraising drive anger some nonprofits: They must show they have no terrorist ties.](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
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60. [Hotbed of moderation: Seat of Islamic learning represents silent majority of Muslims](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

61. [Letters from readers](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to

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62. [Letters from readers](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

63. [Putting faith in the future](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

64. [At a time of division, turbulence in France ; Globalist](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

65. [Letters from readers](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

66. [The Will To Win](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

67. [NEWS SUMMARY](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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News

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68. [A long and winding road: Booker-nominated novel does many of the things that fiction does best](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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News

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69. [Suicide bomber kills 19 in Israel ; Israeli officials renewed calls to retaliate against Palestinian leader Yasir Arafat after the attack in a seaside restaurant.](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

70. [In secular Syria , an Islamic revival](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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News

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71. [19 DEAD IN SUICIDE BOMBING; BLAST AT RESTAURANT IN HAIFA, ISRAEL, INJURES 50](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

72. [Mayor's Israel Trip Marks Higher Profile for Him on Jewish Issues](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

73. [*Israel pleases few with prisoner release*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

74. [*Skepticism Lives on Scarred Jerusalem Street*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

75. [*NEWS SUMMARY*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

76. [*Real men want out of testosterone city*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

77. [*Iraq : Why it was the wrong war on the wrong enemy for the wrong reasons*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

78. [*War-torn nations have lost the will for peace WEEKEND ESSAY*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

79. [*Reform or die for Damascus*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

80. [*Bush nominated as GOP unites Schwarzenegger, first lady praise leadership*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

81. [*Comment & Analysis: Look past the hijab: Muslims in Britain are trying to establish their own institutions and identity. They need allies*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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82. [*By Sharon's standards: It was right to hold Israel to account over Jenin. But why are the US and Britain not in the dock over Falluja ?*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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Oct 31, 2004

83. [*Rich legacy; IN FOCUS : JOHN CORCORAN gives us the lowdown on this year's Writers' Week Listowel.*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to
Oct 31, 2004

84. [*A new party steps up*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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News

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Oct 31, 2004

85. [*DEMOCRACY IS NOW A CLOAK FOR OPPRESSION*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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86. [*LETTERS*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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News

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Oct 31, 2004

87. [*Summit Collapse Leaves Arab Leaders in Disarray*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

88. [WORLD REPORT](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

89. [CAMPAIGN CONFIDENTIAL](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

90. [LETTERS](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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News

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91. [Far from victory](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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News

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92. [Follow the road to Damascus](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

93. [*Egypt Confronts Double-edged Sword of Reform*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

94. [*False Messiahs and Whirling Dervishes: A Scholar's Fresh Take on an Old Topic*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

95. [*Lifting the veil on Muslim culture; Controversial leader of Hamilton-area Muslims says he is committed to bridging communities*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

96. [*Our victory over terror starts with a strong, secure Israel*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

97. [*BY ENDORSING ARIEL SHARON'S PLAN GEORGE BUSH HAS LEGITIMISED TERRORISM; WHAT BETTER RECRUITING SERGEANT COULD BIN LADEN HAVE THAN THE*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

98. [*For Saudis, jihad abroad is terror at home*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

99. [*LETTERS TO THE EDITOR*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

100. [*THE WEEK*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jun 01, 2003 to Oct 31, 2004

Israelis surround refugee camp; 3 Palestinians are killed during missile strikes

Telegraph Herald (Dubuque, IA)

May 18, 2004 Tuesday

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Section: National/World; Pg. a5

Length: 896 words

Byline: ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dateline: RAFAH, Gaza Strip

Body

Israeli tanks cut off the Rafah refugee camp from the rest of Gaza Monday, sending panicked residents fleeing. Palestinians said an Israeli helicopter fired missiles at the camp hours later that killed three people.

Early Tuesday, Palestinian security officials said armored bulldozers moved to the edge of the camp near the border with Egypt and began leveling land in an Israeli-controlled zone. It wasn't clear if it was the start of a large-scale move against the camp.

Israel wants to widen a military patrol road between Rafah and the Egyptian border after Palestinians blew up an armored vehicle there last week, killing five soldiers assigned to destroy arms-smuggling tunnels.

The Israeli helicopter fired three missiles at the surrounded refugee camp, killing three people and wounding seven, one critically. Hospital officials said at least two of the dead were gunmen, but the wounded were civilians, including a 35-year-old woman.

The Israeli military said the target was a group of armed Palestinians approaching Israeli forces. Israel Radio has reported that troops were prepared to fight from house to house in the camp.

Frantic residents on Monday loaded belongings onto trucks and donkey carts and headed to the neighboring town, also named Rafah. The U.N. Relief and Works Agency set up shelters in schools and pitched a tent camp.

Women balanced mattresses on their heads, children carried blankets and men carted away sofas. One man lowered a cooking gas container by rope from a second-floor window, and another piled fire wood onto a horse cart.

Raouf Abu Jazar said dozens of people crowded his store, stocking up on rice, bottled water and baby food. "Many had no money to pay, but I gave them what they want, because we all are brothers," he said.

The Arab Group called on members to take "necessary measures" against Israel for violating international law.

Palestinian militants planted bombs around Rafah, a residents said. A 23-year-old Palestinian was killed early Tuesday when a bomb he was assembling exploded, they said.

Israelis surround refugee camp; 3 Palestinians are killed during missile strikes

Israeli security officials said they plan to expand the patrol road to a width of 250 yards, almost double its current size.

in some places. The army is also considering digging a deep trench, or even a moat, to block the tunnels that lead from Egypt to Rafah.

The Israeli patrol road was carved out in the 1980s after Israel and Egypt signed a peace treaty and Israel withdrew from the Sinai Peninsula.

The international border created then went through the camp, and thousands of houses were destroyed on both sides to create the Israeli-controlled zone, with compensation paid to the displaced.

Yuval Dvir, an Israeli reserve colonel who oversaw that destruction, said Israel must leave Gaza now, and the plan to widen the patrol road would not enhance Israeli security. "We are following our guts and not our brains," he told Israel Army Radio.

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon has proposed a unilateral pullout of soldiers and settlers from Gaza, but his party rejected the plan. Officials said Monday that he would make minor revisions in the plan and present it to his Cabinet later.

A senior Israeli official said an eventual pullout would not stop Israeli operations like the move into the Rafah camp.

The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said Israeli intelligence shows the Palestinians, supported by Hezbollah and **Hamas** abroad, are trying to create a situation in Gaza like the one in Lebanon, by bringing in long-range missiles.

Hezbollah guerrillas pounded Israel's north with Katyusha rockets for two decades in a guerrilla war that ended with Israel's pullout from southern Lebanon in 2000. Hezbollah is armed by Iran and Syria.

Deputy Defense Minister Zeev Boim said civilian hardships are unintentional but unavoidable. Some people in Rafah, he said, "rent their houses for digging tunnels, so not all of the people there are blameless."

A senior Israeli military official said high-ranking Palestinian security officers are involved in arms smuggling.

Palestinian security officials were not immediately available for comment.

Secretary of State Colin Powell denounced the destruction of houses, a rare U.S. criticism of Israeli policy.

On Monday, Palestinian Foreign Minister Nabil Shaath pleaded with National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice during a meeting in Berlin to stop the Israeli offensive. Shaath told Rice he has received calls from fearful relatives.

"She (Rice) said that she and President Bush will act to stop what is going on in Rafah," Shaath said.

The U.S. ambassador to Israel, Daniel Kurtzer, met Sunday with the Israeli army chief, Lt. Gen. Moshe Yaalon, to discuss the Israeli operation.

"We understand Israel's need to defend itself from attacks, but as a matter of policy we oppose the use of home demolitions to achieve this end and we are concerned about the humanitarian consequences of such demolitions," said embassy spokesman Paul Patin.

Palestinian legislator Mohammed Hijazi said hundreds of families have left the camp since the exodus began Sunday; local officials put the number of evacuees at more than 2,000. UNRWA said Israel has demolished or damaged nearly 2,000 houses in Rafah since 2000.

Amr Moussa, Arab League secretary-general, condemned the destruction and charged that Israel's leaders are wrecking chances for peace. "Who would sit down with these people?" he asked.

Israelis surround refugee camp; 3 Palestinians are killed during missile strikes

Graphic

AP Photo

Load-Date: May 18, 2004

End of Document

The leadership that's lacking is in the Arab world

St. Petersburg Times (Florida)

October 9, 2003 Thursday 0 South Pinellas Edition

Copyright 2003 Times Publishing Company

Section: EDITORIAL; Pg. 21A; LETTER

Length: 1843 words

Series: LETTERS

Body

Re: An absence of leaders, editorial, Oct. 7.

It occurs to me that if the St. Petersburg Times believes that every leader in the current Middle East conflict is inadequate, then perhaps it is the Times that has an inadequate grasp of the true nature of the Middle East conflict.

Two of the current leaders are democratically elected, Ariel Sharon and George W. Bush, and the rest are not. Those who are democratically elected represent the will of their people. The Israelis elected Sharon because they had tried the techniques you espouse as "leadership." These approaches - giving away land, ignoring the other side's military buildup, and engaging in unconditional negotiations - were miserable failures, and the Israeli people refuse to negotiate under this formula any longer. President Bush, to his credit, refuses to make exceptions to his war against terrorism in order to prod the Israelis into more pointless negotiations.

More "leadership" is desperately needed. The Palestinians need leadership that will not only fight terrorism but also stop hate-inspired education, media-inspired incitement, and provide transparent government with due process. The Arab world needs democracy, due process and equal rights for women and homosexuals. Demanding across-the-board "leadership" without recognizing the cause of the problem and the need for the will of peoples to be expressed and respected is hollow and smacks of political correctness.

Jonathan D. Reich, Lakeland

Taking a stand for peace

Re: Pilots to be disciplined for protest, Sept. 26.

Applause, cheers, hooray and amen! I want to congratulate the Israeli pilots who signed the letter refusing to participate in the bombing of Palestinian terrorist leaders when it is reliably known that these raids will cause collateral damage to civilians. These brave men have put morals above their careers.

I hope that most Israelis agree with them. I would also like to believe that when viewed by Palestinians and other Muslims around the world it is accepted that because a government can't compromise, the individual person can.

Hopefully, this will inspire those backing the Palestinian effort to rethink peaceful solutions. The Mideast problem cannot be decided by killing. It must be gained by the individual taking a stand for peace.

The leadership that's lacking is in the Arab world

Michael Mitchell, Oldsmar

Dedicated to Israel's destruction

Re: Syria hit shows Israel is stuck, Oct. 7.

Susan Taylor Martin's incisive column highlighting the problem posed by Syria is very timely. Our government has made it clear that Syria harbors and supports terrorists. Despite our warnings, Syria continues its support of terrorist groups, such as Hezbollah and Palestinian Islamic Jihad. The hypocritical United Nations and its European and Arab supporters even have the gall to give Syria a key role in the United Nations.

Of particular interest to us in the Tampa Bay area is the fact that Ramadan Abdullah Shallah, the current head of Palestinian Islamic Jihad, was brought to Tampa as an "Islamic scholar" by Sami Al-Arian, the University of South Florida professor in jail awaiting trial on terrorism charges. Shallah continues to dispatch homicide bombers from his sanctuary in Syria. It should be noted that Shallah would not allow the name Israel to be used in his classes at USF. In 1996 Shallah wrote that Palestinians would "not concede a single meter" of land to Israel.

As for the suggestion that perhaps a charismatic Palestinian like Marwan Barghouti might provide an answer to the problem, this appears to be wishful thinking as he has sponsored terror and, like Arafat and Shallah, seems dedicated to the destruction of Israel and the creation of an Arab Palestine in its place.

What should be clear to those with open minds is the fact that Israel is willing to accept an Arab Palestine that poses no threat to its existence. What, sadly, is equally clear is that there is no Palestinian leader willing to accept the existence of the Jewish state of Israel in its ancient homeland.

Norman N. Gross, president, PRIMER, chairperson,

Anti-hate Committee, Greater Florida B'nai B'rith,

Palm Harbor

Israel's foes are many

Re: Syria hit shows Israel is stuck.

Susan Martin's column regarding the Israeli strike on Syria is off the mark on several key points.

First, Martin describes those Palestinians who wish to replace Israel with a fundamentalist Islamic state as "a small but radical faction." Radical they certainly are but both Jewish and Palestinian polls show that **Hamas** enjoys popularity equal to Arafat's. Four separate Jerusalem Media and Communication Center polls in 2002 each found that more than 4 in 10 Palestinians favored liberating "all of historical Palestine," which just happens to include Israel. Those factions can hardly be considered "small."

Martin's idea that Israel negotiate with the Islamic terror groups in a manner that the British did with the Irish Republican Army is faulty in comparison. The IRA sought only independence, not to replace England with a fundamentally religious state. Israel is facing a large faction that wants no compromise, and who see the West Bank as a stepping stone to Tel Aviv.

Greg Buete, St. Petersburg

The leadership that's lacking is in the Arab world

Israel is protecting itself

Re: Israel and the Palestinians.

If Mexico or Canada were launching terrorist homicide bombings from within their borders upon U.S. citizens in our territory, would the United Nations call for America to be restrained in our response? And would the United States even listen to those absurd suggestions? Of course not!

Those who would blame Israel for protecting its own population from terrorists are delusional in denying the facts.

Here's a fact that is undeniable:

If the Palestinians laid down their arms, they would get peace, and would achieve their goal of statehood. If Israelis laid down their arms, they would get annihilated.

Except for the death of innocents, terrorism achieves nothing.

Jeff Cabaniss, Cocoa

U.S. needs to wake up

Re: Israel to build homes in West Bank and Crying for choices in the Middle East, by Thomas L. Friedman, Oct. 3.

It appears our government's policy toward the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is in complete disarray; the American-backed road map to peace is defunct.

The Israeli Housing Ministry announced plans to build 600 new homes in three large Jewish settlements in the West Bank. This follows by one day the Israeli government decision to continue building a wall deep within the West Bank to guard Jewish settlements.

The Bush administration made no formal condemnation of Israel's actions. Israel's prime minister has been a leading proponent of settlement building for decades.

In a poll by Zogby International in the October issue of The Link, a publication of Americans for Middle East Understanding, it was reported that Arab attitudes toward Americans and American culture were positive. However, 72 percent of those polled said the Palestinian issue was the most important in the Middle East, and 89 percent disapproved of U.S. policy toward the Palestinians.

Tom Friedman, normally a supporter of Israel, concludes his article on choices as follows: "a vast majority of Israelis want a decent, normal society, but their ideologically driven leaders are lost in space And the Bush team, which should be acting as a reality check, has fallen so deep into the pocket of Ariel Sharon you can't even find it anymore."

We seem to have fallen asleep on the Israeli-Palestinian problem while focusing on Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran and Syria. We don't seem to be listening to the people who live in the area. I hope we wake up.

Joseph A. Mahon, St. Petersburg

Turning a blind eye to terrorism

At the United Nations a Security Council resolution has been introduced for Israel to stop committing acts that could threaten regional security. Who's kidding whom? The United Nations has always turned a blind eye to those who have been upsetting the so-called "regional security" for decades. When is the last time the United Nations held any of the Arab nations accountable for the acts of terrorism perpetrated against innocent civilians? When has the

The leadership that's lacking is in the Arab world

United Nations censored the Palestinian Authority, specifically Yasser Arafat concerning his lack of control and indifference over Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, Hezbollah and other terrorist cells?

Speaking of Arafat, we are told by Forbes that he is one of the wealthiest men in the world. He is worth millions. Has the United Nations initiated an investigation making him accountable for the millions that he has accumulated in the past few years? Have American taxpayers contributed to this as well?

Just as we Americans and this administration reserve the right to destroy bomb factories and cells of terror in Iraq, so, too, Israel has the right to destroy these same cells before they are used to blow up the lives of Israeli citizens, both Jews and Arabs.

Hela Crown-Tamir, Tarpon Springs

Better way to blunt OPEC

Re: A patriotic tax that we'll never pay, Oct. 7.

Tom Friedman is a great journalist and an expert on the Middle East. I've enjoyed his columns and books for years.

Unfortunately, when he strays from his field of expertise, he runs onto the rocks. In this column he promotes the idea of a \$1 per gallon tax on gasoline as a means of achieving a host of good things. He fails to measure the effects of an increased tax on the current recovering economy and, further, panders to the Luddites of the radical environmental groups.

Contrary to his argument, the way to defang OPEC is to cut the price of fuel by drilling for more of it at home and getting more of it from other non-OPEC suppliers. Any Econ 101 student knows that if the market is flooded with lots of oil, the price will inevitably drop. That's the approach to put a crimp in OPEC and also the way to provide for the longer-term benefits of all consumers worldwide.

So, Tom, forget the tax and go for helping the investments in Kurgistan, Russia, and other places that have enormous reserves of oil and get on board the drilling initiative in the northern wastes of the Alaskan arctic. By these means we could blunt OPEC and also have plenty of oil to burn as we each see fit while keeping our economy growing.

John J. Christman, Tierra Verde

Energy bill seeks short-term answers

Re: Back president's energy bill, letter, Oct. 7.

American dependence on foreign oil is a great cause for concern. But instead of likening environmentalism to fanaticism, blaming Democrats, and promoting the president's energy bill, why don't we look at the real reason we are in this mess?

There are new technologies and better, cleaner energy sources that have been discovered or are just waiting to be discovered. Too many interest groups like oil companies put such considerable pressure on the government that other fuel options are barely explored and rarely developed.

The president's energy bill is only interested in short-term solutions. Raping our natural resources to drain that last drop of oil will only buy a little more time. Do we really want to leave future generations an even bigger mess?

Janna Roman, Dunedin

Graphic

CARTOON, DON ADDIS; "FINAL NOTE:" Two Austrians standing in the hills of Hollywood, Calif. One shouts "RECALL-AAAAH!" as the other blows a large horn labeled "CALIFORNIA CARNY-COPIA."

Load-Date: October 9, 2003

End of Document

Let the truth count in country debate

Western Morning News (Plymouth)

April 1, 2004

default

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Section: Features; General; Letters; Pg. 13

Length: 849 words

Body

It is unfortunate that those committing views to paper on rural issues like shooting do not research their subject matter sufficiently, to give a view representative of the truth. One thing that the countryside lobby must do is to ensure that those who are out of touch, as evidenced by correspondence and prejudice, are educated better. That has been a failing from the past, perhaps.

Those connected with the countryside know when incorrect comment is made (and in fact laugh at it) but that should not be an acceptable distraction. For any issue, when the only approach used is an emotionally charged one without basis of truth and fact, it is clear that their cause has been lost.

Logic fails these types of approaches, too. For example, not that I have been fox hunting but if anyone considers how any dog, a pack animal, dispatches its prey, invariably it is a swift bite in the right place.

Sadly, it is the domestic cats, of which we own 8-9 million in this country, which enjoy cruel teasing and carnage.

Then, of course, the cynic could challenge the billions we spend on our pets - just look at the exotic flavours of pet food or the cost of the average vet bill. This is before we look at the hundreds of millions in investments held by the big animal charities - from the RSPCA to the Donkey Sanctuary. With all this we could save the world's endangered species if we were really concerned about them - let alone all the starving and dying people in the world who I believe come before animals.

It would be good if the extreme elements of the animal activists concentrated their efforts on some issues which they choose not to make so emotive.

For example, we await their humane solutions for controlling the growing problems of herring gulls, feral pigeons, the ruddy duck, magpies, badgers and their TB, urban foxes, dealing with growing cases of infestation by rats and mice and then down to the simple issues of the wasp nest by the children's play area, the plague of head lice endemic in our schools, the ants' nest in the kitchen, the irritating flying insects at night.

Come, come, why do "they" think that they have sole prerogative in drawing the lines of acceptability? All life is God made, entitled to its existence.

All I am trying to do is balance the debate. Please continue to enjoy and benefit from your personal choices about animals, pets and livestock and help to defend sensible countryside management by destroying the falsehoods presented by those who have been brainwashed by the misguided and ignorant! Philip Milton Braunton North Devon Poor comparison I WAS appalled at Patrick Nicholls' comparison between the assassination of SS General

Let the truth count in country debate

Heydrich Gauleiter of occupied Czechoslovakia and that of Sheikh Ahmed Yassin (WMN, March 25). General Heydrich was the ruthless Nazi governor of an occupied country, whereas Sheikh Ahmed Yassin was considered, by many Arabs, as a Palestinian patriot fighting for the liberation of his country from the illegal occupation by the Israel army.

From the article, it would appear that political murder is not only permissible but morally justified for some.

Mr Nicholls quite rightly condemns the immorality of the hundreds of Israeli men, women and children murdered and mutilated at the hands of Hamas suicide bombers but totally fails to mention the even greater number of innocent Palestinian men, women and children murdered by the Israeli Army of occupation and the wanton destruction carried out in that country on the instructions of Prime Minister Sharon.

It is a fact that Jan Kubis and Josef Gabcik were trained by us like a large number of British and other Allied agents sent into occupied territory on various missions during the last war. It is also a fact that the initial request for Heydrich's execution came from the Czech Government in exile in Britain. I can also vouch for the fact that the death of Heydrich was met with pride and joy by the oppressed Czech population although the reprisals were terrible.

However I would remind Mr Nicholls and your readers that it is not Israel which is illegally occupied and oppressed but Palestine. Israel has ignored 35 UN resolutions instructing them to leave occupied Palestine, expelled Palestinians from their homes and used their land to install Jewish settlers. Now they are building a Berlin-type wall which further encroaches on that country's territory.

These are facts which are seldom stated for fear of being branded anti-Semitic. Unless these injustices are redressed there will be no peace in the Middle East.

Harvey Thane Higher Clovelly North Devon Thatcher's legacy I CAN enlighten your correspondent Liz Clarkson on why her son cannot get a position as an apprentice plumber. If he was trying to be a carpenter, electrician or other tradesman, he would get the same answer.

We have to go back to the Margaret Thatcher years when she stopped all apprenticeships, brought in all those silly YTS schemes and gave employers the right to hire and fire at will. It was the beginning of the end of all fairness in our industry.

A Deller St Austell

Load-Date: April 2, 2004

Arabs largely unfazed by mutilation incident;
The burning and display of American corpses in Iraq last week strikes many
as simply just.

The Philadelphia Inquirer

APRIL 6, 2004 Tuesday CITY-D EDITION

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The Philadelphia Inquirer
Found on Philly . com

Section: NATIONAL; Pg. A15

Length: 815 words

Byline: Hannah Allam INQUIRER FOREIGN STAFF

Dateline: AMMAN, Jordan

Body

One question emerged for many Arabs who watched the grisly images this week of four American civilians whose bodies were burned and mutilated after an ambush in Iraq:

So what?

While the horrific killings Wednesday in the restive town of Fallujah outraged Americans and prompted the U.S.-led coalition to vow an "overwhelming" response, the incident barely registered in the Middle East, where the big news was an Enrique Iglesias concert in Egypt. The dead contractors were largely forgotten.

"Who cares?" asked Fida Alsha'er, a columnist for a Jordanian women's magazine. "It's another example of how American life is considered something very expensive, very important, while the Arab life is worth nothing."

The Uncle Sam restaurant sits in the heart of Amman, the Jordanian capital, and its sign is all-American red, white and blue. But that's where the kinship with the United States ends. Tamer, 24, a waiter who would not give his last name, watched Egyptian soap operas at the cafe Saturday instead of Western channels that featured persisting questions of when the United States would retaliate.

"It's not good to celebrate mutilation, but Iraq is an Arab country under American occupation," Tamer said with a shrug. "Iraqis have the right to fight back."

The four Americans, who worked for a North Carolina security firm, were ambushed as they drove through Fallujah on Wednesday. A jeering mob kicked, beat and dragged their charred corpses through the street. Two bodies were shown hung on a bridge over the Euphrates River. Clerics on Friday denounced the dismemberment as a grave sin in Islam, but stopped short of condemning the killings.

Arabs largely unfazed by mutilation incident; The burning and display of American corpses in Iraq last week strikes many as simply just.

The two most-watched Arab satellite channels, Al Arabiya and Al Jazeera, showed unusual restraint in their treatment of the images Wednesday. Arabiya aired most of the scene, but blurred the bodies. Al Jazeera refrained from showing any photos. It was not clear whether the decision was out of sensitivity or because the U.S.-appointed Iraqi Governing Council has in the past banned both stations for airing "inflammatory" footage.

In Iraq - as well as in Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Algeria and Egypt - newspapers ran initial reports of the incident at the bottom of the front page or buried inside. By last weekend, the papers either ignored developments in the story or stressed the failure of U.S. troops to stop the bloodshed in Iraq.

On Saturday, CNN International featured relatives eulogizing the dead men as freedom-loving heroes. Arabic-language news channels showed footage of Iraqis ripping, burning and trampling on the American flag at an unrelated demonstration. Most Arab media never even identified the slain men.

"There is so much animosity against Americans that people, on the whole, don't regard this mutilation as against individual corpses," said Labib Kamhawi, a Jordanian political analyst. "They feel this was something done against American policy, against America."

Amr al-Azm, 40, a Syrian archeologist, has given lectures in the United States on Arab jubilation at American deaths, particularly after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. He likens the situation to a speed demon cruising down the highway and cutting off other drivers. When the fast car crashes, Azm said, the gut reaction of the law-abiding drivers is, "He got what he deserves."

That instinctive satisfaction of mighty America taking a loss, he added, was only intensified by Israel's killing last month of Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, the spiritual leader of the Palestinian group **Hamas**.

An Israeli gunship fired three rockets at the elderly sheikh as he left a Gaza City mosque after prayers, sparking massive protests throughout the Arab world.

A shadowy group calling itself Brigades of Martyr Ahmed Yassin claimed responsibility for the Fallujah ambush in a statement that, like the attack itself, received little attention in the Arab world.

"It's not a big incident in the daily litany of woes in the Middle East," Azm said in a telephone interview from his home in Damascus. "The Arab media is full of this stuff every single day."

"Just last week, we saw the mutilated remains of Sheikh Yassin and his wheelchair. Was there similar outrage in America over that?"

Hundreds of American troops in Iraq never saw the gruesome Fallujah footage in full because many satellite TV networks didn't show it and many Internet sites are blocked on U.S. bases.

Marine Lt. Col. John Pioli, however, happened to be in Jordan at the time and watched a snippet of the incident on Arab television.

"For 10 minutes, I was disgusted, upset, extremely angry, and thinking that being here is a waste of my time," said Pioli, who is helping to rebuild the Iraqi military.

"Then I thought, 'Nope, there's still too much work to be done.' I want to do what I need to do so I can prevent my son from ever having to come here."

Contact reporter Hannah Allam at hallam@krwashington.com.

Load-Date: August 24, 2005

Arabs largely unfazed by mutilation incident; The burning and display of American corpses in Iraq last week strikes many as simply just.

End of Document

READERS WRITE

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

February 18, 2004 Wednesday

Home Edition

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The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Section: Editorial;; Letters

Length: 784 words

Byline: VIC JACKSON, BEVERLY MULLINS, KATHY BROWNE, ERIC RIDENOUR, JOYCE M. BUIS, ELLEN SPEARS, BILL LENTZ, TONY HAMMOCK

Body

Gay marriage: Responses to "Ban of gay marriage advances," Page One, Feb. 17

Amendment denies rights

As a gay black man, I am dismayed that the state Senate has voted for a constitutional amendment that would curtail my civil rights.

After being imprisoned for 27 years for civil rights activism, Nelson Mandela insisted on civil rights protections for gay and lesbian South Africans. This was the first time in the history of the world that gay people's civil rights had been defined in a national constitution. Now in my own country I see my elected leaders doing the opposite --- using their power to enshrine hate and bigotry against gay people in the state constitution.

For the Journal-Constitution

I grew up in a segregated Georgia and have gradually begun to feel that I have achieved a degree of equality. Now it's happening all over again. I am being judged as less worthy and less deserving simply because I am gay.

VIC JACKSON, Atlanta

No, it safeguards an institution

While some would have you believe that SR595 is about hate, it is not.

Gay Americans can celebrate their partnerships, unions --- whatever they prefer to call them. I have no doubt that many of them are loving, caring relationships. But most Americans believe that marriage is between a male and a female. It has always been that way, and I hope it will remain so.

BEVERLY MULLINS, Tiger

READERS WRITE

Middle East: Responses to "Palestinians join nonviolent struggle against Israeli occupation," @issue, Feb. 16

Bloodshed still preferred method

Nonviolent Palestinians? Since when? Who blew up a bus in Jerusalem two weeks ago? Swedish terrorists?

Hamas, Fatah and the Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigade are still threatening to destroy the "Zionist Entity" (Israel) and "throw the Jews into the sea." Building the wall of separation is a last-ditch effort by the Israelis to stem the rising tide of terrorism in their country. Nothing else has worked, and at least it is nonviolent.

KATHY BROWNE, Toccoa

Article welcome

Thank you for publishing the article by Adam Shapiro of the International Solidarity Movement.

Such articles, openly critical of Israel's brutal occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, are rarely seen in the mainstream U.S. media. You've put your readers in a better position to make a more informed decision about the Palestinian/Israeli conflict.

ERIC RIDENOUR, Alpharetta

It poses no threat to mainstream values

My husband and I, who have been married for nearly 50 years and have four children and seven grandchildren, can't see what threat gay marriage poses to our family or to social values.

The writer who equates same-sex unions to child marriages, premarital sex and pornography ("Christians' concerns biblically based," Letters, Feb. 16) sounds hateful and intellectually dishonest. And he says God is on his side. We really doubt that.

JOYCE M. BUIS, Atlanta

Responses to Susan Wells' essay "Gay parents know that love matters more than gender," @issue, Feb. 13

Essay exposes phoniness of foes

Hurray for Susan Wells' forthright article on the importance of celebrating loving families, without regard to gender orientation of the parents. Her candid personal account clearly shows that opponents of same-sex marriage are attacking family values, not defending them.

In fact, current efforts to outlaw gay marriage are driven in part by a cynical, election-year effort to mobilize intolerance to achieve short-term political gain. Georgia's proposed state constitutional amendment is part of a nationally coordinated assault on the rights of gay and lesbian families and should be opposed by all who care about strengthening families.

ELLEN SPEARS, Atlanta

Tired of aggressive push for inclusion

Gay parent Susan Wells asserts that the "right wing of the straight world" is out to get her and her peers. That's an example of the whole "We're here, we're queer and we're in your face" mentality that seems to be a survival response from a small minority.

Most people are not homosexual, but that does not imply this majority seeks to ruin the lives of gay folks. More likely, most people don't spend a lot of time thinking about a subset whose members identify themselves first and foremost by what they like to do in their bedrooms.

READERS WRITE

The gay lifestyle's shouting agenda for recognition and acceptance is perhaps too aggressive. Please --- give it a rest, already.

BILL LENTZ, Cumming

Shame on senator

A citizen tries to make an appointment with his U.S. senator, Zell Miller, and is charged with trespassing after being refused an appointment with his "public servant"? ("Iraq war protester in court today," Metro, Feb. 17)

The real criminal here is not the protester, but the senator. This is a prime example of democracy not at work.

TONY HAMMOCK, Atlanta

Graphic

Photo: Construction continues in Israel on a wall that will separate the outskirts of Jerusalem from the West Bank. / KEVIN FRAYER / AP; Photo: The Rev. Jeffrey Jordan (left) and David Pickett exchange rings Saturday in Philadelphia's Love Park. / MIKE MERGEN / Associated Press

Load-Date: February 18, 2004

End of Document

Israeli bulldozers flatten Gaza homes

Guardian Weekly

February 5, 2004 / February 11, 2004

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Section: LE MONDE; Pg. 29

Length: 770 words

Byline: Gilles Paris in Rafah

Highlight: Rafah is turning to rubble as army crushes buildings in hunt for tunnels

Body

Two Israeli watchtowers can be seen behind a steel wall that stands several metres high. In the distance an Egyptian flag flaps in the violent wind that often sweeps across this Israeli-controlled section of the border at the southern tip of the Gaza strip. On the far side, between the wall and the first group of Palestinian houses in the town of Rafah that are still inhabited, there stretches a no man's land of sand and rubble.

With each new Israeli incursion, this area of wasteland gets larger. The Israeli army is looking for tunnels that the Palestinians have bored into Egypt, and which, the Israelis claim, are used to bring in arms consignments. Armoured bulldozers are regularly sent in to demolish homes thought to conceal shafts leading down to the secret tunnels.

Fauze al-Shaher, a 43-year-old farmer, is convinced that it will soon be his turn. Between the border and his home the only thing still standing is a house that one of his cousins vacated several weeks ago. And yet Israeli soldiers have already been through al-Shaher's house with a fine-tooth comb. "They came with dogs during the night, threatened us with their guns, grouped us together in the entrance hall and then searched the place from top to bottom," he says. The soldiers did not find anything, but al-Shaher is not reassured: "The tunnels are only an excuse."

Al-Shaher is proud to belong to one of the largest families in Rafah, and one that has given its name to the district of Shahara. Six months ago two of his cousins were killed during an Israeli incursion, bringing to 25 the number of family members who have died since the beginning of the intifada in September 2000. Around his home, houses belonging to other relatives have already been demolished.

Next door one of his aunts, Jundia al-Shaher, is also expecting the worst. She points to the various parts of her house that have been destroyed -- some of them only two days previously. She and her family now camp in rooms on the ground floor. The blade of a bulldozer accidentally made a hole in one of her walls when depositing a load of earth to block access to the no-man's-land. She has plugged it with a piece of mattress.

By the front door of al-Shaher's house, which was recently hemmed in by piles of rubble left by an Israeli earth-mover, his granddaughter playfully sticks her school ruler into pockmarks left in the wall by gunfire. His eldest son, Yunes, has decided to leave for Egypt: "I no longer believe in anything or anyone. I have no expectations."

His father agrees: "The Palestinian Authority, Hamas and foreign diplomats come to see us, but none of them does anything for us. The only people I respect are the international pacifists. By stepping in front of the Israelis they have sometimes made it possible for families not to leave empty-handed."

Israeli bulldozers flatten Gaza homes

Two such activists lost their lives in Rafah in 2003 -- an American woman who was crushed by a bulldozer, and a Briton shot by the Israelis. Draconian rules have since been imposed to restrict access to the Gaza Strip.

Rafah is the poorest town in the Palestinian territories. The majority of its people are refugees and, according to estimates by international organisations, more than 70% of the population is unemployed. Cases of malnutrition have recently been observed there. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian refugees (UNRWA) says 72 more homes have been destroyed in less than a month; and almost 10,000 Palestinians in Rafah have been made homeless since September 2000.

Talal Hamdan, who works at the town hall, says 1,500 homes have been demolished, 1,000 others damaged and 267 people killed, including 80 children and 27 women. He admits that "there are some tunnels". An Israeli spokesman is more specific: "Thirty-four tunnels were destroyed in 2002, 40 in 2003, and four since the beginning of this year." However, the army has not so far discovered any sophisticated weapons.

Hamdan, like al-Shaher, lives in an exposed part of town. And like him he has not made any particular arrangements for the future. "There's a shortage of housing and I don't have any money. The town hall already has enough trouble paying its staff, so I can't rely on it to rehouse me."

Building work in the less exposed districts cannot keep up with the rate of destruction imposed by the Israelis. "What we need is \$ 25m," says Paul McCann, a spokesman for UNWRA, which faces constant financial problems. So far only 288 homes have been built by the agency throughout the Gaza Strip, and more than 400 other projects are still waiting for finance. *January 30*

Graphic

Photo, A Palestinian woman searches through the wreckage of her house in Rafah, Khalil Hamra/AP

Load-Date: February 13, 2004

Are Suicide Bombings Morally Defensible?

The Chronicle of Higher Education

October 24, 2003, Friday

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Section: THE CHRONICLE REVIEW; Pg. 12

Length: 3051 words

Byline: RICHARD WOLIN

Body

In recent weeks a publishing scandal involving charges of anti-Semitism has dominated the feuilleton sections of leading German dailies. The debate has embroiled one of the nation's most respected publishing houses, the Frankfurt-based, left-liberal firm of Suhrkamp Verlag. It has also implicated the world-renowned philosopher Jürgen Habermas for having made a controversial publishing recommendation. More generally, the dispute raises an issue of fundamental importance concerning the ground rules of the continuing, fractious debate over Middle East politics -- an issue familiar to American academics: At what point does vigorous criticism of Israeli policy dovetail with rank anti-Semitism?

At the center of the maelstrom in Germany is a slim volume by the philosopher Ted Honderich, who until his retirement taught at University College London. The book, *After the Terror*, is an attempt to reassess global politics in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks. Written in an offhand, chatty style, its main point -- unarguable, as far as it goes -- is that first-world nations bear responsibility for third-world nations' impoverishment. Yet the lines of clarity -- and reasonability -- quickly blur when Honderich attempts to define the nature of that responsibility and its consequences. At issue, in his view, is not just political responsibility for the deleterious economic consequences of American-backed globalization policies on the part of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Trade Organization, but also a direct moral responsibility allegedly shared by all Westerners. What makes that argument problematic is its blanket refusal to acknowledge any indigenous causes of third-world poverty, be they geographic, climatological, regional, sociological, or political. Rather than promote intelligent reflection on the causes of global social injustice, Honderich is interested in playing a simple blame game. Because Westerners (or at least a good number of them) live affluently, while most third-world denizens languish in squalor, the former are by definition morally culpable exploiters.

Further suspicions about Honderich's acuity surface when one searches for the connecting link between his nominal topos -- third-world misery -- and his 9/11-inspired title. He endorses the perilous view that, under certain circumstances, the 2001 terrorist attacks could be construed as a justifiable response to global impoverishment. In various passages, he apotheosizes Osama bin Laden as the avenging angel of the wretched of the earth. Since the attackers proceeded without a reasonable expectation that their crimes "would work to serve a justifying end," their actions remain condemnable.

Conversely, had the perpetrators reason to believe that, in Honderich's words, "the killing of several thousand people would in due course serve the end of the principle of humanity," their actions would have passed the Honderich test of justifiable political homicide. In the end, Honderich derives considerable solace from the fact that

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the 9/11 assaults "were indeed attacks on the principal symbols of world capitalism." Therein lies their partial moral legitimacy.

Of course, the major problem with this interpretation is that bin Laden's agenda was explicitly couched in the language of fundamentalist Islam rather than class injustice. His goal was not to liberate fellow Arabs from capitalist oppression, but to enslave them under a Taliban-style theocracy.

A more recent essay by Honderich, chillingly titled "Terrorism for Humanity," reinforces the conclusion that he acknowledges few limits on acts of violence committed in the name of the oppressed: "African terrorism against our rich countries would be right," proclaims the Canadian-born philosopher, "if it had a reasonable hope of success." But from the standpoint of moral philosophy, it is not "instrumental" criteria like success or failure that determine whether or not an action is right; rather, it is the action's intrinsic qualities. Terrorism is morally wrong because it targets innocent civilians. From a moral point of view, the fact that it is practiced by a group with which one happens to sympathize changes nothing. A history of political violence demonstrates that numerous admirable causes have been vitiated by their choice of murderous methods.

Many of the flaws in *After the Terror* had already surfaced at the time of its initial publication, in 2002, by Edinburgh University Press. When Honderich presented his ideas on "morally justifiable terrorism" in lecture form to North American audiences, vigorous protests ensued. As one Brown University student wrote to the campus newspaper: "It is incomprehensible that a university professor would seek to rationalize murder ... and grotesque that Brown would bring him to campus."

To defuse the controversy, Honderich, who hails from a wealthy publishing family, agreed to contribute £5,000 in royalties to Oxfam. But, to the philosopher's chagrin, the British relief agency pointedly refused to accept the donation, on ethical grounds. As its statement explained: "Oxfam's purpose is to overcome poverty and suffering. We believe that the lives of all human beings are of equal value. We do not endorse acts of violence."

Apparently, Suhrkamp Verlag was blissfully unaware of the commotion surrounding the book when, on Habermas's recommendation last year, it purchased the rights to a German translation.

The focus of the debate in Germany concerned Honderich's observations on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Given the misdeeds of the German past, unreasonable or excessive criticism of Israel has long been a fraught issue. In the postwar era, Suhrkamp Verlag has been a beacon of moral integrity. It has been the publishing home of Jewish authors, like Walter Benjamin, who were persecuted by the Nazis. One of its major subsidiary imprints is the Jüdischer Verlag, or Jewish Press.

After the Terror is suffused with what can only be described as anti-Israel canards. Whether these observations qualify as anti-Semitic is another matter. Early on in his narrative, Honderich observes that "having been the principal victims of racism in history, Jews now seem to have learned from their abusers" -- implying that Jews are present-day Nazis or, at the very least, employ Nazi methods. He goes on to say that Zionism "has rightly been condemned as racism by the United Nations." But he omits to mention that in December 1991, the U.N., in its infinite wisdom, repealed the same declaration, by a vote of 111 to 25.

But the claim that brought matters to a head concerned another one of Honderich's attempts to legitimate the political use of terror, which he euphemistically praises as "liberation-terrorism" or "Terror for Humanity." The disputed passage reads:

"I myself have no serious doubt ... that the Palestinians have exercised a moral right in their terrorism as certain as was the moral right, say, of the African people of South Africa against their white captors and the apartheid state. Those Palestinians who have resorted to necessary killing have been right to try to free their people, and those who have killed themselves in the cause of their people have indeed sanctified themselves. This seems to me a terrible truth, a truth that overcomes what we must remember about all terrorism, and also overcomes the thought of hideousness and monstrosity."

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In August, Micha Brumlik, a professor of education at Goethe University, in Frankfurt, who is also director of the Fritz Bauer Institute for the Study and Documentation of the History of the Holocaust, read Honderich's book and became alarmed. Claiming that the passages in question evinced an "anti-Semitic anti-Zionism," Brumlik requested that Suhrkamp withdraw *After the Terror* from circulation. The press complied, avowing that it would refrain from republishing the text once the initial print run of 2,000 copies was exhausted. Brumlik's protest, which appeared as an open letter in a German daily, put Habermas on the spot. The German philosopher restated his rationale for having recommended publication -- the book's exploration, in the aftermath of 9/11, of the roots of global social injustice -- while explicitly distancing himself from Honderich's sanguinary political fantasies.

In retrospect, it seems that the German handling of the "Honderich affair" was unfortunate and maladroit. Brumlik appears to have overreacted. Honderich's political judgment might be extremely questionable. But his statements are hardly anti-Semitic in the technical sense of the term. In any event, the merits of his claims should be assessed and debated in the public sphere. By suggesting that the book be removed from circulation, Brumlik showed insufficient trust in the reasoning capacities of the German public. He thereby missed a golden opportunity to educate his fellow citizens on why the political use of terror is morally reprehensible. Banning books, or refusing to reprint them on political grounds, sets an unfortunate precedent. It also has the unintended consequence of allowing Honderich to claim that his ideas are being unfairly suppressed -- by Jews and their sympathizers, no less.

The question of political uses of terror has been brought to a head by the wave of Palestinian suicide bombings in the aftermath of Ariel Sharon's provocative September 2000 visit to Jerusalem's Temple Mount, site of the al Aqsa Mosque. The legitimacy and efficacy of those bombings have been intensely debated by Arab intellectuals in the Middle East and the United States. Increasingly, they have been a topic of heated discussion on university campuses across North America, discussion not often characterized by patience and reasoned argument. See, for example, the public statements of New Jersey Solidarity, a Rutgers University-based, pro-Palestinian organization that opposes the existence of Israel. Its members have justified suicide bombings with the claim that "Palestinians have a right to resist occupation. It is not our place to dictate the forms and practices the Palestinians must use."

Honderich does not, as one might expect of a philosopher, evaluate such rhetoric. In fact, he seems strangely unaware of, or uninterested in, the continuing dialogue regarding Palestinian terrorist tactics. Rather than offer a considered analysis of the dominant arguments on both sides, he shoots from the hip, his endorsement of political terrorism seemingly designed merely to provoke.

Dating back to the Hague Conventions of 1898 and 1907, one of the mainstays of international law is the imperative that warring parties distinguish between combatants and civilians. Those precepts were vigorously reaffirmed by Additional Protocol I to the 1977 Geneva Convention, which representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization attended. The distinction is widely recognized as a linchpin of international human-rights law. By intentionally targeting civilians, suicide bombings deliberately contravene those precedents. More insidious still, some of the recent bombings seem to have intentionally targeted young Israelis -- to wit, a June 1, 2001, bombing at a Tel Aviv discotheque that killed 21 and wounded 120, and an August 19, 2003, Jerusalem bus bombing that killed 5 children among the 18 dead, and wounded 40 children among the 100 wounded.

According to an October 2002 report by Human Rights Watch, "Erased in a Moment: Suicide Bombing Attacks Against Israeli Civilians," which condemned the intentional and systematic massacre of innocents, the suicide bombings qualify as a crime against humanity. In international human-rights law, the fundamental precedent was set by the 1945 Nuremberg Charter. The Nuremberg precepts were recently reaffirmed by the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, which defines crimes against humanity as the "participation in and knowledge of a widespread or systematic attack against a civilian population," and "the multiple commission of [such] acts ... against any civilian population, pursuant to or in furtherance of a State or organizational policy to commit such attack." According to the Rome Statute, both individual perpetrators and the organizations that sponsor them bear criminal accountability for such acts. They are crimes of universal jurisdiction and are subject to no statute of limitations.

Are the bombings morally or politically defensible? The attempt to morally justify suicide bombing seems especially specious. One of the cardinal precepts of the just-war doctrine, dating back to the days of early Christianity, has

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been the prohibition against the massacre of innocents. In the 2,500-year-old canon of Western moral philosophy, I am hard pressed to find a single thinker who accepts the taking of innocent life to further political aims. Moreover, experts on the Middle East have frequently pointed out that suicide bombing explicitly contravenes three cardinal precepts of Islamic law: the prohibition against killing civilians; the prohibition against suicide; and the protected status of Jews and Christians. Here, too, the burden of proof is squarely on Honderich's shoulders.

In the instance at hand, even the argument from political expediency seems dubious. The military or strategic gains that have accrued from the suicide bombings seem negligible. All evidence points to the fact that their overall effect has been to bolster the political power of Israeli hard-liners -- a regrettable outcome for Palestinians and Israelis alike. A spate of suicide attacks by members of Hamas and Islamic Jihad immediately before the 1995 Israeli elections played a major role in facilitating the victory of the Likud Party candidate for prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu. From the standpoint of a constructive and equitable resolution of Palestinian-Israeli territorial disputes, the terrorist actions have been flatly counterproductive. Palestinian opinion leaders worldwide have indirectly acknowledged as much, believing that the wanton and bloody assaults on civilians risk bringing the entire Palestinian cause into disrepute. In June 2002, 58 leading intellectuals and public figures published an "Urgent Appeal to Stop Suicide Bombings" in the Palestinian daily Al-Quds. Honderich's position remains distinctly behind the curve.

Interestingly, in recent interviews, Honderich has pointedly declared his belief in Israel's right to exist. But then his defense of suicide bombings as a legitimate political weapon is self-contradictory. For the two main Palestinian militant factions responsible for the attacks, Islamic Jihad and Hamas, have never concealed the fact that their strategic objective is to expel all Jews from Palestine.

The groups' justifications of suicide bombings are a maze of confusing and contradictory statements. The leaders have variously argued that:

- * The suicide strikes are purely retaliatory. (That claim, starkly at odds with the available evidence, leaves the question of the attacks' moral or political legitimacy untouched.)

- * Civilians are not the main targets. (A manifest falsehood.)

- * Because all Israeli adults serve in the military at one point or another, none are civilians. (The strictures of international humanitarian law make clear that soldiers who are off duty and out of uniform qualify as noncombatants.)

- * Settlers in the West Bank and Gaza often carry weapons and are illegally occupying Palestinian land; hence, they are fair game for attack. (Under the terms of international law, the fact that civilians are armed does not alter their status as noncombatants. Moreover, that argument fails to account for the plethora of attacks that have occurred outside of the West Bank and Gaza -- i.e., within Israel's pre-1967 borders.)

- * The Palestinians are at such a distinct military disadvantage vis-à-vis Israel's sophisticated modern weaponry that suicide bombings represent a great equalizer. (That claim is difficult to square with the dearth of positive strategic military results. And other oppressed peoples have successfully employed nonviolent methods of civil disobedience to call attention to their cause. Why has the Palestinian leadership ruled out those means?)

If the suicide bombings have provided the Palestinians with negligible strategic or military gains, why have the attacks persisted? And why have they been so popular among the Palestinians (according to a July 2001 poll, 58 percent of them approve of attacks against civilians inside Israel)?

Here one of the keys is understanding the brand of religious fundamentalism represented by the two main perpetrators, Islamic Jihad and Hamas. For both organizations, and for fundamentalist Islam in general, martyrdom represents a central article of faith. Muslim clerics who seek to justify suicide attacks against Israel customarily argue for a seminal theological difference between suicide and martyrdom. Whereas, according to Islamic law, self-inflicted death is strictly proscribed, militant mullahs have elevated martyrdom to the status of the most glorious death. The suicide bombings are a lethal amalgam of martyrdom-laced vengeance -- a consummate theological and strategic outlet for Arabs in the region, who have been otherwise politically impotent. (After all, from 1948 to

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1973, the Palestinians lost four wars.) Moreover, the bombings serve the functional end of shoring up support for Arab leaders who have been slow to produce results, and whose competence has been increasingly called into doubt in recent years.

Was Honderich's endorsement of Palestinian suicide bombing anti-Semitic? Technically, no. Yet it could easily be construed in that way. For, in addition to being a (disputable) military gambit, suicide bombings constitute a highly freighted act of political symbolism. They deliver an unambiguous message: All Jews -- men, women, children -- are legitimate targets of political murder. Thereby the bombings flirt with a discourse of genocide whose historical resonances are all too familiar and disturbing.

Richard Wolin is a professor of history and comparative literature at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. His books include *Heidegger's Children*: Hannah Arendt, Karl Lowith, Hans Jonas, and Herbert Marcuse (Princeton University Press, 2001).

Load-Date: November 24, 2003

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Pull out of enclave, some Israelis urge

Deseret News (Salt Lake City, Utah)

October 27, 2003, Monday

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Section: WIRE;

Length: 826 words

Byline: By Ravi Nessman Associated Press

Body

NETZARIM, Gaza Strip -- Moderates in Israel's Cabinet called Sunday for the evacuation of this tiny Jewish settlement, which relies on an entire army battalion for protection, after three soldiers were killed there by Palestinian militants.

However, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon believes a pullout from the enclave in Gaza would show weakness and encourage Palestinian violence, and one former Israeli commander says Netzarim must remain a strategic "bone in the throat" of the Palestinians. Others in the military say using an estimated 350 soldiers to guard 400 people is a waste of resources.

In this quiet, leafy enclave just 2 1/2 miles from the border with Israel and surrounded by Palestinians on all sides, people remain confident they will stay right where they are.

"God promised this area to Israel," said Yossi Krakover, 35, who has lived there for 12 years.

The debate over Netzarim exploded after two Palestinian militants shrouded in fog cut through a fence early Friday and crept up on the army base inside the settlement. The militants entered the barracks and shot soldiers as they slept, killing three -- including two women -- and wounding two others.

Soldiers killed one of the militants, who was from Hamas. The other, from Islamic Jihad, escaped.

Israel responded Sunday by blowing up three Palestinian high-rises less than a half-mile from the settlement, as well as a police post they say the surviving militant hid in after the attack.

Netzarim is a common target for militants, and soldiers guarding the settlement say it is one of the most dangerous places to be posted. Several Palestinians have been killed trying to break in.

Nine soldier guards and two residents have been killed during the three-year uprising, and the settlement also is a frequent target of rocket attacks.

Justice Minister Yosef Lapid, leader of the moderate Shinui party, told the Cabinet on Sunday the time had come for a serious discussion of the Netzarim settlement.

"Is it right that a battalion of soldiers should guard only 60 families?" Lapid asked, according to spokesman Tzachi Moshe.

Pull out of enclave, some Israelis urge

About 350 soldiers serve in an average battalion, though exact numbers are classified.

Shlomo Avineri, one of Israel's leading academics, said it was time to pull out of Netzarim.

"The 5 million Jews living in the state of Israel have a right and a moral obligation to say something simple (but quite difficult) to the . . . families living in Netzarim: 'Come Home!' " he wrote in the Yediot Ahronot daily.

Still, there is a strong reluctance in Israel to concede any territory -- or dismantle any settlements -- without getting something in return, and a peace deal with the Palestinians does not seem near.

Beyond that impasse, some say the site of Netzarim is strategically important for Israel. Netzarim was founded in 1980 southwest of Gaza City, overlooking the Mediterranean coastline and Gaza's port.

"It is like a bone in the throat for the Palestinians," Zvi Fogel, an ex-general who was the head of Israeli's southern command, told Israel Radio. "From a military perspective, it allows the army to put up checkpoints at any time they want and to divide the strip into three parts."

About 6,500 Jews live in 17 settlements in Gaza, where Israel controls about one-third of the territory. More than 1 million Palestinians live in the rest of Gaza, which is 25 miles long and only a few miles wide.

While nearby Gaza City is a crowded, dusty concrete jungle, Netzarim is a tree-lined community of lush lawns and rows of concrete houses, each topped with a roof of red ceramic tile. Laughing groups of children play on swings as their friends run around nearby.

But residents who need anything more make a run for the border in the company of a military convoy, which includes a bulletproof bus that leaves every hour.

Krakover pulls on a bulletproof vest and a helmet for his daily commute to his job as a school principal in a settlement in Gush Katif in southern Gaza. In addition to the soldiers guarding the settlement, the residents have their own nightly patrols.

But many Israelis are growing tired of paying a heavy price for the preservation of isolated settlements deep in Palestinian populated areas, on land which many believe ultimately will be transferred to Palestinian control.

Nahum Barnea, one of Israel's most respected political commentators, said Netzarim is "an intolerable situation," a luxury Israel can no longer afford.

"It is true that it gives the (army) an opportunity to keep a close eye on Gaza City ... but everyone familiar with the Gaza Strip knows that this task could be done under far safer conditions from alternative locations," he wrote in Yediot Ahronot.

When Krakover moved here 12 years ago, there were only seven families. Now there are 60 -- about 400 people -- he said, then nodded toward his 4-year-old daughter, Maayan, resting in his arms.

"We will see our daughter married in Netzarim, God willing. I don't have any doubt about it."

Load-Date: October 27, 2003

G2: Girls shot as they baked and swept: Palestinian teenagers among growing number of children hit by Israeli snipers during 'Days of Penitence'

The Guardian (London) - Final Edition

October 6, 2004

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Section: Guardian Foreign Pages, Pg. 17

Length: 800 words

Byline: Chris McGreal in Jabaliya refugee camp

Body

Islam Dwidar's classmates were still taking in her shocking death - the teacher weeping outside before facing the girls, her closest friend recounting how they walked to school together each day - when the news arrived about Tahreer Abu El Jidyan.

The two 15-year-old pupils at Jabaliya's school were both shot in the head by Israeli soldiers inside their homes just a few blocks and several hours apart. Islam died almost immediately after the bullet smashed through her forehead as she baked bread with her mother in their yard on Sunday. Tahreer is still on life support at a Gaza hospital after an operation to remove shards of shattered skull from her brain.

She lies motionless, with little to suggest she is alive other than gentle breathing. Doctors do not expect her to survive.

Tahreer's mother, Intisar, was at her bedside yesterday.

"Oh Tahreer, my heart. I wish I were lying in this bed, not you," she whispered to her child. "She was sweeping the floor in front of the door," said Mrs Abu El Jidyan. "I was standing talking to her. We knew the Israeli soldiers were around, we knew they had snipers in the buildings on our street but we didn't expect what happened. They just shot her in the head. Her brains spilled out. She said: 'Mum, I'm hit'. She praised God and she collapsed."

There were two bullets. The first struck Tahreer in the head. As she fell, the second hit the wall behind her. "I've no doubt a sniper shot her deliberately. There was no fighting in the area. There were no other shots, only the ones that hit Tahreer," said her mother.

With her stood Tahreer's 14-year-old brother, Naser, who was wounded by shrapnel last week. Israeli forces killed their father 11 years ago during the first intifada.

Mrs Abu El Jidyan regrets preventing Tahreer from walking to school on Sunday morning. She thought it would be too dangerous to venture out of their home in Jabaliya's Sikka neighbourhood because it is on the edge of the area occupied by Israeli troops and tanks last week. Snipers are posted in buildings overlooking their street and a tank is less than a block away.

"I wouldn't let her out of the house but it was dangerous at home too. When there was fighting, bullets came through the walls. We stopped using some rooms on the side where the Israelis are," she said.

G2: Girls shot as they baked and swept: Palestinian teenagers among growing number of children hit by Israeli snipers during 'Days of Penitence'

Israeli and Palestinian human rights groups say that about half of the nearly 80 people killed by the army over the past week of "Operation Days of Penitence" are civilians. The military says it has carefully targeted **Hamas** and Islamic Jihad fighters with missile strikes.

But while the numbers are in dispute - in part because it is often hard to say whether youths in their mid to late teens are bystanders or part of the Palestinian resistance - there is no doubt that a growing number of children have been felled by Israeli snipers.

At Islam and Tahreer's school in Jabaliya yesterday morning, the headmistress, Rukaya Kamal al Budani, fielded calls from parents wanting to know if it was safe to send their girls. "If they can get here, it's safe," was her stock reply. But of 1,150 pupils, fewer than 200 turned up.

Before word reached the school about Tahreer, Mrs al Budani was getting to grips with the death of Islam.

"This is our first casualty at the school," she said. "I don't know how to deal with the girls. It's going to have a big impact on her classmates and friends. I'm shocked that no one in the free world condemns the killing of a child."

Then one of the male teachers tells Mrs al Budani about the shooting of Tahreer the previous day. The headmistress sits in silence.

Until June, the two young **women** had been classmates, but then Tahreer failed her exams and was held back for a year. Asmaa Abu Samaan walked to school with her each morning. "I met her in front of my house each morning to walk to school. I did my homework with her. I keep thinking that if she is brain-dead and not killed perhaps she is still suffering. I can't stand it," she said.

Asmaa walked to school yesterday morning without her friend. "I walked against the wall hoping the soldiers can't see me. I want to go to school because I know the Jews do not want us to study because we need to be educated to build our country," she said.

But the killing went on as the conflict claimed the life of another teenage girl in the Gaza strip yesterday. Palestinian medics said Israeli soldiers fired about 20 bullets into 13- year-old Iman al-Hams, including five into her head.

The military said she had entered a forbidden zone in Rafah refugee camp, and that she dropped a bag that soldiers feared was a bomb.

The Palestinians said Iman was walking to school when troops entered the camp and that she dropped her bag as she ran away in fear.

The bag was not found to contain a bomb.

The Editor, page 26

Load-Date: October 6, 2004

Bin Laden video: Your security is in your hands ; In a broadcast believed to be authentic, the al-Qaida leader admits his role in 9/11 and says there still are reasons for a 'repeat'

Telegraph Herald (Dubuque, IA)

October 30, 2004 Saturday

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Byline: ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dateline: CAIRO, Egypt

Body

Osama bin Laden, injecting himself into the campaign four days ahead of presidential elections, said in a videotape aired Friday that the United States can avoid another Sept. 11 attack if it stops threatening the security of Muslims.

In the segment broadcast, the al-Qaida leader refrained from directly threatening new attacks, although he said "there are still reasons to repeat what happened."

"Your security is not in the hands of Kerry, Bush or al-Qaida. Your security is in your own hands," he said, referring to the president and his Democratic opponent. "Any state that does not mess with our security has naturally guaranteed its own security."

Admitting for the first time that he ordered the Sept. 11 attacks, bin Laden said he did so because of injustices against the Lebanese and Palestinians by Israel and the United States.

It was the first footage in more than a year of the fugitive al-Qaida leader, thought to be hiding in the mountains along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border. The video, broadcast on Al-Jazeera television, showed bin Laden with a long gray beard, wearing traditional white robes, a turban and a golden cloak, standing behind a table with papers and in front of a plain, brown curtain.

His hands were steady as he spoke and he appeared healthy.

The Bush administration said Friday it believes the videotape was authentic and had been made recently. White House press secretary Scott McClellan said the administration did not plan to raise the nation's threat level for now.

Al-Jazeera said it broadcast one minute of the five-minute tape. The station's spokesman, Jihad Ali Ballout, said they aired what was "newsworthy and relevant" and refused to describe the unaired portions, including whether they included any threats.

There was no way to determine when the tape was made - but it offered evidence that bin Laden was alive and actively following events. Sen. John Kerry emerged as the Democratic candidate in the spring.

Bin Laden video: Your security is in your hands ; In a broadcast believed to be authentic, the al-Qaida leader admits his role in 9/11 and says there still are

Bin Laden said he wanted to explain why he ordered the suicide airline hijackings that hit the World Trade Center and the Pentagon so Americans would know how to avoid "another disaster."

"To the U.S. people, my talk is to you about the best way to avoid another disaster," he said. "I tell you: security is an important element of human life and free people do not give up their security."

He accused President Bush of misleading Americans by saying the attack was carried out because al-Qaida "hates freedom." Bin Laden said his followers have left alone countries that do not threaten Muslims.

"We fought you because we are free ... and want to regain freedom for our nation. As you undermine our security we undermine yours," he said.

He said he was first inspired to attack the United States by the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon in which towers and buildings in Beirut were destroyed in the siege of the capital.

"While I was looking at these destroyed towers in Lebanon, it sparked in my mind that the tyrant should be punished with the same and that we should destroy towers in America, so that it tastes what we taste and would be deterred from killing our children and women," he said.

"God knows that it had not occurred to our mind to attack the towers, but after our patience ran out and we saw the injustice and inflexibility of the American-Israeli alliance toward our people in Palestine and Lebanon, this came to my mind," he said.

Bin Laden suggested Bush was slow to react to the Sept. 11 attacks, giving the hijackers more time than they expected. At the time of the attacks, the president was listening to schoolchildren in Florida reading a book.

"It never occurred to us that the commander-in-chief of the American armed forces would leave 50,000 of his citizens in the two towers to face these horrors alone," he said, referring to the number of people who worked at the World Trade Center.

"It appeared to him (Bush) that a little girl's talk about her goat and its butting was more important than the planes and their butting of the skyscrapers. That gave us three times the required time to carry out the operations, thank God," he said.

In planning the attacks, bin Laden said he told Mohammed Atta, one of the hijackers, that the strikes had to be carried out "within 20 minutes before Bush and his administration noticed."

The image of bin Laden reading a statement was dramatically different from the few other videos of the al-Qaida leader that have emerged since the Sept. 11 attacks.

U.S. authorities have long said they believe bin Laden is hiding in a rugged, mountainous tribal region of Pakistan that borders Afghanistan, but there has been no firm evidence of his whereabouts for three years.

The last audiotape purportedly from bin Laden came in April. The speaker on the tape, which CIA analysts said likely was the al-Qaida leader, offered a truce to European nations if they pull troops out of Muslim countries. The tape referred to the March 22 assassination by Israel of Hamas founder Sheik Ahmed Yassin.

Al-Zawahri, bin Laden's Egyptian deputy, has spoken on three recent audiotapes that emerged on June 11, Sept. 9 and Oct. 1 this year. In the latest, he called on young Muslims to strike the United States and its allies.

Graphic

Bin Laden video: Your security is in your hands ; In a broadcast believed to be authentic, the al-Qaida leader admits his role in 9/11 and says there still are

photo

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There is no easy cure for Iraq's kidnap pandemic DAVID GARDNER

Financial Times (London, England)

September 18, 2004 Saturday

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Section: COMMENT & ANALYSIS; Pg. 13

Length: 936 words

Byline: By DAVID GARDNER

Body

Nobody is safe, absolutely no one. That is the message behind the pandemic of kidnapping in Iraq, and it is undeniably effective.

This week's seizure of two Americans and a Briton from a rich riverside district of Baghdad and the recent kidnapping of two Italian women aid workers may have no intrinsic connection. But they are part of an emerging pattern in which political aims overlap with financial extortion, and in which Iraqis are suffering far more from kidnapping than the foreigners in their country.

For foreigners it would appear to make little difference which side of the war debate their country was on, whether their leaders committed troops to the occupation, or whether they are in Iraq as mercenaries or missionaries, reporters or construction workers. Frenchmen get taken as well as Italians, Russians and Canadians as well as Americans and Britons. Turkey, Iran, Egypt and Lebanon all opposed the war, but that did not protect their (mainly Muslim) citizens from the kidnappers, any more than the citizens of US-allied Japan, South Korea and the Philippines. Nepal, whose only part in the entire affair is the presence of an estimated 15,000 labourers in Iraq, faced the horror of seeing 12 of its nationals murdered by kidnappers in one incident.

"It is painful that the kidnappers do not differentiate between the brother and friend, and the enemy," said Jean Obeid, Lebanon's foreign minister, after a botched kidnapping last week in Baghdad that left three Lebanese nationals dead. He seems to have forgotten what went on in Lebanon's 1975-90 civil war, which Iraq is now in real danger of emulating.

Yet almost since the fall of Baghdad 18 months ago, Iraqis have had it far worse. With the collapse of the Iraqi state into lawlessness and banditry - a phenomenon that well pre-dates the emergence of resistance to the occupation - rare is the family of even modest financial substance that has not been afflicted by kidnapping for ransom. Probably even more than the dangers of the ongoing war, the hostage-taking business is causing a big outflow of middle-class Iraqis to neighbouring countries, a haemorrhage no country that needs to rebuild almost from scratch can afford.

Some of the kidnappers are plainly Sunni Islamist militants, their demands, usually for troop withdrawals, set out in communiques, or their savage revenge recorded in grisly webcasts or videotapes. Others are Ba'athists, including former (and, by some accounts, actual) policemen and army officers. Others still are simply brigands, exploiting US inability to control roads, frontiers and an increasing number of towns and cities in central and southern Iraq.

There is no easy cure for Iraq 's kidnap pandemic DAVID GARDNER

The political aim is to trigger a stampede of allied troops, businesses and Iraqi professionals to demonstrate that the occupation can provide neither peace nor reconstruction. The financial aim is equally uncomplicated.

In the same way that Washington and its allies blame much of the resistance on "foreign fighters" (despite finding barely two dozen from over 43,000 people seized in the first year after the fall of Baghdad), they assign too much responsibility for the kidnappings to individuals who are easy to demonise, such as Abu Musab al-Zarqawi. Mr Zarqawi, a Jordanian Wahhabi whose aims include a civil war to exterminate the majority Iraqi Shia, appears to have personally beheaded the US hostage Nick Berg in May. Chilling and abhorrent as this ritualised slaughter was, it - and indeed Mr Zarqawi - are but a fraction of the problem. That is not least because, as in the Lebanon war, factional chaos and lawlessness lead to multiple but scarcely visible elisions between the politics and the business of kidnapping, creating a market where hostages taken for money are sold on to politico-religious groups. This seems to be the direction Iraqi kidnapping is taking, and it is deeply sinister.

In 1986 in Beirut, for example, three teachers at the American University, two British and one American, were kidnapped and sold on. They were eventually bought by a pro-Libyan group and "executed" in revenge for that year's US air strikes on Tripoli.

France is clearly aware of the Lebanese experience in its approach to trying to secure the release of two French journalists seized last month. It despatched General Philippe Rondot, an experienced Arabist intelligence chief and veteran of the Lebanese hostage crisis, to find who was holding the journalists; it appears, like others, to be prepared to pay for their freedom; and it has launched a diplomatic offensive, drawing support from Arab and western capitals, militant groups and figures such as Hamas, the Muslim Brotherhood and Moqtada al-Sadr, as well as mainstream Muslim clerics.

Paying ransom deepens the hostage market, while headline diplomacy aggrandises the kidnappers and encourages their demands. There is a gathering debate among news organisations about whether publicity is exacerbating the kidnapping problem. But fatwas, religious edicts, have force in the Muslim world.

There are no good options or easy solutions to the kidnapping plague, just as there are none for the chaos of post-war Iraq. But France's ability to mobilise Arab and Muslim opinion, alongside the debate on how much to publicise hostage seizures, is suggestive. If the religious authorities of Iraq and the region were to issue fatwas prohibiting kidnapping, one contractor who withdrew from Iraq after ransoming drivers said this week, many would return. More fatwas and fewer headlines are not much to go on, but not much else seems to be working.

The writer is a member of the FT's editorial comment team

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Hostage-Takers Teach the French the Limits of Diplomacy

The New York Times

September 12, 2004 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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Length: 922 words

Byline: By ELAINE SCIOLINO

Dateline: PARIS

Body

GEOPOLITICAL question of the week: What do Carlos the Jackal and the pope have in common?

Answer: Both have condemned the taking of two French journalists as hostages in Iraq and appealed for their liberation.

So have Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi of Libya, King Abdullah of Jordan, Iraq's Sunni clerical leaders, the Palestinian militant group **Hamas** and Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood. Also, some of the world's leading Muslim clerics and assorted political leaders, journalists and humanitarian organizations.

The groundswell is a result of what might be called France's turban diplomacy, an intense public campaign to persuade the Islamic world to throw its support behind the hostages and therefore behind France.

There is a perception in Washington that France was smug, that President Jacques Chirac and his lieutenants felt themselves somehow immune from terrorism emanating from Iraq because of their fierce opposition to the American-led war and their refusal to send troops in the aftermath. Among France's American critics, the events of the last two weeks confirm the view that France cannot protect itself by refusing to embrace the Bush administration's war on terror.

But as the French hostage crisis proves, what animates the French and their Islamic adversaries is not a battle over the future of Iraq. The Muslim militants make no distinctions in their war against the West. The kidnappers' demand dealt with a social problem involving the Muslim population in France: They wanted the French to rescind a new law banning Islamic head scarves and most other religious symbols in public schools, a demand France rejected.

French leaders say they were never naive about terrorism. The official French position from the start, as expressed by Mr. Chirac, has been that terrorism thrives in disorder, and that the prospect of unleashing anarchy in Iraq was one reason for opposing the American-led invasion there. This anarchy, the French say, is the principal reason their journalists were kidnapped, and justifies their global charm offensive.

Support for the view that France deserves a special status has come from some surprising quarters. Jordan's main opposition party, the Islamic Action Front, referred to "France's distinguished position in rejecting the Anglo-

Hostage-Takers Teach the French the Limits of Diplomacy

American occupation of Iraq." And Ilich Ramirez Sanchez (a.k.a. Carlos the Jackal), the terrorist convicted in kidnappings, bombings and killings in the 1970's and 80's, sent a handwritten statement from a prison outside of Paris. It said all nationalities in the "service of the imperialist aggressor" were legitimate targets in Iraq but argued that because of its opposition to the war, "In Iraq, France must not be attacked."

Ten days ago, the turban offensive seemed to be working and France's culture minister expressed hope that the hostages' release was only hours away.

But that hope proved to be a mirage. France learned the hard way -- in Algeria in the 1950's, in Lebanon in the early 1980's -- that the effectiveness of negotiations and public diplomacy and even appeals to logic was unpredictable in dealing with hostage-takers.

If the dashing of French hopes proved anything, many commentators here say, it is that France was right in opposing the Iraq war. Where anarchy rules, and faceless thugs operate, it can be futile to try to figure out what might motivate them to release a hostage.

Hostage-taking in Iraq has included attacks by groups with clear political aims, especially those trying to force American allies into withdrawing troops. The captors of two Italian female aid workers kidnapped last Tuesday promised to punish Italy for basing troops in Iraq. There is also kidnapping for money, as in the case of seven foreign truckers ransomed for \$500,000. Or there is kidnapping purely to express hate, the apparent motive behind the slaughter of 12 kidnapped Nepalese contract drivers.

Against that range of possibilities, France has found it difficult to plot a strategy. "These are opportunistic people looking for any target," said Olivier Roy, a prominent French scholar of Islam. "They don't care about Iraq. They are striking at the West as a whole."

The French know better than most that there is no refuge from terrorism. In October 1983, when a suicide truck bomber in Beirut blew up the American Marine barracks there, killing 241 servicemen, another truck exploded at a French barracks two miles away, killing 58 French troops. And when France had citizens taken hostage by Iranian-backed Shiite radicals in Lebanon later in the 1980's, seeking their release proved humiliating, as it did for Americans. The United States sold Iran weapons in a vain effort to get the hostages freed. President Chirac, who was prime minister then, is still suspected of involvement, widely rumored but unproved, in reportedly paying ransoms for French hostages.

Before and since the invasion of Iraq, the French angered the Bush administration when they lectured that the war would produce chaos and breed terrorism. Now, believing they are suffering the consequences of just such disorder, they have tried to curry favor with whichever group or individual, however radical or fundamentalist, might have a chance to win the hostages' freedom.

In their own descriptions of their motives, they sound neither noble nor naive. Just scarred. And, perhaps now, wary. After the open appeals failed to yield results, the French throttled back to a more traditional form of negotiation last week, one of behind-the-scenes diplomacy.

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Graphic

Photo: In Paris, artists have declared war on the war in Iraq. (Photo by Francois Guillot/Agence France-Presse)

Hostage-Takers Teach the French the Limits of Diplomacy

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LEADER: DESPOTIC SAUDI REGIME NOW A THREAT TO STABILITY

The Scotsman

August 9, 2003, Saturday

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Section: Pg. 17

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Body

THE relief of the seven Britons released from prison in Saudi Arabia yesterday can only be imagined. But now that they are home and free, we should be asking tough questions about the Saudi regime and Britain's attitude to it.

The seven were accused of involvement in the car bombing that killed Christopher Rodway, an engineer, in December 2000. They were supposedly fighting a gang war over illegal alcohol sales. Relatives and friends claim that some of the men were tortured. Two, including Sandy Mitchell from Kirkintilloch, made televised confessions which they later retracted, and were sentenced to be publicly beheaded, a horrifying prospect in itself.

Campaigners on their behalf are naturally jubilant. But yesterday's volte -face owed nothing to the Saudi justice system and everything to an act of royal clemency. Either the gesture was an admission that the men were innocent, or the Saudis are taking a strangely relaxed attitude to suspects charged with a serious crime. Mr Rodway's widow, understandably, wants to know who was responsible for her husband's death. Was it an al-Qaeda bomb, as some have claimed?

It looks as if the sudden change of heart owed more to diplomacy than justice. In the wake of 9/11 and the Iraq war, the Saudi regime is under pressure and keen to please. Saudi links with terrorism have been highlighted by a recent report from the United States Congress - even without the publication of the most incriminating pages. Saudi funding for groups such as **Hamas** is belatedly coming under scrutiny. Now that Saddam Hussein has gone and the US is pulling out of its military bases in the kingdom, Saudi strategic importance in the Middle East is declining.

With a real chance for democracy in Iraq, King Fahd's crumbling and despotic monarchy looks ever more anachronistic. Far from being a force for stability and moderation in the region, which was how the Foreign Office traditionally saw it, Saudi Arabia is now a threat to stability. Resistance to reform has made the kingdom, where 60 per cent of the population is under 20 and unemployment is high, a recruiting ground for extremist Islamic groups.

The Saudis say they are offering unprecedented co-operation in the war on terrorism, inviting the CIA and FBI to help interrogate suspects. The three car bombs in Riyadh in May, which killed 34 people, appear to have shocked the regime out of a state of denial and impelled it to pursue al-Qaeda with more vigour. Without changes in culture and governance, however, terrorism will continue to flourish.

The lack of democracy and neglect of human rights is glossed over by diplomats and experts accustomed to treating the Saudis with kid gloves. But the reality is brutal. More than 20 executions have taken place this year. Amputation is used as a punishment. The religious police are so strict that, when a girls' school caught fire in Mecca, they drove pupils without headscarves back into the burning school and prevented male rescuers from entering.

LEADER: DESPOTIC SAUDI REGIME NOW A THREAT TO STABILITY

The treatment of Saudi women, who cannot drive or travel unaccompanied by a man, is nothing short of shameful. Mrs Rodway's stepson was consulted about the release of her husband's supposed killers: she, as a woman, was not.

President George Bush and the Prime Minister, Tony Blair, like to stress that the desire for freedom "transcends race, religion and culture", as Condoleezza Rice, Mr Bush's national security adviser, said this week. That should apply as much to women in Riyadh as in Kandahar, as much to citizens in Jeddah as in Basra.

How would we feel if the new Iraqi governing council refused to allow "the practice of any religion which contradicts Islam"? Yet that is the Saudi position.

Hence the reluctance to assist in the war against Iraq. It was not just a question of solidarity with fellow-Muslims. The Saudis were conscious that regime change in Baghdad could hasten regime change at home.

Voices in the US foreign policy community are already urging President Bush to reconsider his supportive attitude to the Saudis. They object to the failure to crack down on Islamic charities which may be financing terrorism, a point reinforced by Colin Powell this week. They observe that 15 of the 19 hijackers involved in the attacks on 11 September were Saudi. The unpublished section of the recent Congressional inquiry is thought to disclose that a Saudi citizen who lent money to the hi-jackers may have been an intelligence agent, or had links with Saudi officials.

Thus far, the Bush administration has shown great restraint, shielding the Saudis by refusing to publish the offending section. It may be that, with Iraqi oil proving slow to come on the market, the president feels he needs their help to keep oil prices low. But in the longer term, a friendly Iraq will help reduce dependence on Saudi oil.

The British government is free to draw its own conclusions. The release of UK citizens who appear to have been wrongly detained should prompt a reassessment of relations with a state where the desire for freedom has been too long suppressed.

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WORLD REPORT

Windsor Star (Ontario)

March 29, 2004 Monday Final Edition

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Dateline: Madrid; Rome; Paris; Tunis, Tunisia; Kinshasa, Congo; Baghdad; Beirut, Lebanon; Kabul; Ankara; Taipei, Taiwan; Rio De Janeiro, Brazil; Orlando, Fla.; Marysville, Ohio; Crawford, Texas

Body

Spanish police stopped terrorists' car, let them go

Madrid

Spanish police were agonizingly close to foiling the Madrid train bombings, it was disclosed Sunday.

A car carrying the explosives used in the March 11 massacre was stopped by police but its Arab driver was fined only for a minor traffic offence, it was reported.

The trunk of the Volkswagen was packed with 100 kg of dynamite which had been stolen from a coal mine at Aviles in northern Spain during the last week of February, the El Pais newspaper said.

The car, which had been stolen, was stopped by two Civil Guard patrolmen near Benavente, north of Madrid. But their suspicions were not aroused when they checked the car's registration as the owner had not yet reported it missing. They failed to recognize that the driver was not the registered owner.

Compiled from Star News Services

The driver was fined for a minor infringement and allowed to drive on. Three of the four bombing suspects are thought to have been in the car.

The terrorists bombed four packed commuter trains during the morning rush hour, killing 190 people and injuring more than 1,500.

Italian mobster used girl as shield, family claims

Rome

The family of a girl shot dead in a Mafia gun battle in Naples claimed Sunday that she had been seized by the intended target of an assassination and used as a human shield.

Annalisa Durante, 14, died Sunday after she was shot in the neck. Police believe that the real target was Salvatore Giuliano, the son of the boss of a local Mafia family.

Witnesses said two hitmen arrived in the Forcella market area on a scooter shortly before midnight Saturday before opening fire. Their target was thought to have escaped unscathed.

WORLD REPORT

But an aunt of the murdered girl said Giuliano had taken cover behind Annalisa on purpose.

"He used my niece as a shield," the woman, who was not named, was quoted by the Ansa news agency. "He grabbed her by the hair. He knew that someone had been looking to kill him."

Police had to intervene as hundreds of angry relatives, friends and neighbours besieged the hospital where Annalisa was being treated.

Saddam's lawyer criticizes Bush presuming guilt

Paris

A French lawyer who claims to be representing Saddam Hussein said Sunday he doesn't think there will be a trial for a long time and criticized U.S. President George W. Bush for pronouncing the former dictator guilty of atrocities.

Jacques Verges said he believes the United States has violated the Geneva Conventions on several counts in its detention of Saddam and said the world must wait for a trial to determine what Saddam did wrong.

"We know that Mr. Bush has said he's guilty," Verges told Associated Press Television News. "But what does that mean? Mr. Bush is not a judge. We cannot accept him as a judge. He is an enemy of Saddam Hussein."

Verges, known for taking on clients including terrorists and a Nazi leader, said he didn't think Saddam's trial would happen "before a long time."

By the most conservative estimates, Saddam's regime killed 300,000 men, women and children during his 23 years as president.

Arab summit postponed amid discord over reform

Tunis, Tunisia

Egypt offered to host a meeting of Arab leaders as governments launched fresh efforts Sunday to convene a summit after Tunisia called off this week's session because of policy divisions.

The two-day Arab League summit, which was to begin today, was postponed indefinitely late Saturday after foreign ministers failed to bridge differences over how to respond to a U.S. reform plan and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Arab leaders intended for the conference to relaunch a Saudi-crafted peace initiative to Israel and to submit their own proposals for political reforms in response to U.S. calls for greater freedoms.

Congo coup attempt by Mobutu loyalists crushed

Kinshasa, Congo

Government forces put down an apparent coup attempt in the Congolese capital Sunday, battling attackers believed loyal to deceased former dictator Mobutu Sese Seko.

It was the most serious political strife to hit the city since the end of a ruinous war last year.

The government refused to characterize the deadly firefights as an attempted putsch, but Interior Minister Theophile Mbemba said the attack would not destabilize President Joseph Kabila's government -- an administration struggling to reassert control over its vast territory after a 1998-2003 war.

Coalition shuts down Iraq paper run by cleric's allies

Baghdad

WORLD REPORT

The U.S.-led coalition Sunday shut down a weekly newspaper run by followers of a hardline Shiite Muslim cleric, saying its articles were increasing the threat of violence against occupation forces.

Hours after the closure of Al-Hawza, more than 1,000 supporters of cleric Muqtada al-Sadr demonstrated peacefully in front of the newspaper's offices, decrying what they called a crackdown on freedom of expression.

Dozens of U.S. soldiers arrived at the Al-Hawza newspaper offices Sunday morning and closed its doors with chains and locks, Sheik Abdel-Hadi Darraja said in front of the one-storey house. The paper will close for 60 days, officials said.

Hamas leader warns of 'earthquake' of revenge

Beirut, Lebanon

Israel faces an "earthquake" of revenge for killing **Hamas** founder Sheik Ahmed Yassin, the militant group's Syrian-based leader said Saturday.

Yassin, a quadriplegic, was killed in an Israeli missile attack last Monday as he was being wheeled out of a Gaza mosque. Israel has accused him of planning attacks.

"I say with absolute certainty that the assassination of Sheik Ahmed Yassin will cause an earthquake to the Zionists," Khaled Mashaal told Dubai-based TV station Al-Arabiya.

Election in Afghanistan postponed due to violence

Kabul

On the eve of a major international conference to decide future aid for Afghanistan, President Hamid Karzai announced definitively that a much-anticipated general election will be postponed three months, until September.

That is the month after Canada's one-year commitment to a major military deployment with 2,100 troops ends.

It is still up in the air how many troops NATO's member nations will commit after that point and how they will be spread throughout the country.

Until now, the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force's troops, from 32 countries, have been confined to the cities of Kabul and Kunduz.

Pro-western ruling party declares win in Turkey

Ankara

Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan declared his pro-western Islamic-rooted party victorious in local elections Sunday -- a major victory that could encourage the Turkish leader to make further reforms toward membership in the European Union.

Erdogan's Justice and Development Party took about 40 per cent of the vote and won key cities, including Istanbul - the largest and Ankara -- the capital. It was also doing well in several other cities in the predominantly Muslim but staunchly secular country, with about 35 per cent of the vote counted.

Opposition agrees to talks over Taiwan vote dispute

Taipei, Taiwan

Taiwan's opposition leader Sunday agreed to meet President Chen Shui-bian to discuss a recount of last weekend's disputed election, bringing the island's political crisis a step closer to a resolution.

WORLD REPORT

A spokesman for the opposition Nationalist party Sunday also welcomed an independent investigation of a puzzling shooting on the eve of the March 20 vote that slightly wounded Chen and might have helped him win his narrow re-election.

Meanwhile, a few hundred pro-opposition protesters rallied at one of the capital's most famous tourist spots, the Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall.

Lien Chan of the Nationalist party and his running mate, James Soong, have alleged that the election was marred by irregularities and claimed the shooting gave Chen an unfair boost by winning him sympathy votes. However, they have provided little evidence.

Two die, homes destroyed during Brazilian storm

Rio De Janeiro, Brazil

A large storm that was rare for its intensity killed at least two people and destroyed hundreds of homes along the southern coast of Brazil, officials said Sunday.

American officials said winds exceeded 120 km/h, making the storm the first hurricane on record in the South Atlantic. But Brazilian meteorologists said winds were between 80 and 90 km/h, meaning it would only be a tropical storm.

Eleven fishermen were missing off the coast of Santa Catarina state after two boats sank 15 km offshore.

Vitamin E may lower the risk of bladder cancer

Orlando, Fla.

Getting plenty of vitamin E by eating foods like nuts and olive oil appears to cut in half people's risk of bladder cancer, the fourth leading cancer killer among men, a new study suggests.

The research, released at a cancer conference Sunday, is the latest blip in the ups and downs of perceptions about this nutrient's powers to ward off disease. Experts once had high hopes that vitamin E would prove to be an important safeguard against heart attacks. But that idea eventually faded as repeated studies failed to show any protective effect.

Whether vitamin E does anything to stop cancer is still far from proven, but some think the vitamin may be helpful, perhaps by warding off the damaging effects of oxygen. The strongest evidence of this so far has been against prostate cancer and a large federally sponsored experiment is underway to help prove this.

The new study offers a strong hint that dietary vitamin E may also protect against bladder cancer, which kills about 12,500 Americans annually and is four times more common in men than women.

The study was based on questionnaires of the eating habits of about 1,000 Houston residents.

Woman faked daughter's cancer to keep husband

Marysville, Ohio

A woman imprisoned for faking her daughter's leukemia to gain thousands of dollars in donations said she concocted the scheme to keep her husband from leaving.

Teresa Milbrandt told the Columbus Dispatch for a story in Sunday's editions that she regrets what she did, which included shaving her daughter Hannah's head and giving her sleeping pills to make it look like she was undergoing chemotherapy. She also made Hannah wear a protective mask and put her in counselling to prepare for death.

WORLD REPORT

"Last week, I said to someone, 'I wonder if I could pay the doctor and have him give me a lethal injection,'" she told the newspaper in an interview at the Ohio Reformatory for Women. "I can't hardly live in my own skin."

Milbrandt was sentenced to 6 1/2 years in prison after pleading guilty last August to felony charges of endangering children, grand theft and theft.

Authorities said Milbrandt and her husband fooled 65 people and businesses in their hometown of Urbana into donating an estimated \$31,000 US for Hannah's treatment.

Robert Milbrandt was sentenced to four years and 11 months in prison.

Teresa Milbrandt said the ruse began in early 2002 during intense arguments with her husband.

"I knew how much he cared about Hannah and if she's sick, I thought, he's not going to leave us."

Pressure mounts on Rice to testify at commission

Crawford, Texas

White House allies and Republicans investigating the Sept. 11 attacks pressed Sunday to hear open testimony from National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice, with one commissioner calling her refusal a "political blunder of the first order."

President George W. Bush, spending a long weekend on his Texas ranch, gave no ground. But he sent Rice back out for another lengthy news interview to rebut fresh criticism on the way his administration has handled the threat of terrorism against the United States.

Graphic

Swinging to the left: Socialist Party supporters in France cheer results from regional elections in Paris Sunday. Early results suggest the Socialist opposition will sweep regional elections in a stinging rebuke to conservative President Jacques Chirac, although the regions exercise little power. His economic reforms, particularly reduced pensions, have been unpopular. AP photo: Michel Euler

Load-Date: March 29, 2004

Israel suspends pullback from occupied areas: Gun attack on settlers and Arafat's detention of Palestinian militants endanger peace process

The Guardian (London)

August 5, 2003

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Byline: Chris McGreal in Ramallah

Body

Israel's defence minister, Shaul Mofaz, called a halt to the military withdrawal from Palestinian cities yesterday following the wounding of a Jewish settler and her three children near Bethlehem on Sunday.

Mr Mofaz also said there would be no further prisoner releases in addition to the 342 Palestinian detainees to be freed tomorrow as a "goodwill gesture" towards the road map peace process.

After Israel published the names of those to be released on the internet, to give "victims of terror" the opportunity to raise legal objection, the Palestinian leadership accused the Israeli prime minister, Ariel Sharon, of betraying pledges to free more prisoners.

The list of 342 fell about 200 short of the number the Israelis said they would free. It included about 100 common criminals and large numbers of security detainees who were to have completed their sentences in weeks and months. Hundreds more have been arrested in the meantime.

Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian president, said: "They say they are going to release 400, and then they turn around and arrest 800. What is this? Deception? Are they laughing at us? Is this the implementation of the road map?"

The Palestinian leadership has told Israel that unless many more of the 6,000 Palestinian "security prisoners" it holds are released, confidence in the road map would be dented.

Mr Mofaz said no more detainees would be freed, and there would be no further withdrawals until the Palestinian prime minister, Mahmoud Abbas, acted against "the terror".

"We will not continue with the policy of transferring the authority for the cities until it is proven that the Palestinians are taking the steps agreed upon to end terrorism," he said.

Israel wants Mr Abbas, also known as Abu Mazen, to detain "terrorists" in compliance with the first stage of the road map. The Palestinian prime minister said he would move only against those who breach a month-old ceasefire and that to do otherwise would provoke a civil war.

The Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades claimed responsibility for the shooting near Bethlehem. Palestinian officials said it was not an organised breach of the ceasefire which the Israelis conceded had been effective.

Israel suspends pullback from occupied areas: Gun attack on settlers and Arafat's detention of Palestinian militants endanger peace process

A more serious threat to the truce was looming yesterday as Palestinians sought US intervention to settle a confrontation with the Israelis over the fate of 17 Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade militants detained on Yasser Arafat's orders. Israel is demanding the Palestinians imprison or hand over the activists.

Mr Arafat ordered them disarmed and locked in a room at his headquarters in Ramallah, called the Muqata, on Saturday after they refused to move to Jericho, where they claimed they would be targeted by the Israelis. His aides had demanded that the men leave the building because it was believed their presence was an obstacle to Israel lifting its siege of the Muqata.

Israel has said the men in the compound can go to Jericho but only if they are imprisoned there. Last week, the army shot dead a wanted brigade member in Tulkarem in the West Bank.

Khudora Fares, a member of the Palestinian parliament's detainees committee, who has been in regular contact with the men held at the Muqata, said they had threatened to call off the ceasefire unless they were allowed to remain in Ramallah or offered guarantees for their safety.

"They are very angry," he said. "They said that if they are not released, that will be the end of the ceasefire."

Mr Fares said the men's detention had come about as the result of a misunderstanding. Last week, Mr Sharon's office accused one of them, Kamal Ghanem, of an attempt to send two female suicide bombers into Israel.

"The day before they were arrested, one of the guys in the brigade was to get married," said Mr Fares. "It's becoming common for people to come to the Muqata to read some religious verse before they marry, and there was somebody else recording it on a video camera. It seems someone told Arafat that this guy was recording his final video before a suicide mission. That's when they were arrested."

But Mr Ghanem said the Palestinian president had told them they had to go because "the world has changed" and they were a liability.

The standoff came after weeks of negotiations between the Israelis and Palestinians over the fate of about 250 men wanted by the Israelis. They are members of Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade, Hamas and Islamic Jihad allegedly responsible for attacks on Israeli troops and civilians.

The Israelis want the Palestinians to lock them up and reserve the right to arrest or kill those still on the loose.

The Palestinian leadership said it would not arrest members of the various organisations for past deeds and would only detain them if they threatened to breach the ceasefire.

The wanted men said there was little incentive to extend the ceasefire if they continued to be hunted by the Israelis.

guardian.co.uk/israel

Load-Date: August 5, 2003

We're All Combatants Now

New York Sun (Archive)

September 7, 2004 Tuesday

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Section: EDITORIAL & OPINION; Pg. 9

Length: 859 words

Byline: Hillel Halkin

Body

Some 10 years ago, I wrote a piece on the death, in an Arab suburb of Jerusalem called Bir Naballah, of an Israeli soldier named Nachshon Wachsman.

Some of you may remember the incident. Wachsman, the son of American parents, had been kidnapped by Hamas and held hostage in a two-story house in an Arab neighborhood. His kidnapers asked for the release from prison of a large number of Palestinian terrorists and threatened to kill him if their demands weren't met. An Israeli commando unit stormed the house in which he was held and killed them - but not before they managed to kill him.

Although the story was front-page news in Israel, no journalist actually went to the house, which was cordoned off by the army and barred to the press. No journalist, that is, except me. I slipped - rather easily, as it turned out - through the cordon and spent an hour there, trying to reconstruct what had happened. In the end, I came to a disturbing conclusion. The army had blown it. A different angle of attack, a bolder first few seconds, and Wachsman might have been saved.

As I say, I wrote a piece on it. The only problem was that the editor of the paper it was written for refused to publish it. He would not, he told me, run an article second-guessing the Israeli army.

I was furious. I had a scoop and it wasn't going to appear. I even threatened to resign from my job, but the editor held his ground. He wasn't going to allow armchair criticism of a military operation that went wrong by someone who might be clever but wasn't there when it took place.

Today, I'm not sure he wasn't right. In any case, I couldn't help thinking of that episode in the wake of the appalling events in Beslan. On the face of it, the Russian army's attempt to storm a school building in which hundreds died seems to have been the botched product of faulty intelligence, bad planning, an inept command structure, insufficiently trained troops, and poor discipline. It appears to have been doomed to failure in advance, in which case those who launched it made a terrible mistake.

And perhaps they did. But one must be careful about being clever when one wasn't there. The conditions under which the hostages were being held were terrible; some - particularly the children - were in serious danger from exhaustion and thirst; and it's a cheap shot to say now, "But what was the rush? The Russians should have waited until they were ready to do it properly." Try saying that when children are drinking their own urine a hundred meters away.

We're All Combatants Now

The question goes deeper than that, however. It involves asking: What, in a conflict that more and more is being correctly viewed as a world war against Islamic terror, is the role of you and me - that is, of the 99.999% of the world's population who are neither terrorists, nor soldiers nor policemen fighting terrorists, but ordinary people with a slight yet not non-existent chance of being caught up in acts of terror themselves?

Let's put it more concretely. In a war, we expect soldiers to risk their lives. Sometimes, when their commanders' judgment is poor, military lives are risked in reckless or callous ways that may arouse our anger or condemnation, but we understand that the risk must be there. No one of a logical cast of mind would think, although armies sometimes behave as though this were the case: "The main object of sending troops into battle against an enemy is to ensure that they all emerge safely."

This is precisely, however, what most of us do think about the innocent victims of terrorists, like the children and their parents in the school in Beslan. They were not there as soldiers, nor unlike, say, foreigners working in Iraq did they set that day with the knowledge that they were jeopardizing their lives; therefore, the Russian government's first duty toward them was to extract them unharmed from their situation, any result short of that being a failure on its part.

And yet this attitude, however humane it may seem, turns a blind eye to what terror is about, which is erasing the distinction between legitimate targets like soldiers and illegitimate ones like innocent civilians. Indeed, in the eyes of the terrorist, no one associated in any way with an enemy nation, group, or political camp is innocent. All are legitimate targets - those in street clothes as well as in uniform, children as well as adults, women as well as men.

But if we are all the potential targets of terror, we are also all - like it or not - potential combatants in the war against it, since a war against us all is a war we must all be prepared to take part in. And taking part in this war, one of whose military principles is never to give in to the demands of hostage takers because this only encourages the more brutal and audacious taking of ever larger numbers of hostages, can indeed mean taking terrible risks like those taken in Beslan.

This does not mean that the Russian army acted wisely or responsibly in storming a school in so slipshod a manner. It does mean facing the cruel truth that the war against terror has a price that must be paid by ordinary people, too, and that there are, alas, no non-combatants in it.

Load-Date: September 8, 2004

NEWS SUMMARY

The New York Times
September 2, 2004 Thursday
Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2004 The New York Times Company

Section: Section A; Column 3; Metropolitan Desk; Pg. 2

Length: 966 words

Body

INTERNATIONAL A3-12

Armed Rebels in Russia Capture a School

Heavily armed insurgents seized a school in southern Russia, herded scores of children, parents and teachers into its gymnasium and threatened to kill them. As many as seven people are believed to have died. Two police officers who were guarding the school are missing, and at least a dozen others were reported wounded. A1

Israeli Intelligence Criticized

Israeli intelligence came under criticism for its failure to crack the Hamas cell that carried out the twin suicide bombings in Beersheba. The cell is believed responsible for the deaths of more than 80 Israelis. A7

Focus on Iran's Nuclear Agenda

A new assessment of Iran's nuclear program by the International Atomic Energy Agency says that, as early as 1995, Pakistan was providing Tehran with the designs for sophisticated centrifuges capable of making bomb-grade nuclear fuel. A12

U.N. Recommends Darfur Force

The United Nations secretary general, Kofi Annan, said the government of Sudan had failed to keep commitments to rein in the militias terrorizing the Darfur region and that a large international force was required there soon. A5

Iraqi Kidnappers Release Seven

Kidnappers in Iraq released seven foreign truckers held for 43 days after the head of a Kuwaiti transport company said he paid a \$500,000 ransom. Iraqi and American officials have opposed ransom payments. A10

The Iraqi exile leader, Ahmed Chalabi, announced his return to Iraq's political scene. A10

Charges in Afghan Deaths

Army criminal investigators will recommend that about two dozen soldiers face criminal charges or administrative punishment in connection with the deaths of two prisoners at an American detention center in Afghanistan in December 2002. A10

NEWS SUMMARY

NATIONAL A14-20; P1-16

Republicans Attack Kerry And Praise Bush's Record

Speakers at the Republican National Convention mounted a vigorous assault on Senator John Kerry's domestic and foreign policy credentials and a spirited defense of President Bush's stewardship, with Vice President Cheney saying that national security was the fundamental issue of this year's election. A1

Convention demonstrations have barely interrupted the convention narrative and have drawn relatively little national media coverage despite the arrest of nearly 1,800 protesters. A1

President Bush swept into New York through a convention hall in Queens, where he met with more than 100 New York City firefighters and several widows of those who had died in the Sept. 11 attacks. P12

Senator Kerry forcefully rebuked the president on his handling of the war on terror and the situation in Iraq. P1

Bryant Rape Charges Dropped

The rape case against the basketball star Kobe Bryant was dismissed after the prosecution said his accuser would no longer cooperate. A1

Government Stops Terror Case

The Justice Department asked a judge to end the case that had been hailed as its first courtroom victory in the war on terror after its prosecutors compiled evidence that they said undermined their case. A14

Second Storm Nears Florida

Florida began bracing for the possibility of its second major hurricane in less than a month, with people up and down the east coast lunging for emergency supplies. A14

SCIENCE/HEALTH

Breast Cancer Treatment

Radiation treatments routinely given after surgery to remove small breast tumors may not be necessary for women over age 70 if they take the cancer drug tamoxifen. A19

NEW YORK/REGION B1-5

U.S. Agrees to Restore Planned Housing Aid Cuts

The federal government agreed to restore almost all of the \$55 million in housing aid to New York City that had been slated to be cut under a change to the government's main housing program for the poor. B1

East Side Dispute Over Pit Bulls

Residents of Turtle Bay, a quiet Manhattan neighborhood, are in a heated dispute over the fate of three dog-killing pit bulls. B1

CIRCUITS G1-8

ARTS E1-8

Studio Blocks Antiwar Film

Warner Brothers declined to distribute an antiwar documentary that was to be an add-on to the 1999 Gulf War movie "Three Kings," scheduled for fall release. E1

NEWS SUMMARY

Conservatives See Book Bias

Conservative authors and commentators deplored the lack of attention being paid to their point of view by book publishers. E1

HOUSE & HOME F1-14

OBITUARIES C14

SPORTSTHURSDAY D1-9

Capriati Wins Opening Round

Jennifer Capriati beat Magui Serna, 6-0, 6-2, in an opening round match at the United States Open. Amelie Mauresmo, of France beat Julia Vakulenko of Ukraine in second round play, 3-6, 6-2, 6-2. D1

Downtown Flushing, Queens, one of the city's most vibrant ethnic enclaves, is a virtual stranger to the Open, which is unfolding less than a mile and one subway stop away. B3

BUSINESS DAY C1-13

Masking a Caller's Identity

A technology until now known mainly among software programmers enables customers to create phony outbound phone numbers in order to mask their telephone identities. C1

Military Insurance Inquiry

State and federal investigators and members of Congress are broadening their efforts to address problems in the sale of life insurance and mutual funds to young soldiers and other service members. C1

Cuts in Vehicle Production

General Motors and Ford Motor said that they would cut car and truck production because vehicles are piling up in inventory. Each company saw a sharp drop in sales, along with the auto industry as a whole. C1

Textile Industry to Seek Help

Officials of the United States textile industry said that they would petition the Bush administration to block an expected flood of Chinese imports. C1

Business Digest C1

World Business W1

EDITORIAL A22-23

Editorials: Mr. Bush and the truth about terror; corporate kleptocracy; Lebanon's lost sovereignty.
Column: Maureen Dowd.

Bridge B3

TV Listings B7

Crossword B2

Weather A18

NEWS SUMMARY

Load-Date: September 2, 2004

End of Document

Women step forward in West Bank

Christian Science Monitor (Boston, MA)

August 5, 2004, Thursday

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 01

Length: 898 words

Byline: By Joshua Mitnick Contributor to The Christian Science Monitor

Dateline: KUFR KHALIL, WEST BANK

Highlight: As strife constrains men, women venture into jobs and activism.

Body

The village women who assembled in this hillside hamlet to talk politics came in conservative, drab gowns and head scarves that left only their faces exposed.

But their comments about the approaching municipal elections were anything but traditional. Two said they aspired to become the first female members of their village council. Others, like Nivineh Amr, insisted that only a female candidate would understand the importance of bringing day-care centers and running water to this West Bank town of 3,500.

Amid the devastation wrought by nearly four years of conflict with Israel, a subtle but significant transformation is under way in the lives of many Palestinian women. Normally confined to domestic chores and child care, they're now playing central roles in the survival of families in which husbands have found themselves without work.

The crisis has emboldened women to assert themselves in new realms, from finding part-time work and taking control of family finances to political involvement. The newfound freedoms are even bucking the rising influence of fundamentalist Islam in the public lives of Palestinians.

"Before the intifada," says Mrs. Amr, a mother of seven, "our husbands would come to us and say, 'Vote for this one or vote for that one,' and we weren't concerned with their qualifications or what that person stood for."

As Israel's military has clamped down on cities in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, it has choked off Palestinian activity and sent unemployment soaring. Jobless rates in the West Bank have risen as high as 40 percent. In Gaza, unemployment has surpassed 60 percent.

"Because of the closures, women had to find ways of producing food without going to a market," says Subhiyeh Hamdan, a social worker who facilitates the women's support group in Kufr Khalil. As a result, she says, "women have gone back to sewing. Any job that was available they took."

Hanging above the entrance of the building where the group meets are faded posters of men brandishing machine guns - ubiquitous images of the uprising's martyred heroes. In a bare room up two flights of an unfinished stairwell, the women sit in a seminar-sized semicircle and discuss their struggles at home.

Women step forward in West Bank

Cradling a 10-month old infant, Karine Oded told of an ill-fated chicken-farm venture that left her husband demoralized. That forced her to get support from charity organizations and open a small shop.

"The men are distracted because they are unemployed, and because of the political situation," she says. "All this leads to difficult relations in the family, and women have to deal with it."

The past few years have also seen a membership surge in women's savings and loan cooperatives. By contributing 10 Jordanian dinars (\$ 13.50) a month into the fund, members become eligible for loans as much as 30 times as big to help finance small businesses, tuition, or emergency needs. In the West Bank city of Ramallah, savings funds subsidized by the Working Women's Society count more than 500 members and \$ 85,000 in assets.

Similar entrepreneurship can be found in the Gaza Strip. In Khan Yunis, wives of fishermen are rejuvenating businesses that have been paralyzed by Israeli blockades preventing the seamen from reaching the coast, says Majeda Alsaqa, a local field worker with the Culture and Free Thought Association in Khan Yunis. The women raised money through nongovernment organizations to refurbish their husbands' boats and are employing Gazans who do have access to the sea to captain the vessels.

"Women are oppressed in our society. So when they have a small space to solve a problem, they will go and do it," she says. "It's the first time you are freeing a woman, and telling her, 'Go and find a job and be creative.' "

UN data show that Palestinian women attend high school and university in roughly the same numbers as men. But instead of starting careers, women get married and remain at home. According to Palestinian Bureau of Statistics, the work force is only 14 percent female.

In some respects, Palestinian society appears to be growing more conservative, influenced by the growing prestige of fundamentalist groups like Hamas, which have persuaded Palestinians to adopt a stricter brand of Islam. Their influence can be seen in towns of the southern Gaza Strip, where women are seldom uncovered, Alsaqa says. But some observers suggest that the dress is a poor indicator of political or religious. "It's mostly a passport out of the house for women," says Randa Nasser, a sociologist at Bir Zeit University in Ramallah. "A lot of women find it easier to go get work, to go get an education, if they put on that dress."

To be sure, there is no lack of resistance to the changes. Mrs. Hamdan says many men in the village have discouraged her from gathering women to discuss the vote as the Palestinian legislature mulls local elections. Other women's activists have said that men in villages have told their wives that they don't have the right to vote.

Still, interest is on the rise. The Working Women's Society - a sponsor of the women's groups - says it knows of 120 women in the West Bank interested in running. Back in Kufr Khalil, Amr offered an explanation.

"Hard times makes you assess the good from the bad," she says . "These hard times make us realize that we should have a role in this assessment."

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Load-Date: August 4, 2004

Smeared in blood, Hezbollah fingerprints all over globe

The Australian

June 9, 2003 Monday All-round Country Edition

Copyright 2003 Nationwide News Pty Limited

Section: WORLD; Pg. 11

Length: 963 words

Byline: Matthew Levitt

Body

BODY POLITIC

Evidence of Hezbollah's international terrorist activity is overwhelming, writes Matthew Levitt in Washington

THE UN operates by consensus, a major counterterrorism handicap given that several of its members are proactive state sponsors of terrorism. Hezbollah poses a threat to Australia and threatens others with support of members in Australia. The Australian initiative to ban Hezbollah, despite the group's absence from the UN Security Council's terrorism list, is therefore critically important.

As was the case when Canada banned Hezbollah last December, some oppose the Australian measure, arguing that Hezbollah is not a terrorist group but a social and political organisation engaged in armed struggle against Israel. Yet evidence of Hezbollah's international activity as a terrorist group of global reach is overwhelming.

MATP

While Hezbollah may be more likely to use Australia as a base for logistical support operations than a target, Hezbollah's threat to target Australians over the country's role in the liberation of Iraq is not the only reason the group should be banned. Terrorism experts concur that Hezbollah is one of the most active international terrorist groups in Australia. Indeed, Australia is one of only seven countries where a Hezbollah video game glorifying terrorism was successfully marketed. According to the game's designers, it is intended to instil Hezbollah "values" by giving supporters a virtual opportunity to participate in the attacks they fund and laud from abroad.

Hezbollah poses an international threat, but does the presence of Hezbollah sympathisers and logistical and financial supporters pose a direct threat to Australians themselves? Absolutely.

Terrorism scholar Rohan Gunaratna notes Hezbollah operatives have attempted to recruit Malaysians and Indonesians to carry out terrorist attacks in Israel and Australia. Moreover, Hezbollah has a long track record of plotting terrorist attacks in southeast Asia.

On March 17, 1994, Hezbollah terrorists attempted to bomb the Israeli embassy in Bangkok, Thailand. The attack failed because the terrorists got in a car accident and fled the scene. Authorities later discovered C4 explosives in the car.

In 1995, Hezbollah operatives began surveilling Singapore's coastline. Two years later authorities thwarted the group's plans to blow up US Navy ships passing through the Singapore Straits or berthed in the city-state's harbour. The cell included Hezbollah operatives who infiltrated the region with visa-waivers and married local women.

Smeared in blood, Hezbollah fingerprints all over globe

Hezbollah operatives have been arrested in Thailand, Singapore, and The Philippines. The group has also been active in Malaysia, Indonesia, Taiwan and Korea, and has infiltrated Islamic charitable societies throughout the region.

The conviction of two Hezbollah operatives in the US Federal Court last year highlighted the links between these types of support networks and senior Hezbollah military leaders, as well as radical Iranian elements.

In June 2002, brothers Mohamad and Chawki Hammoud were convicted of providing material support to a terrorist group. Their Charlotte, North Carolina-based cell was part of a network responsible for raising funds and procuring dual-use technologies for Hezbollah terrorist operations. Mohammed Hassan Dbouk and his brother-in-law, Ali Adham Amhaz, ran the Canadian portion of this network under the command of Haj Hasan Hilu Laqis (Hezbollah's chief military procurement officer). Their activities were funded in part with money that Laqis sent from Lebanon, in addition to their own criminal activities in Canada (eg, credit card and banking scams).

Among the items that they purchased in Canada and the US and smuggled into Lebanon were night-vision goggles, global positioning systems, stun guns, naval equipment, nitrogen cutters and laser range finders. The Canadian Hezbollah network also sought to take out life insurance policies for Hezbollah operatives committing acts of terrorism in the Middle East.

Hezbollah's international activities are all the more dangerous in light of the group's ties to al-Qa'ida. In June 2002, US and European intelligence officials described Hezbollah as "increasingly teaming up with al-Qa'ida on logistics and training for terrorist operations". This alliance, described as "ad hoc", "tactical", and "informal", was said to involve mid and low-level operatives. US and European intelligence officials reiterated this concern in September 2002, noting that "the most worrisome" of al-Qa'ida's new "tactical, ad-hoc alliances" is with Hezbollah. **Hamas**, Hezbollah and al-Qa'ida members co-operate in the lawless tri-border area in South America, where Paraguay, Brazil and Argentina meet; similar co-operation has been noted in Asia, as in the cases of Abdul Nasser Nooh (who facilitated both al-Qa'ida and Hezbollah operations) and Muhammad Amed al-Khalifa (a Hezbollah member linked to a shipment of explosives sent by a company tied to al-Qa'ida and confiscated by Philippine police).

To be sure, Hezbollah is a terrorist group of global reach, with an international logistical and financial support network stretching to Australia and beyond. Hezbollah runs operational and logistical support cells in Asia, Africa, Europe, North America, South America and the Middle East. Canberra must protect Australians against the kinds of attacks Hezbollah operatives successfully executed in Argentina and attempted in Singapore and Thailand; it must also do everything in its power to prevent Hezbollah supporters in Australia from funding and facilitating the group's attacks targeting others.

Matthew Levitt, a former FBI counterterrorism analyst, is a senior fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy. He is writing a book on Hezbollah

Load-Date: June 8, 2003

Islamists join Jordan election contest, providing a fillip for reconciliation after Iraq war: It is unclear whether the polls will succeed in ending criticism of a monarch who since he dissolved parliament in June 1991 has ruled as an autocrat, says Nicolas Pelham in Amman

Financial Times (London,England)

June 16, 2003 Monday

London Edition 1

Copyright 2003 The Financial Times Limited

Section: MIDDLE EAST; Pg. 6

Length: 820 words

Byline: By NICOLAS PELHAM

Dateline: AMMAN

Body

Abdul Munem Abu Zant, the pro-**Hamas** candidate, has an advantage when canvassing for votes in Jordan's parliament elections on June 17.

He gets to press the flesh at least five times a day in his prayer trips to his mosque in the Hay Nazal quarter on the rocky slopes of the Jordanian capital, and finds a ready audience for his calls to liberate the Arab world from Crusaders and their clients.

Sadly for him, many of his most ardent supporters do not vote. One, who identifies himself as Mamdou, claims to support the banned Islamic Liberation party. This says the Hashemite kingdom, like all Arab states, is illegitimate, and that participation in its institutions - including parliament - is a sin. Veiled **women** voters may also be deterred by the requirement that they reveal their faces to male election monitors before entering the polling booth. Officials say it would be too complicated to provide **female** monitors.

Abu Zant is standing as an independent after he was expelled from the Islamic Action Front, Jordan's main Islamic party and best organised opposition, for defying an order not to stand. After talks with the royal palace, the IAF agreed to field just 30 candidates in the country's 110-member parliament.

Limited though it is, Islamist participation in the first elections under King Abdullah, after a boycott in 1997, will help to bring about a national reconciliation after the Iraq war pitted the monarchy against Islamist-led opposition to the deployment of US troops into the kingdom.

The much-delayed elections were announced a week after the fall of Baghdad, but observers question how far the polls will succeed in ending criticism of a monarch who since he dissolved parliament in June 1991 has ruled as an autocrat.

"Dissolving parliament was unprecedented since democratisation began in 1989," says Adeeba Mango, Jordan researcher in Amman for the International Crisis Group, the Brussels-based think-tank.

Islamists join Jordan election contest, providing a fillip for reconciliation after Iraq war: It is unclear whether the polls will succeed in ending criticism o....

"In two years, the authorities introduced 160 temporary laws against less than 50 in the previous 60 years. People see a process of de- democratisation."

The king's men argue that rule by decree was vital to push through economic reform. Tuesday's elections, they say, will mark a new drive for political reform and allow Jordan to trumpet its multi-party system and Islamist participation rare in the region.

The elections come four days ahead of next week's meeting of the World Economic Forum in Jordan, to be attended by hundreds of political and business leaders and state dignitaries.

But critics say that a new electoral law, which increased the number of seats from 80 to 110, has undermined the validity of the polls.

"The increased numbers of seats has left Amman even less represented than before," says Fawzi Samhouri, who runs a pressure group, the Jordan Society for Citizens' Rights, which the authorities dissolved last year.

Votes are skewed, say analysts, to prevent Jordan's majority Palestinian population - concentrated in the central and northern cities - from dominating parliament, and rightwing Israelis contending that Jordan really is Palestine.

According to Mr Samhouri, Abu Zant's Amman constituency has an MP for each 52,255 voters, while Karak, the home town of the interior minister, has an MP for 6,000 voters.

Government advocates argue that it is not in Jordan's national interest to have a lower house dominated by Palestinians from refugee camps and radical Islamists and that the system has other ways to restore the balance.

"To say the system is anti-Palestinian is junk. It's another form of prejudice," says Mustafa Hermaneh, politics professor at Jordan University. The central bank governor and the ministers of planning and finance, he notes, are all Palestinian.

To quash suspicions of fraud, the authorities have added magnetic strips to identity cards, which voters are required to produce to obtain a ballot paper. The 1997 elections were marred by allegations that boxes had been filled with false ballots to prevent vocal critics like Toujan Faisal, Jordan's first **female** MP, from winning her seat.

Appeals for international election monitors have, however, been dismissed. Observers say the 'gerrymandering' is alienating potential voters in urban areas: Zarqa and Amman, home to over half of the population, account for less than a third of the seats.

The expected low turnout has not deterred candidates. In Abu Zant's constituency, 30 are competing for four seats. Candidates have festooned the byways with banners and erected Bedouin tents in the streets, where they woo voters with Arabic sweetmeats known as kanafe, coffee, and occasionally cash. Electioneering can be expensive, but winners receive their parliamentary incomes for life.

"They're really in for the spoils," says Adel Wahash, a bank clerk, who has to choose between two relatives -a former development minister and the Islamist candidate - also standing in Abu Zant's constituency.

Load-Date: June 15, 2003

I just hope I die before I get olde

Evening Herald (Plymouth)

April 28, 2004

default

Copyright 2004 Evening Herald (Plymouth)

Section: Features; General; Columnist; Pg. 6

Length: 816 words

Body

With apologies to Maria and the Von Trapp family, I'm not too keen on singing nuns and crooning kids, either. But what really gets me is the British obsession with anything old.

The word 'quaint' is bad enough.

And as for 'olde' as in 'olde- worlde charm' and 'Ye Olde Tea Shoppe'...

Please, no.

If Hamas would only see the light and target Britain's heritage industry, I'd be first in line for the next suicide bombers' class.

I could stomach it - just - if all the period nonsense were genuine. It's the sight of fake wooden beams and pretend silk flowers, the shine on the horsebrass and the stench of polyester that really offends me.

I can cope with country pubs that are 400 years old - although I'd prefer it if they kept the original ditch toilets.

What I truly cannot understand is the desire to camouflage something built in 1966 as if it dated from 1066, but with a loud carpet and an even noisier fruit machine.

What was so charming about the olde worlde? Was it the bubonic plague in particular or just the insanitary conditions in general? Oh, the joys of dying at 36 from tuberculosis or being worked to an early death in a tin mine.

Yes, the great times enjoyed by 10 children crowded into a two-bedroom house in a terrace where three families share a toilet.

Oh, for the days when kids could play in safety on cobbled streets - before they reached their 10th birthday and were sent down a mine or up a chimney. Bliss, I'm sure.

The World War One millions in the trenches? They'd never had it so good as they choked on the mustard gas.

World War Two and the spirit of the Blitz: how much fun was that, lying awake in terror in your shelter listening to the whistle of an incoming bomb? (I've got misgivings, too, about some of the old soldiers who like to wear their uniforms and medals with pride and march up and down on Remembrance Sunday. I never understood why my dad, who was with the Eighth Army in North Africa and Italy, never wanted to talk about the war until I asked him. "It

I just hope I die before I get olde

was horrible," he said, his final words on five years of his life.) Why are the labels 'antique' and 'vintage' such a selling-point in Britain? OK, with vintage wine you've almost got me - except that you can keep 'em because I can't afford 'em.

But an antique phone only reminds me of the bad old days when lines were usually party, frequently crossed and invariably crackly and calls were scarily expensive.

The whole quaint, olde-worlde, vintage, antique thing reaches its zenith of absurdity in the classic car.

I sometimes forget myself and get caught up in the mass hysteria for objects that were paid for - through the nose and gritted teeth - in pounds and shillings.

The other day we parked next to some pile of rusty, inefficient, unreliable junk which had been repainted and buffed up and taken for its first drive for six months simply because the sun was shining and it was Sunday.

"Look!" I shouted to my seven-year-old, "an old car! All cars used to look like that when mum was a little girl." I got a daggers look from the wife and a puzzled expression from the daughter.

Thank God for children cutting through adults' baloney.

"Why is it good?" asked the littl'un. "It doesn't look like it goes very fast and you must get wet without windows and a roof." She stabbed her finger on a button and closed her window with a satisfying electrical buzz.

Attagirl. I half-expected her to start singing that anthem to youth, 'My Generation'.

She's right: old cars are about rust, fumes, rust, discomfort, rust and standing by the A38 in the rain on August Bank Holiday wondering where the nearest AA box is (no mobile phones in the good old days).

To close the 'vintage' car debate, I'll offer these four words: 'British Leyland' and 'Austin Allegro'.

What about the great stately homes of England, you may ask.

Well, I can cope with the National Trust in small doses. If somebody has to own stretches of the South West coastline it should be a charity dedicated to protecting them from more development.

I guess there's also an argument for keeping some stately homes.

To let them rot would be an insult to the memory of the poor people who gave blood, sweat, tears and even their lives to build these vanity projects for the rich and exploiting so that our lords and masters would have somewhere nice to show off the foreign works of art they looted during their travels.

I can see that the National Trust has to open a tea shop to provide an income to help support the above - I just don't understand why they have to staff them with middle-aged women dressed in fake Edwardian/Victorian frocks.

Stuff the British Empire (subjugation and arrogance); let's hear it for the European Union (partnership and tolerance).

Here's to bleach and stainless steel, the Internet and mobile phones, antibiotics and MRI scanners, central heating and fridges.

I just hope I die before I get olde.

Load-Date: April 29, 2004

Bulldozers crush hope in Rafah camp: Palestinians scramble to safety as Israeli attack flattens homes

The Guardian (London) - Final Edition

May 21, 2004

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Section: Guardian Foreign Pages, Pg. 18

Length: 881 words

Byline: Chris McGreal in Rafah

Body

Fatima Sharif Hassan fled the "Block O" neighbourhood of Rafah refugee camp a week ago as Israel's giant mechanical wreckers tore at the home she shared with her son and his family.

The great grandmother, 75, sought refuge in another section of the camp, al-Brazil, where her daughter lived. Mrs Hassan felt certain it was far enough away from the volatile Israeli security strip and Egyptian border to be safe from the bulldozers.

But yesterday Mrs Hassan, who is crippled by diabetes, had to be hauled through a hole in the wall shortly before the building was brought crashing down.

"We heard the Israeli bulldozers starting to demolish the house over us," she said. "We only escaped because the men knocked a hole in the wall and carried me between the buildings. We lost everything. I lost my false teeth. I lost my money. The neighbours had to give me this scarf to cover my head."

After the destruction of nearly 200 homes in Block O and other parts of Rafah last week, the Israeli government vigorously denied that the goal of its sweep through the camp was to break armed resistance through widescale demolition of Palestinian homes - even though the army chief of staff said as much on Sunday before a public change of heart.

But since the army seized control of the al-Brazil district on Wednesday night, leaving at least five people dead and several more wounded, fleeing residents say the military bulldozers have crushed entire rows of homes.

The army says it only destroys the houses of "known terrorists" or where the buildings are used as cover for fighting by groups such as **Hamas** and Islamic Jihad.

But the Hassans say that, in al-Brazil yesterday, at least eight of the houses on their road, Taha Hussein School street, were bulldozed to rubble. Other residents have reported similar destruction or at least a similar number of homes destroyed.

Mohammed Nerab, a Palestinian ambulance driver dispatched to pick up the wounded from al-Brazil, said he had witnessed the destruction. "I saw three homes demolished in front of my eyes," he said. "There are tanks and bulldozers everywhere. If anything moves, they shoot."

Bulldozers crush hope in Rafah camp: Palestinians scramble to safety as Israeli attack flattens homes

Ayad Rubi, a doctor at Rafah's hospital who has been unable to reach his home in al-Brazil since the beginning of the assault on the refugee camp on Monday, was reeling yesterday afternoon; his wife had told him their house had been destroyed.

"My house has just been demolished," he said. "My wife and four children have made it to the UN school in Rafah town. My mother and father are still in al-Brazil, they've gone to a friend's house nearby. I can't get back because I've been so busy at the hospital."

More than 150 people have registered with the UN's Palestinian refugee agency having been left homeless after the destruction yesterday.

Al-Brazil residents say they are concerned that the destruction will continue while the military retains its grip on the district as it advances into other parts of the camp.

Mrs Hassan and her family took shelter in a toilet as the Israeli tanks entered al-Brazil on Wednesday. It was the only room with a concrete roof, built to support the water tank, and so gave the best protection from the mortars, shrapnel and bullets.

The family spent the night there. Yesterday morning the men emerged to check on the situation and get food and water. Mrs Hassan and the children stayed inside. Shortly after 10am they heard the clank and roar of the giant armoured bulldozers. "We didn't sleep at all because of the shooting," said Nabil Hassan, the owner of the house.

"When they began demolishing the houses there was no way to warn the bulldozer driver we were there. My parents live in the house next door. We called them to make a hole in the wall (to) escape. They brought hammers and they made the hole.

"First of all I helped my children escape and then I carried the old woman through the hole. Then they destroyed my parents' house and we had to run to another, bigger house nearby."

But after a while the bulldozer turned its attention to that property too.

The family was forced to flee with about 60 others from the street to one of the remaining unscathed buildings. But the bulldozers loomed again.

"The foundations and pillars started shaking," said Mr Hassan. "The women started screaming. They shouted, 'we are all going to be killed, let's get out of here'. Then they made white flags and walked with the children until they were all the way out of al-Brazil. We are left with nothing from our homes."

Mrs Hassan was recovering in Rafah hospital yesterday while the children were being sheltered in a UN school.

An army spokesman denied there had been any demolition: "Since the beginning of the activity in the Brazil neighbourhood, Israeli forces did not demolish any structures.

"There are certain routes that forces are going through that Palestinians placed explosive devices over, and in order to continue we have to detonate the device if we cannot neutralise it. Sometimes that damages houses. There are some armoured bulldozers but they are used for clearing work."

Jonathan Steele, page 28

guardian.co.uk/israel

Links www1.idf.il/dover/site/mainpage.asp?sl=EN&id=7&docid=29334.ENIsraeli Defence Forces: tunnels
www.un.org/unrwa UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees

Load-Date: May 21, 2004

Bulldozers crush hope in Rafah camp: Palestinians scramble to safety as Israeli attack flattens homes

End of Document

A tragic loss of Arab dignity laid bare in pictures ROULA KHALAF

Financial Times (London, England)

May 8, 2004 Saturday

London Edition 1

Copyright 2004 The Financial Times Limited

Section: COMMENT & ANALYSIS; Pg. 11

Length: 901 words

Byline: By ROULA KHALAF

Body

In every war there are images that capture the tragedy, that become etched in people's minds and tell the story more poignantly than volumes of words. From the conflict in Iraq, perhaps the most unforgettable image, particularly for the Arab world, was that of Ali Abbas, the 12-year-old boy who lost both arms and his parents in a bombing raid. A symbol of Iraqi suffering, the picture of the terrified boy lying in his hospital bed was eventually eclipsed by the powerful image of the statue of Saddam Hussein falling amid cheering Iraqi crowds.

The falling statue became a symbol of the liberation of an oppressed people, so potent it provoked relief even among the many Arabs who had opposed the war. Eight months later, that image was reinforced by an even stronger one: Iraq's haggard, disoriented dictator being dragged from a hole. Despite Iraq's slide into violence and chaos, the capture of Mr Hussein forced Arabs to remember his tyrannical rule and his humiliating defeat. In the past week, those images associated with America's victory in Iraq have been washed away by the sickening depictions of a hooded prisoner, wired and perched on a box, and the naked bodies of prisoners piled up like animals, all for the viewing pleasure of US soldiers at the Abu Ghraib prison. Throughout the Middle East, the sexual humiliation was played and replayed on television screens, presented as living proof of the decadence of US might and long-presumed American hypocrisy in the Middle East.

But if Arab reaction was even more furious than the disgust expressed by others, it is because the tortured prisoners of Iraq also symbolised a general depression, a reminder of the Arab world's own defeat in a broader war, fought against Israel, against the US and against itself.

Unlike little Ali or the crashing statue, Arabs saw in the images from Abu Ghraib a reflection of everything that is wrong with their region: the perceived arrogance of the US in its drive for domination under the label of the war against terrorism; the denial by Israel - America's close ally - of Palestinian rights to a viable state; and the impotence and repression of their own despotic rulers. Going far beyond Iraq, the most potent impact of the grotesque images, as Ahmad Amorabi wrote in al-Bayan, a United Arab Emirates newspaper, was to remind Arabs that they are "a nation without dignity".

"Had George W. Bush and Tony Blair not been certain of our passivity as Arabs, no American or British soldier would have dared undress any Iraqi detainee to beat them up with a broom while another urinated on them," he says. "Arab regimes would not have been passive in such a situation . . . had it not been, in turn, certain that the Arab nation is dormant and lacks a minimal sense of self-dignity."

A tragic loss of Arab dignity laid bare in pictures ROULA KHALAF

The Bush administration rushed to condemn the abuses and later apologise to Arab audiences for them, presumably because it feared the images would destroy any belief among Arabs in America's commitment to a democratic Iraq. But most never had such beliefs.

For many Muslims, the damage lies in the fact that the pictures are the most disturbing in a string of horrifying pictures from Iraq and the occupied Palestinian territories in recent months. Among the more recent pictures, three images have stood out in the Arab world.

First was the US assault on Falluja - most widely seen by Arab viewers via the passionate TV broadcasts of Ahmed Mansour, the correspondent of al-Jazeera, the Qatar-based Arabic satellite network and the only TV covering the town at the time. Screaming with rage against the killing of women and children, he issued appeals to Arabs to help the people of Falluja.

Then there was the burnt body of Abdelaziz Rantissi, the slain leader of Hamas, the radical Palestinian group, assassinated in an Israeli raid in the Gaza Strip. Dying under the cameras, Rantissi became the latest symbol of Israeli impunity - backed by a US administration that refused to condemn the killing. Commenting on TV, Azmi Beshara, an Arab member of the Israeli Knesset, said the remains of Rantissi were also "the remains of the Arab world".

Between these two images was the most disturbing and significant picture of all: Mr Bush, standing next to Ariel Sharon, Israel's leader, at the White House, declaring that Israel could keep parts of occupied Palestinian lands and reject the right of return of Palestinian refugees.

What US officials insist was a simple statement of the facts on the ground was interpreted in the Arab world as a second Balfour declaration, equivalent to the 1917 British document that promised a home for Jews and was considered a devastating betrayal by Arabs.

"It's not so much about the photos, it's an accumulation of fury in general," says Mohammed al-Sayed Said, an Egyptian commentator who tracks public opinion. "There's a sense of real humiliation in the US-Israeli alliance, in the general American attitude, in the occupation of Iraq itself."

In the most revealing insight - and without minimising the revulsion over Abu Ghraib - he says Arabs know that even worse torture happens in their own countries, yet they are rarely as outraged. "The real fury comes from the feelings of injustice on substantive issues. The US symbolises a total identification with Israel and a degrading of Arab dignity and people feel the injustice but can do nothing about it."

The writer is the FT's Middle East editor

Load-Date: May 7, 2004

READERS WRITE

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

April 16, 2004 Friday

Home Edition

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The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Section: Editorial;; Letters

Length: 878 words

Byline: KENNETH SISSEL, SHAUL LAVAN, JAMES MCCARTHY, DEIRDRE MACNAB, GARY KOLAR, SARA REAMS, BRENT ESTES

Body

Middle East children: Responses to "Toll of young victims grows," @issue, April 15

Palestinians kill their own

No matter what the children's death count may be, Khalid Amayreh is missing the point. How many Israeli children have been strapped to bombs and sent to murder innocent people on a bus or in a market? The Palestinians also have a higher number of children killed while being used as human buffers.

The real point, however, is that if the Palestinian children are not being killed by Palestinian adults purposely blowing them up, they are killed in the course of justifiable retaliation.

Terrorists will use any tool available, including children, to inflict pain and fear on Israelis. The only thing that deters them is knowing that Israel will retaliate.

For the Journal-Constitution

Keeping score is intellectually dishonest. No numbers on either side can justify the deaths. However, it is Palestinian terrorists who created and purposely manipulate the circumstances under which people die.

KENNETH SISSEL, Lilburn

Israel tries to avoid civilian casualties

More than three-fourths of the more than 1,000 (not 850) Israelis killed in Yasser Arafat's latest war have been civilian victims of suicide bombers. The overwhelming majority of Palestinians killed have been attacking Israel, or killed in crossfire; many have been killed by Palestinian gunmen firing at Israelis while using crowds or homes as cover.

READERS WRITE

Unlike Arafat's Al Aqsa Brigades or Hamas' teenage bombers, Israel tries to avoid civilian casualties. As the United States is discovering in Iraq, it is impossible to avoid civilian casualties when the insurgents hide in ambulances, hospitals and mosques and use children.

SHAUL LAVAN, Atlanta

Terrorists hide behind women and the young

Khalid Amayreh does not take to task Palestinians (terrorists) who commit their acts and then hide behind skirts and playgrounds, hoping not to be held accountable.

The Palestinians martyr themselves by letting terrorists hide among the populace and wail when this results in the deaths of "innocents" --- who, by their own admission, seek the destruction of Israel, making them mortal enemies of the Israelis. Some of the bombers are children.

When the Palestinians cease their aggression, Israel will cease its aggression, but not a moment sooner.

JAMES MCCARTHY, Woodstock

Education: Teacher quality bound to decline

Thanks to our state government, new teachers don't need an education degree. They must only pass a test --- no more going to school to learn classroom management skills, no different teaching techniques for different learning styles, no more mentoring arrangements under skilled, proven teachers.

This change, our "Professional Standards Commission" tells us, is so we can keep up the No Child Left Behind requirements for a qualified teacher in every classroom. Voters and parents need to ask: Is this progress?

DEIRDRE MACNAB, Atlanta

It's no wonder children are fat

Oh wow --- it's showtime next week for third-graders ("Futures on the line in a third-grade test," Page One, April 15)! Do or die. Make the cut or be forever cursed with the stigma of retention. Anybody think of blowing the whistle on this craziness?

Do we need this frenzy? What country are we trying to catch up with this year? Where is the threat coming from that so burdens our 8-year-olds and puts them in the media spotlight? Are they in "bad" schools in a "bad" state with "bad" teachers?

I just hope the students get a little time to go out in the nice weather and play off some of that obesity we keep hearing about.

GARY KOLAR, Atlanta

Voters should have a say in Mideast policy

With President Bush's pronouncement on "our" new policy regarding the Israeli/Palestinian conflict, I feel as if I am being held hostage ("Bush shocks Arabs with West Bank shift," Page One, April 15). Don't I have any say (through my elected representatives) in our government? Has Bush no advisers who will say the emperor's naked? Would he listen?

When we are embroiled in our own conflict in the Mideast, for him to side so strongly with Israel can mean only more problems for the United States --- both with the Arab world as well as with our European allies (if we have any left).

READERS WRITE

The impression I get from the White House is that the executive branch operates without regard to checks and balances, preferring to ask for apologies later (if at all) rather than consensus before.

SARA REAMS, Fayetteville

Metro Atlantans love to drive, and it shows

Gov. Sonny Perdue's transportation plan misses the mark ("Spending for roads beefed up," Page One, April 15). I can't blame him entirely --- he is, unfortunately, being advised by those who think it wise to look to other cities for solutions to our traffic issues.

Atlanta is large and spread out, not contained in a neat grid-like format. More important, Atlantans love to drive. The idea that spending money on mass transit will alleviate our traffic problem is absurd. MARTA needs to be put out of its misery. The HOV lanes are like ghost towns. Mass transit works in tightly contained cities; it has not and will not work here.

Improve the one and only thing that can help with traffic --- the roads! We have always driven in Atlanta. Accept this premise and then find a solution within it.

BRENT ESTES, Smyrna

Graphic

Photo: Jewish ultra-Orthodox children look from the window of a bus passing by the site of a suicide bomb attack in August 2003 that left 23 people dead and more than 100 wounded. / ODED BAILILTY / Associated Press; Photo: Northbound traffic on the Downtown Connector. / JOHN SPINK / Staff

Load-Date: April 17, 2004

The Wrong Way to Sell Democracy to the Arab World

The New York Times

March 8, 2004 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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Section: Section A; Column 1; Editorial Desk; Pg. 19

Length: 967 words

Byline: By Zbigniew Brzezinski

Zbigniew Brzezinski, national security adviser in the Carter administration, is the author of "The Choice: Global Domination or Global Leadership."

Dateline: WASHINGTON

Body

The Bush administration deserves credit for its long-term commitment to democracy in the Middle East. But even a good idea can be spoiled by clumsy execution. Worse still, the idea can backfire -- particularly if people come to suspect that ulterior motives are at work.

This is precisely what is happening with President Bush's "Greater Middle East initiative," which outlines steps the United States and its partners in the Group of 8 industrialized nations can take to promote political freedom, equality for women, access to education and greater openness in the Middle East. Elements of the proposal include the creation of free trade zones in the region, new financing for small businesses and help overseeing elections.

After a draft of the initiative was published last month in Al Hayat, a London-based Arabic newspaper, Arab leaders responded swiftly -- and unhappily -- at what they perceived to be American efforts to impose change. President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt went so far as to call the proposal "delusional."

Fortunately, there is still time for the administration to set things right and rescue this potentially worthwhile project. But it must move quickly, particularly if it wants the G-8 to sign on to the plan at its summit meeting in June.

There is no question that the administration has its work cut out for it. For starters, the democracy initiative was unveiled by the president in a patronizing way: before an enthusiastic audience at the American Enterprise Institute, a Washington policy institution enamored of the war in Iraq and not particularly sympathetic toward the Arab world. The notion that America, with Europe's support and Israel's endorsement, will teach the Arab world how to become modern and democratic elicits, at the very least, ambivalent reactions. (This, after all, is a region where memory of French and British control is still fresh.) Though the program is meant to be voluntary, some fear that compulsion is not far behind.

There are other reasons to be wary of the administration's plan. Democracy, impatiently imposed, can lead to unintended consequences. If the Palestinians were able to choose a leader in truly free elections, might they not opt for the head of Hamas? If free elections were soon held in Saudi Arabia, would Crown Prince Abdullah, a reformer, prevail over Osama bin Laden or another militant Islamic leader? If not genuinely accepted and reinforced by

The Wrong Way to Sell Democracy to the Arab World

traditions of constitutionalism, democracy can degenerate into plebiscites that only add legitimacy to extremism and authoritarianism.

Compounding the problem is the suspicion -- not only among the Arabs but also among the Europeans whose support the United States is seeking -- that the sudden focus on democracy has been promoted by administration officials who wish to delay any serious American effort to push the Israelis and Palestinians to reach a genuine peace settlement. That suspicion was fueled by Vice President Dick Cheney's recent remarks at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland. The spread of democracy, Mr. Cheney said, was "the precondition for peace and prosperity in Western Europe" after World War II. He went on to assert that democratic reform "is also essential to a peaceful resolution of the longstanding Arab-Israeli dispute."

Mr. Cheney's argument that democracy is the precondition for peace appeared to many to be a rationalization for postponing any effort to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Moreover, it ignored the historical reality that democracy can flourish only in an atmosphere of political dignity. As long as the Palestinians live under Israeli control and are humiliated daily, they won't be attracted by the virtues of democracy. The same is largely true of the Iraqis under the American occupation.

For the Bush administration's initiative to succeed, it must be more in sync with regional realities. To that end, the administration should take the following steps:

First, the program must be devised with Arab countries and not just presented to them. Egyptians and Saudis will not embrace democracy if they feel that their religious and cultural traditions are being slighted. The Europeans should also be fully engaged, and they should likewise pursue a dialogue of their own with the nations of the region regarding the definition and the goals of the planned undertaking. Any differences in approach could then be reconciled at the G-8 summit meeting.

Second, the initiative must recognize that without political dignity derived from self-determination there can be no democracy. The Germans regained their political dignity in a relatively short time after the end of World War II, and that in turn helped them to revive the democratic traditions of the pre-Nazi era. The program for Arab democracy will be more successful, and find wider acceptance, if it is matched by efforts to grant sovereignty to the Iraqis and Palestinians. Otherwise, democracy will seem to many in the Arab world to be window dressing for continued external domination.

Finally, the United States must define the substance of a peace settlement in the Middle East and then work energetically to put that agreement in place. Doing so will give greater credibility to the constructive motives behind the democracy initiative; it will also show the countries of the Middle East that there is a shared basis for a genuine partnership with the democratic West.

The transformation of the Middle East will be a more complex undertaking than the restoration of postwar Europe. After all, social restoration is inherently easier than social transformation. Islamic traditions, religious convictions and cultural habits must be treated with patient respect. Only then will the time be ripe for democracy in the Middle East.

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Load-Date: March 8, 2004

*How not to spread democracy ;
Bush's Greater Middle East initiative*

The International Herald Tribune

March 9, 2004 Tuesday

Copyright 2004 International Herald Tribune

Section: OPINION; Pg. 9

Length: 957 words

Byline: Zbigniew Brzezinski

Dateline: WASHINGTON

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The New York Times

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How not to spread democracy ; Bush's Greater Middle East initiative

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Load-Date: March 9, 2004

**NEW IRAQ NOT;
QUITE A BEACON RESENTMENT MORE WIDESPREAD THAN REFORM**

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (Pennsylvania)

March 28, 2004 Sunday

FIVE STAR EDITION

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Section: WORLD,

Length: 975 words

Byline: MEGAN K. STACK, LOS ANGELES TIMES

Dateline: RIYADH, Saudi Arabia

Body

These are days of heady promises, when kings and despots are making emphatic gestures of reform. There are petition drives in Syria and Saudi Arabia and women's rights negotiations in the United Arab Emirates. Human rights initiatives are suddenly being aired by members of oppressive regimes.

Saddam Hussein's fall unsettled Arab leaders by demonstrating that the United States is willing to do away with hostile regimes. Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh said it best: We must shave our beards, he warned, before others shave them for us.

But behind the gestures of political change, contradictions and resentment are as thick and dark as the pools of oil under Saudi sands. One year after the campaign to oust Saddam, other regimes have been stripped of their sense of invulnerability and appear uncertain of the new order. Pro-democracy reformists from Damascus to Dubai took strength from the disintegration of the Iraqi regime -- but were also saddled with the poisonous label of American sympathizer.

The United States has paid for the war and the occupation with a profound anti-American backlash. Jihad has been fired in the hearts of a new generation of extremist recruits. Sectarian tensions are spilling from Iraq, drawing out tribal, religious and ethnic splits in neighboring countries and raising fears of instability.

The United States argued that toppling Saddam would ease the path to peace between Israel and the Palestinians. But another year of horrendous bloodshed in the Palestinian uprising has sunk Arabs deep into despair and intensified rage against U.S. foreign policy. That anger found form in wide-ranging street protests after the assassination of Sheik Ahmed Yassin, the founder of the militant Hamas movement. "If you ask us whether American foreign policy is working, we will say no," said Mustafa Harmarneh, head of Jordan's Center for Strategic Studies. "We went to American schools, and we will tell you: No."

Western officials point out that change takes time. It's too early to measure Iraq's influence, they say, adding that in the long run, the ouster of Saddam can't help but set off waves of political progress in the region. Optimistic analysts insist that the mere discussion of human rights and democracy is an important step.

"The removal of Saddam Hussein brought politics back to the Middle East," Lebanese lawyer Chibli Mallat said.

NEW IRAQ NOT; QUITE A BEACON RESENTMENT MORE WIDESPREAD THAN REFORM

But others say talk is cheap, and backsliding common. In autocratic regimes such as Saudi Arabia and Egypt, they say, discussion of change has become a tool of rulers -- a way to ease American pressure, discourage unrest and, above all, keep a firm grip on power.

"Many, many regimes are very frightened -- they're illegitimate, but they've always been buttressed and covered by American support, which they don't seem able to rely on anymore," Lebanese analyst Michael Young said. "And they realize their own people are not very happy with them, so they're caught in this sort of ambiguous situation."

Reform is an old ghost in the Arab world, frequently discussed and seldom realized. Egypt is a case in point: Aging President Hosni Mubarak this year lightened media constraints, approved the formation of a human rights committee and made several much-studied remarks indicating that he won't bequeath the presidency to his son, Gamal.

But how deep is the change? Egyptians have lived under emergency law almost continuously since 1967. Independent nongovernmental organizations and religious parties are illegal, and human rights groups have criticized Egyptian security forces, saying they torture opposition demonstrators, gay men, street children and Islamists alike.

In many Arab countries, where the status quo means discrimination, the sectarian question distills the tension between democratization and stability. Minorities see a chance for greater freedom; regimes worry that a resurgence of tribal or religious loyalty could provoke violence -- and erode carefully centralized control.

They have watched nervously while Iraq's diverse population, free from brutal ties of enforced nationalism, retrenched along ethnic lines.

"The [Americans] keep talking about Shiites in the south, Kurds in the north -- why don't they just talk about Iraqis?" asked Ihsan Ali Bu-Hulaiga, a Saudi member of the appointed council that advises the royal family. "Now everybody is scared, thinking they need to stick to their tribe. This will drive us back 100 years."

In Saudi Arabia, one of the most troubled and pressured Arab regimes is fighting for survival on all fronts. The House of Saud is battling an armed internal uprising, international pressure to reform its Islamic fundamentalist culture and a clamor for democratization from political activists.

Amid the strife, Saudi Arabia is also trying to find its footing with the United States. Decades of tight, affectionate relations gave way to awkward suspicion and mutual disappointment following the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. After the invasion of Iraq, to the quiet relief of officials from both nations, the United States pulled its troops out of Saudi Arabia.

The vast land that yielded Islam's prophet is also the birthplace of the modern jihad movement, fed during the Cold War by Saudi petrodollars and the fiery preaching of the kingdom's conservative Wahhabi clerics.

Asked about the number of men who rushed over Saudi Arabia's long border to fight the Americans, a Western diplomat said, "We're talking thousands, not hundreds."

Saudis aren't the only ones -- from Beirut to Cairo, young men have left home to answer the summons to holy war.

In Saudi Arabia, the lesson is well known: Eventually, jihad finds its way back home. Islamic insurgents turned their firepower against the royal family last year with a pair of devastating suicide bombings in Riyadh and gun battles throughout the country.

Load-Date: March 30, 2004

The art of biting a helping hand

The Daily Telegraph (Sydney, Australia)

January 27, 2004 Tuesday

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Section: FEATURES-TYPE- FEATURE-COLUMN- OPINION / OP ED; Pg. 18

Length: 899 words

Byline: PIERS AKERMAN

Body

SOCIETY has traditionally been split in its opinion of the ditherings of deluded post-menopausal women.

Shakespeare took the warts-and-all approach and added intrigue to Macbeth with his witches, Hansel and Gretel ran into trouble in the ginger bread cottage, as did Snow White when she accepted a less than delicious apple.

There have been fairy godmothers, as Cinderella found, though they tend to be overshadowed by their loopy doppelgangers.

Germaine Greer revived her bleat about Australia last week, but does anyone care?
MATP

Now we have Sydney's high priestess of theatre, Robyn Nevin, babbling on about the Prime Minister's preference to attend the opening of a railway rather than a new theatre at Walsh Bay.

It was a classic direct-from-the-heart to the luvvies. The Labor luvvies.

The theatre in question was delivered despite strong opposition from the in-your-face crowd because it was part of a wharf redevelopment plan which saw the white-ant infested Walsh Bay wharves restored by a developer.

The luvvies know in their hearts that development is evil, and they weren't happy with the thought that expensive units would also be built as part of the deal.

I recall backing the proposal, the development, the theatre and the general revival of the dead precinct and being attacked in The Sydney Morning Herald for my views by Richard Ackland, who falsely stated I had been paid a case of Grange Hermitage for my support.

Absolute nonsense of course, but without any real editorial management overseeing standards, the newspaper is a haven for grossly inaccurate fabulists.

Whether Nevin's remarks were all her own work or merely a script delivered by opponents of the Howard Government is difficult to determine. What is certain, however, is that she failed to acknowledge that Federal Government funding of the Sydney Theatre Company of which she is the CEO has been almost doubled since John Howard replaced Paul Keating as prime minister.

According to the files, the STC received about \$540,000 in 1996 and now trousers some \$1.2 million.

The art of biting a helping hand

If you're going to attack a government, you could at least acknowledge who's carrying the freight.

The arts and business story has been improving in recent years as the partnerships between Sun Microsystems and Musica Viva, and Australia Post's generous support for last week's wonderful tribute to Dame Joan Sutherland and her husband Richard Bonyng demonstrate, but there are more opportunities yet to be realised.

Gratuitous and insulting remarks from the CEO of a leading arts body don't help reassure members of the business community that their contributions will be appreciated by ideologically-driven arts czarinas.

By far the loopiest remarks from a member of the harpies' chorus came from British Liberal Democrat MP Jenny Tonge, however.

Speaking eight days after a Palestinian woman killed four Israelis at a border crossing, Ms Tonge said she understood suicide bombers and would consider becoming a suicide bomber herself if she were a Palestinian.

Most of the suicide bombers have been pathologically damaged kids, brainwashed since early childhood by Yasser Arafat's Palestinian Authority which operates the most foul education system on the planet, teaching hatred, promoting lies and encouraging suicide as a means of advancement.

Ms Tonge, however, might have been thinking of the most recent woman to pull the pin on herself in the hope of a free passage to paradise. (Whether women are promised 70-plus dark-eyed virgins is a moot point.) As it happens, Reem Raiyshi was helped on her way to martyrdom by her cuckolded husband, who felt that she could reasonably atone for her adultery by blowing herself up! How the Australian Family Court would view such a sentence is not known.

The terrorist group Hamas supported her all the way.

By the way, when the metal in Raiyshi's bomb showed up on the security screen at the checkpoint, she told the guards she had a metal splint in her leg. The compassionate fools believed her and lost their lives.

Maybe this lethal deception is what Ms Tonge has in mind. What Nevin was thinking of is anyone's guess.

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Random thoughts

Governor of Tasmania Richard Butler weighed in on the public-private education debate as the topic for his Australia Day address and, predictably enough, mouthed the Labor party line. But he didn't indicate whether he sent his own children to the local state school or whether he opted for private schooling? My guess is he went private, as did many other leading lights in the ALP. Perhaps he will blame his previous wife, Susan Ryan, for the decision. I attended both public and private schools but sent my children to private. Sure, it meant making some sacrifices in the family, but isn't that what we do for kids? Parents seeking private schools for their children today tell me they think there will be better discipline, less tolerance of disruptive pupils and, they hope, a better education in the private sector. There are good performers in both systems but there are fewer loony union-inspired restrictions on the teachers in the private system and almost none of the politically correct fixation with gender bender issues that seems to inspire and obsess the daft Australian Education Union. A quick skim of the AEU's manifesto should be enough to cause most parents to get their kids into private schools pronto!

Load-Date: January 26, 2004

Middle East at the crossroads

University Wire

December 4, 2003, Thursday

Copyright 2003 Technician via U-Wire

Section: COLUMN

Length: 880 words

Byline: By Baruch Mechanic, Technician

Dateline: Raleigh, N.C.

Body

A little more than a week ago, I attended a forum called "From Pain to Reconciliation," and it shocked me with how pro-Palestinian the audience was. It seemed as if there were two kinds of people that attended the forum: those that support the "plight" of the Palestinians and those that want to learn more about the situation.

But, I ask, how can you expect people to have a better understanding of the current situation in Israel when the forum took on the same point of view as the mainstream media? I thought the reason for these forums was to create discussion and interest about a certain topic and not be blinded by our biases. CNN (also known as Chicken Noodle News), BBC (British Biased Corporation) and other major networks present what I call dramatized news. The headline news covers topics that would result in better ratings such as the O.J. Simpson and Peterson trials, tiger attacks, murder, missing interns, Ms. Lewinski and other topics. Similar to the situation in Israel, the news takes a dynamic situation that spans over thousands of years with tons of variables and turns it into black and white, good and bad -- where the strong are the bad and the weak are the good. Such simplification of the Arab terror war against Israel is malicious, one-sided and outright wrong.

North Carolina State U.

The Palestinian view is always the one that most people attach themselves to because they see a "suffering people" that are being "oppressed" by the big bad Israelis. First of all, let me take a second here to correct this misconceived notion of Palestinian people. Before 1948, the land that is currently Israel and Jordan was called Palestine. After 1948 the people that lived there were Israeli, Jordanian or Egyptian. The area called the Gaza Strip was under control by Egypt, and the area called the West Bank was under control by Jordan. At this time there was never any mention, talk or existence of Palestinians. After The Six Day War in June 1967, Israel took control of Gaza and the West Bank. This is when you first heard about the Palestinians and their pseudo love for their lost land and country. They were merely created to destroy the Jewish identity of this land that has existed for thousands of years.

The major argument of the forum was the "occupation" -- what most people call Israel's control over Gaza and the West Bank. When Ghazi Briegieth, a Palestinian peace activist, was asked how peace would be accomplished, he said that if Israel would leave Gaza and the West Bank there would be peace. I can't help but to laugh at such a ridiculous idea. Time and time again these terrorist groups known as Jihad, Hezbollah, Hamas, PLO (Palestinian Liberation Organization, now called the Palestinian Authority), Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade and many more continually state that they will never stop their attacks until the occupiers have left their land. In other words, not until the destruction of Israel will the terrorists rampage of murder and destruction stop. There are multiple accounts of the

Middle East at the crossroads

Palestinian Authority providing funding for these same terrorist groups. Guess where the PA receives their funds to carry out the murder of innocent Israelis -- Americans or Europeans? Without the financial support of the governments of Iran, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Iraq, Kuwait and other Muslim countries, the PA would be unable to carry out their wave of cold-blooded murder throughout the land of Israel. Peace? I think not.

When the areas in dispute were under Arab control there were still continuous attacks by terrorists. They would do everything in their power to kill Jews and to think otherwise is pure delusion. One must quintessentially ask, "Will Israel's security wall prevent the continued murder of innocent Jews?" Not when an Arab dresses as an Orthodox Jew and carries a bomb strapped to his chest onto a bus that is carrying innocent men, women and children, as was the case with the last Palestinian attack that killed more than 23 people including four Arabs at the Maxim Restaurant in Haifa. Will a Palestinian state stop the mortars and crudely made rockets from falling on homes where people are sleeping, where the shells rip holes in ceilings that are just above baby cradles? No, it will not! Will the shootings along highways stop? No they will not! Every day Israel receives about 40-50 terrorist warnings -- EVERY DAY!!!! And every day a few succeed.

Since three years ago after the Camp David summit, the amount of terrorist attacks in Israel would be about the equivalent of an Oklahoma City bombing every week within the United States. Israel is about the size of New Jersey with about six million Jews surrounded by more than 500 million Arabs. Would another sliver of Israel given up actually create peace? It would make Israel about 11 miles wide at the thinnest part. So, for pseudo peace, should Israel make itself less defensible? I would hope not.

Like anybody else in this world, I want peace in the Middle East; I want peace in the entire world. But for those terrorists this peace means the destruction of Israel. Is that really peace? No, it's not. And I would hope that the Muslim countries that support terrorism would soon see the grave mistake in their policies.

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Load-Date: December 4, 2003

Syria in their sights

The Daily Telegraph (Sydney, Australia)

October 8, 2003 Wednesday

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Section: FEATURES-TYPE- FEATURE-COLUMN- OPINION / OP EDPHOTO; Pg. 33

Length: 885 words

Byline: PHILLIP COOREY

Body

These are the first pictures of the alleged terrorist training camp in Syria attacked this week in an Israeli air raid. PHILLIP COOREY explores the growing Middle East tensions and its implications for US foreign policy.

US PRESIDENT George W. Bush avoided criticising the Israeli airstrike in Syria on Sunday, saying the Israelis had the right to

defend themselves.

His only caution to Israel was that he did not want to see tensions in the region inflamed by such actions.
MATP

The Israeli attack on Syrian territory is a major escalation on a new front in a region already beset by violence and sectarian hatred.

Does the attack signal an escalation of violence from guerilla warfare and terrorism?

What happened?

At 3am local time Sunday, Israeli F-16 jets crossed into neighbouring Syria and bombed the Ein Saheb camp, about 20km northwest of the capital Damascus.

What reason did Israel give for the attack?

Only hours before the air raid, a **female** suicide bomber belonging to Islamic Jihad walked into a restaurant in Haifa and killed 19 Jews and Arabs. Israel said Ein Saheb was a training camp for Islamic Jihad. Syria and Islamic Jihad deny this.

Violence in the Middle East is as common as the sun rising. Why the furore?

This was the first Israeli attack inside Syria in 30 years. The last time was during the 1973 Yom Kippur war when, on October 6, the holiest day in the Jewish calendar, Egypt and Syria launched attacks on Israel in a bid to regain territory lost during the 1967 Six-Day War.

The Israelis were taken by surprise and suffered losses before fighting back. By the time the US intervened diplomatically, Israel had taken back the Golan Heights from Syria and Gaza and the Sinai.

Syria in their sights

Israel and Syria have clashed since 1973, but that was in Lebanon when both countries became mired in that country's civil conflict.

The countries are still technically at war. Sunday's attack by Israel was on the eve of Yom Kippur.

Was the US, Israel's key ally, angry about the Israeli action?

No. Washington's own relationship with Syria is tense. For many years Washington has labelled Syria a country which supports and harbours terrorists.

It accuses Damascus of supporting Palestinian groups Hamas and Islamic Jihad. It also accuses Damascus of backing Hezbollah, which fought the 18-year Israeli occupation of Lebanon.

Hezbollah, responsible for the abduction of westerners in Beirut in the 1980s, was Iranian backed.

How are US-Syrian relations?

Not good. After Baghdad fell to in April, Washington turned its sights on Syria,

accusing it of having weapons of mass destruction and harbouring members of Saddam's regime who had fled Iraq.

Were relations always this bad?

No. During the 1991 Gulf War when the US needed Arab allies to help oust Iraq from Kuwait the then President George H. W. Bush offered Syria numerous financial and diplomatic incentives to join the coalition. Syria made a significant contribution.

What was President Bush's response to Israel's air strikes?

President Bush rang Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon after the strikes and said Israel had a right to defend herself but any action Israel took should avoid escalation.

Was President Bush having a bet both ways?

President Bush is treading a fine line. It was he who developed the post-September 11 doctrine of pre-emptive self-defence. Israel claimed that very rationale for the Syrian raid. At the same time, the US is sitting on a powderkeg in Iraq and is trying to revive its comatose road map for peace between Israel and the Palestinians.

President Bush really didn't mind the attack, did he?

No. As White House spokesman Scott McClellan said yesterday: "We have repeatedly told Syria they need to stop harbouring terrorist."

The State Department added that Damascus "must make a clean break from those responsible for planning and directing terrorist action from Syrian soil".

Syria has presented a resolution to the UN Security Council condemning the raid. Will it pass?

Not likely. The resolution needs nine out of 15 votes to pass. Although 14 of the 15 council members criticised the attack during Sunday's emergency session, the council will want a more balanced resolution which also condemns Palestinian terrorism.

The draft resolution only expresses grave concern at escalating tensions in the region and condemns Israel for violating international law and the UN Charter on self defence.

The US, a permanent member of the council, will veto any resolution critical of Israel.

Syria in their sights

When did the US last use its veto to protect Israel?

About three weeks ago when it blocked a resolution demanding Israel stop threatening to expel Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat.

Arab nations then put the resolution to the 191-member UN General Assembly and it passed easily. America was one of a handful of nations to vote against it.

Did Ariel Sharon ring President Bush to inform him the raid was about to take place?

Not according to White House spokesman Scott McClellan, who said: "We're not a traffic light. They don't ask for [permission] and we don't give it."

Why doesn't Syria hit back militarily?

Although Syria has a big army, Israel has superior troops and equipment, mainly provided by the US. Israel also has strategic nuclear weapons, including missiles pointed at Damascus. It also has the US on side.

Load-Date: October 7, 2003

End of Document

U.S. vetoes resolution demanding U.N. protection for Yasser Arafat

Deseret Morning News (Salt Lake City)

September 17, 2003, Wednesday

Copyright 2003 The Deseret News Publishing Co.

Length: 919 words

Byline: By Ranjan Roy Associated Press

Body

UNITED NATIONS -- Yasser Arafat dismissed the United States' veto of a U.N. resolution against Israel's threats to expel him, saying Wednesday that the step will not "shake us." Arabs expressed anger, saying Israel may see the veto as a green light to move against the Palestinian leader.

Washington says it opposes expelling Arafat from the West Bank. But it said the U.N. resolution calling for Israel to halt its threats was "lopsided" and didn't condemn terrorist groups attacking Israel.

Arabs were dismayed by the veto, with some saying the vote showed the United States had lost its credibility as an honest broker in the Middle East. Amr Moussa, secretary-general of the Arab League, said he hoped the veto doesn't mean the United States supports Israeli policies, "which are opposed by the whole world."

Arafat, speaking to supporters at his West Bank headquarters in Ramallah, dismissed the American move. "No decision here or there will shake us," he said. "We are bigger than all decisions."

Nabil Shaath, the Palestinian foreign minister, said U.S. officials "informed us officially" that the veto "is not in any way a green light for Israel."

But that did not reassure many in the Arab world.

"The pretext saying that the draft resolution was unbalanced is baseless," Egyptian Foreign Minister Ahmed Maher said Wednesday.

Maher echoed concern Israel might see the vote as a license to go after Arafat. He said that if nations don't pressure Israel to desist from its "provocative and aggressive" policies, it would show the international community's "powerlessness."

Syria's U.N. Ambassador Fayssal Mekdad called the U.S. veto "extremely regrettable," warning it "will antagonize the feeling of Arabs in the region."

Syria, the only Arab nation on the Security Council, had pressed for a vote since last week's decision by Israel's security Cabinet to "remove" Arafat in a manner and time to be decided. Israel blames Arafat for sabotaging the peace process and doing nothing to prevent terrorist attacks.

Yemeni Foreign Minister Abu Bakr al-Kerbi, whose country asked for an emergency Arab summit in support of Arafat, told Abu Dhabi TV the American justification of its veto was "unconvincing," and gives the impression the

U.S. vetoes resolution demanding U.N. protection for Yasser Arafat

United States is not serious about the peace plan. Moussa, the Arab League chief, said the league was waiting for its members to respond to the summit request.

The Palestinians had generated wide global support for the resolution. Of the 15 Security Council members, 11 voted Tuesday in favor of the resolution. Britain, Germany and Bulgaria abstained.

U.S. Ambassador John Negroponte said the resolution did not contain a condemnation of terrorist groups such as **Hamas** and the Al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades, blamed for several suicide attacks against Israel.

He said, "It was lopsided and ... it didn't take into account the elements we thought it ought to take into account, including a robust criticism of Palestinian terrorism."

But Arabs warned the U.S. blocking of the resolution undermined its positions in the Middle East, where many see Washington as favoring Israel.

"Clearly this is not a neutral position," Ziad Abu Amr, a member of the outgoing Palestinian Cabinet, said.

Senior Arafat adviser Nabil Abu Rdeneh told reporters the veto could jeopardize the U.S.-backed "road map" for Mideast peace. The vote "is a real encouragement for the Israelis to continue their escalation," he said.

Nasser Al-Kidwa, the Palestinian U.N. observer, said the United States lost its credibility as an honest broker and warned "serious consequences may follow."

In Jordan, the opposition Muslim Brotherhood said it was not surprised at the U.S. veto because "the Zionist lobby ... controls the American policy in the Middle East."

The Israeli threats against Arafat brought criticism from around the world -- and warnings not to carry out the move. Criticism against Israel mounted after Vice Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said Sunday that killing Arafat was an option, although the foreign minister later backtracked on the remark.

Last Friday, the 15 council members -- including the United States -- issued a statement saying "the removal of chairman Arafat would be unhelpful and should not be implemented."

The rejected draft resolution would have demanded "that Israel, the occupying power, desist from any act of deportation and to cease any threat to the safety of the elected president of the Palestinian Authority."

It would have condemned Israel's targeted assassinations of militant leaders and Palestinian suicide bombings, "all of which caused enormous suffering and many innocent victims." It also called for a cessation of "all acts of terrorism, provocation, incitement and destruction."

France said it regretted the U.N. resolution didn't pass, saying it "had a balanced message that we believed could bring a consensus."

Israel's U.N. Ambassador Dan Gillerman said after Tuesday's vote that the resolution "did not focus on terrorism killing innocent men, **women** and children" and "the clear legal responsibility of the Palestinian leadership to dismantle the terrorist infrastructure."

The last veto of a Mideast resolution was also by the United States on Dec. 20, 2002 -- an Arab-backed resolution condemning Israel for the killings of three U.N. workers, which U.S. officials also termed one-sided.

Britain's U.N. Ambassador Emrys Jones Parry called on Israel not to construe the vote as an endorsement of its action and said the international community had rejected Israel's threat against Arafat.

Load-Date: September 18, 2003

U.S. vetoes resolution demanding U.N. protection for Yasser Arafat

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Lives in the balance

Courier Mail (Queensland, Australia)

September 15, 2004 Wednesday

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Section: FEATURES; Pg. 23

Length: 1019 words

Byline: John Hartley

Body

The kidnapping of hostages has become an ugly feature of international conflict, writes John Hartley

KIDNAPPING in Iraq is becoming a favoured tactic among a variety of disaffected groups.

So far, the authorities have no effective way of responding to it, suggesting the trend will continue.

Kidnapping by terrorists is well documented in conflicts around the world.

In recent times the most notable cases involved the Lebanese radical Shia group Hezbollah, which detained many Western hostages in the 1980s.

Among them, American journalist Terry Anderson was held for six years and a British hostage negotiator, Terry Waite, for nearly five years. Both wrote extensively on their ordeals.

Kidnapping occurs largely for political or ideological reasons or for ransom. In the latter case there usually is a good success rate of an eventual release. Certainly this was the case with the Philippine-based Abu Sayyaf group and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Columbia. But even in ransom cases, such as that involving Australian backpacker David Wilson, there is no guarantee of success.

Kidnapping can attract considerable public attention. If prolonged and subject to detailed media scrutiny, it can be exploited for its human-interest value as families and communities become emotionally involved. There also is the capacity to pressure governments, particularly if the kidnapping is seen to be linked to a broader policy issue.

Since March, 2003, more than 100 foreigners have been kidnapped in Iraq by a variety of groups. Most have been freed but at least 25 have been murdered. Although not generally reported, by far the largest number of those kidnapped have been Iraqi citizens with some observers suggesting as many as 10 a day.

Kidnapping of foreigners is carried out by an array of groups with such exotic titles as the Green Brigade, the Black Banners, the Horror Brigade, Islamic Response, the Islamic Army and so on.

Some of these groups undoubtedly are based on criminal gangs that seek to exploit the general lawlessness in Iraq and kidnap victims for ransom, so they can make financial gains.

Others, however, are part of an extremist Islamic group such as that headed by Abu Mussab al-Zarqawi.

Lives in the balance

The Jordanian-born Zarqawi is Iraq's most wanted terrorist and is considered so important authorities have posted a \$US25 million reward for his capture. His group is said to be linked to Al-Qaeda and certainly believes in the Wahhabi doctrine that is shared by so many extremist Sunni groups. Known as al-Tawid wel Jahid (Unity and Holy War), the group has killed a number of its kidnapped victims.

Iraqi citizens targeted tend to be children of middle class parents or professionals such as doctors and teachers. Most of the hostage takers are small-time criminals who seek quick payment.

A recent development, however, suggests that hostages are being sold "up the chain" to larger criminal or militant Islamic groups.

Foreigners in Iraq are kidnapped for a variety of reasons. Pressure is placed on governments to withdraw their troops, to cease reconstruction activity and to end their support for the interim Government.

Aid agencies, civil contractors and journalists also are targets.

The militants also carry out kidnappings to shore up their own support and credibility within the Islamic world. They also see their activities as part of the global jihad.

No country or field of endeavour appears immune. Nor do those of an Islamic faith necessarily have a better chance of survival. Of the 20 or so hostages presently held, at least a dozen nationalities are involved.

The nationality of the kidnapped victim and that country's relationship with Iraq largely will dictate how the kidnapping is handled and what level of support the hostages attract.

Some hostages, such as the two French journalists and the two Italian women aid workers, attract considerable publicity and government support. Others, such as Turkish truck drivers and Nepalese cooks and cleaners, do not.

There is no doubt the willingness of some countries and groups to deal with the hostage takers impacts on their perceived level of success.

Several private firms have agreed to deals that have secured the release of their hostages. In some cases this has involved the payment of ransoms or a decision to suspend further activity in Iraq. There also is a suspicion that a number of countries also have entered into such deals.

By far the best-documented case is the Philippines, which agreed to withdraw its troops to ensure the safe release of one of its nationals. A CNN report also insists that the release of an Egyptian diplomat was the result of a payment of a large sum of money. There also are allegations that money was paid to release three Italians who were kidnapped some months ago.

Regardless of the veracity of these claims, there is little doubt that hostage takers believe they are able to have their demands met.

TO this end the 32-country multinational force agreed in August that they would make no concessions to terrorist demands. A co-ordinated campaign was mounted to this effect.

Hostage-taking also has been condemned by many Islamic organisations, some of which have been involved in militant activity. The Islamic group Hamas has deplored the kidnapping of the French journalist, describing France as a "supporter of the Iraqi cause". Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood described the murder of the 12 Nepalese as "un-Islamic".

The US and Australia have condemned hostage-taking in the strongest of terms. Both Australian Prime Minister John Howard and the Opposition Leader Mark Latham have reiterated their determination not to negotiate with terrorists.

Lives in the balance

The problem for authorities in dealing with the continued use of hostages in the war on terror is that there is always a public response to an alleged or actual hostage taking event.

With human lives in the balance, it is important that authorities find a way of dealing with the issue that offers no concession to the terrorists but also manages public opinion at home.

Major-General (ret) John Hartley was head of the Defence Intelligence Organisation from 1992-95

Load-Date: September 14, 2004

End of Document

Abbas Cancels Meeting With Sharon Over Prisoner Issue

The New York Times

August 6, 2003 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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Section: Section A; Column 3; Foreign Desk; Pg. 2

Length: 976 words

Byline: By JAMES BENNET

Dateline: JERUSALEM, Aug. 5

Body

The Palestinian prime minister, Mahmoud Abbas, today canceled talks scheduled for Wednesday with his Israeli counterpart, Ariel Sharon, to protest a planned release of Palestinian prisoners as a damaging diplomatic stunt, Palestinian officials said.

Israeli officials said the prisoner release, still set for Wednesday, was a politically difficult concession intended to strengthen Mr. Abbas. But Mr. Abbas's allies called the move a blow to his credibility, saying that many if not most of the 338 prisoners were due to be freed soon anyway.

In a further complication, top Israeli security officials said today that Iran was financing and directing new Palestinian violence.

Instead of easing the way for the current peace plan, the prisoner release has become a sticking point, with both sides seemingly aiming their arguments less at each other than at Washington. As Palestinian officials tried to play down the significance of the release, Israeli officials tried to draw attention to it, informing foreign reporters when and where the prisoners would be freed and promising "full media access."

The peace plan does not specifically oblige Israel to release prisoners, and Israel has repeatedly characterized the step as a good-will gesture. So far it appears to be having the effect of obscuring the precise concessions demanded of each side, which neither has fulfilled.

Hisham Abdul Razeq, the Palestinian minister for prisoner affairs, dismissed any suggestion that the release would help Mr. Abbas, who is known as Abu Mazen. "Israel's way of acting, since this government was created, is showing that their intentions are to destroy the government, to destroy Abu Mazen personally," Mr. Abdul Razeq said by telephone.

He said Israel was wrong to determine unilaterally which prisoners would be freed.

The government has ruled out releasing prisoners who have "blood on their hands," a reference to those involved in terrorist attacks. Many of the Palestinians to be released were described by Israel as having thrown stones or firebombs, or as being members of groups like ***Hamas*** and Islamic Jihad. Israel previously said it would release no members of those groups, but relented after Mr. Abbas objected.

Abbas Cancels Meeting With Sharon Over Prisoner Issue

It was a month ago that the government first voted to release hundreds of Palestinian prisoners. Since then, the number has declined from a previously announced figure of 540, in part because some finished serving their terms in the meantime, Israeli officials said.

Further, the planned release of an additional 99 prisoners, described by Israeli officials as 50 common criminals and 49 Palestinians caught being in Israel illegally, has been postponed, Israeli security officials said.

They said the government did not want to play into the Palestinian accusation that it was releasing only common criminals, whom the Palestinian Authority is not necessarily eager to see freed, and illegal workers.

Of those to be released, roughly half were convicted on Israeli charges and half are in "administrative detention," under which Israel can hold prisoners without charge or trial for up to six months, with the possibility of extensions. According to the Israeli human rights group B'Tselem, the Israeli Army was holding 763 Palestinians in administrative detention as of July 3.

The government said earlier that priority in the release would be given to women and children, but a senior security official said fewer than a dozen of those to be released on Wednesday were under 18. Minors being held amount to a few dozen, he added. No women are to be released, officials said.

The prisoners are to be released at four West Bank checkpoints and at the Erez crossing into the Gaza Strip.

Israeli officials denied reports in the Israeli news media that Mr. Sharon had moved to cancel the meeting with Mr. Abbas in response to a Palestinian shooting attack in the West Bank on Sunday night that wounded an Israeli woman and her three children.

Israel officials seized on that attack, a violation of a declared Palestinian suspension of violence, to renew their call for the Palestinian Authority to begin dismantling "terrorist capabilities and infrastructure," as called for in the first phase of the peace plan.

Another Israeli security official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said recent attacks by Al Aksa Martyrs Brigades, a violent group connected to the mainstream Fatah faction, were instigated not by the Palestinian leadership but by Iran. Al Aksa Martyrs claimed responsibility for the shooting on Sunday night.

"We see a process of escalation from the Iranian side," the official said, describing links between Iran's Revolutionary Guard and Palestinians in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Iran has been behind most of the violence during the cease-fire, he said.

Mr. Abbas has said he will enforce the cease-fire but will not risk civil conflict among Palestinian factions.

For its part, Israel is supposed to "immediately" dismantle settlement outposts built since March 2001 and freeze all other "settlement activity." Israel has begun taking down some outposts -- trailers clustered to extend settlers' grip on the West Bank -- but settlers have continued erecting new ones. Israel is negotiating with Washington over the definition of a settlement freeze.

Much of the process appears to be in negotiation between each party and the Bush administration rather than between the adversaries. Mr. Abbas and Mr. Sharon have not met since July 20, when they saw each other in Jerusalem before separate talks in Washington with President Bush.

Saying it must act as long as the Palestinian Authority fails to do so, the Israeli Army has continued arresting Palestinians since June 29, when the Palestinian factions declared that they were suspending attacks. It has arrested at least 230 Palestinians since then, the army said today.

Abbas Cancels Meeting With Sharon Over Prisoner Issue

Load-Date: August 6, 2003

End of Document

Government Incitement In Egypt and the Sinai Attack

New York Sun (Archive)

October 13, 2004 Wednesday

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Section: FOREIGN; Pg. 9

Length: 1028 words

Byline: By STEVEN STALINSKY

Body

While the identity of those responsible for the terrorist attacks in Egypt last week is not yet known, the Egyptian government institutions' relentless incitement to violence against Jews and Israelis by its political, religious, and press organizations should in part be held accountable.

Incitement against Jews, and the dehumanization of any people, paves the way for violence against them.

This past year alone in the Egyptian press, there has been rampant anti-Semitism. In August the ruling National Democratic Party's religious weekly magazine Aqidati printed an article spreading blood libels, and in July another article by the ruling party's newspaper ran an editorial stating that the Holocaust is a lie aimed at extorting the West, and that the killing of Jews in Nazi gas chambers never happened.

Dr. 'Adel Sadeq, chairman of the prestigious Arab Psychiatrists Association and head of the Psychiatry Department at 'Ein Shams University, gave an interview on April 24, 2002, in which he, in medical terms, explained that suicide bombers are mentally healthy: "... The psychological structure [of the perpetrator of a suicide attack] is that of an individual who loves life...We know this well, because our

culture is one of sacrifice, loyalty, and honor...When the martyr dies a martyr's death, he attains the height of bliss...As a professional psychiatrist, I say that the height of bliss comes with the end of the countdown ...three, two, one. And then, you press the button to blow yourself up. When the martyr reaches 'one,' and then 'boom,' he explodes, and senses himself flying, because he knows for certain that he is not dead...It is a transition to another, more beautiful world..."

Egypt's government-controlled religious establishment, centered at Sunni Islam's main religious center Al-Azhar, has taken the lead in both inciting anti-Semitism and supporting suicide bombings.

For example, on March 22, 2004, Sheik 'Atiyyah Saqr, former head of the Al-Azhar Fatwa Committee, who in the past issued a Fatwa declaring Jews "apes and pigs," was asked in an online chat room to name, "according to the Qur'an, the main characteristics and qualities of the Jews." Sheik Saqr listed 20 evil traits including: feeling pain at others' happiness; wishing evil on people; vulgarity; murder of innocents; mercilessness and heartlessness; cowardice; and miserliness.

The sheik of Al-Azhar, Muhammad Sayyed Tantawi, has frequently spoken in support of suicide bombings and killing Jews. On August 19, 2004, he was asked, "There are preachers in mosques in Iraq who say that anyone who kills an American will enter Paradise. Do you intend to issue such fatwas?" Mr. Tantawi responded by praising

Government Incitement In Egypt and the Sinai Attack

suicide bombings: "Don't specify countries and names. I determined a general rule which is based on religious law and that applies to everybody. Anyone who blows himself up amongst an enemies who want to destroy his home and attack his land...is a Shahid, Shahid, Shahid."

A Web site associated with Al-Azhar earlier reported, "[Sheik Tantawi] emphasized that every martyrdom operation against any Israeli, including children, women, and teenagers, is a legitimate act according to [Islamic] religious law..."

It should also be noted that at a March 18, 2002, demonstration at Al-Azhar, eight students who had been trained to carry out suicide attacks against Israelis were paraded, and introduced as a new "martyrdom organization." Mahmoud Al-Zahhar, a Hamas leader, said soon after, "Enrollment began for volunteers for martyrdom [operations]. Two thousand students...signed up to die a martyr's death. This is the real Egyptian people."

Just as Al-Azhar is under the Egyptian government's control, the mufti of the country also plays an influential position, and those in that position have been equally supportive of suicide bombings. Egypt's former mufti, Sheik Dr. Ahmad Al-Tayyeb, declared on April 4, 2002, that "the solution to the Israeli terror lies in a proliferation of [martyrdom] attacks that strike horror into the hearts of the enemies of Allah."

In an interview conducted in early July 2003 with the Egyptian newspaper Al-Haqiqa, his replacement Sheik Ali Gum'a added, "The world has let the Jews spread corruption...The one who carries out [martyrdom] operations against the Zionists and blows himself up is, without a doubt, a Shahid..." When asked if it is permitted to kill an Israeli traveling outside the borders of his land, he answered, "Yes, it is permitted to kill him."

The Egyptian government press has also consistently supported suicide attacks against Israelis. For example, following the infamous Cafe Moment bombing that killed 11, an editorial in Al-Akhbar on March 12, 2002, labeled that action a "heroic operation."

In an article published by Al-Ahram on August 14, 2001, journalist Fahmi Huweidi described his happiness, and that of many Arabs, following the Sbarro pizzeria bombing in Jerusalem, which killed 15: "I cannot hide my happiness about the martyrdom operation that took place... [It] was, for me, a ray of hope and a life-saver... At first, I thought that this was my own private feeling, but shortly after the news was broadcast, I discovered that many share it with me."

An editorial in another daily, Al-Masaa, on January 2, 2004, also praised suicide operations: "We have no argument regarding the question of the legitimacy of these operations...even if civilians or children are killed...Ultimately, we should bless every Palestinian man or woman who goes calmly to carry out a martyrdom operation, in order to receive a reward in the Hereafter."

Also calling for killing Israelis wherever they can be found was an editorial in the Al-Akhbar daily on August 17, 2001: "All that we have left to say to the sons of Palestine is that although everybody has abandoned you, do not be sad and do not wait for anybody's help...Kill your enemies wherever you may find them."

Whether or not the calls of incitement carried out by official Egyptian institutions were heeded by an Egyptian, the suicide bombings last week prove once again that reform is long overdue. Ending calls for killing Jews and Westerners is a step long overdue.

Load-Date: October 13, 2004

NATION / WORLD DIGEST

St. Louis Post-Dispatch (Missouri)
September 4, 2004 Saturday Five Star Lift Edition

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Section: NEWS; Nation/World Digest; Pg. 21

Length: 938 words

Byline: FROM NEWS SERVICES

Body

SALT LAKE CITY Utah's high court backs anti-bigamy laws

The Utah Supreme Court on Friday denied an appeal from a man convicted of having five wives. He had argued that anti-bigamy laws violated his First Amendment right to religious freedom.

Attorney John Bucher said polygamy was part of Tom Green's religion, and that Utah's laws for cohabitation were so vague that Green had no way to know he was in violation.

A unanimous Supreme Court disagreed, however, noting Utah's bigamy statute "does not attempt to target only religiously motivated bigamy. Any individual who violates the statute, whether for religious or secular reasons, is subject to prosecution."

Green, 55, lived with his five wives and 31 children in a cluster of trailer homes in the remote desert, about 125 miles southwest of Salt Lake City. He was convicted in 2002 of child rape for having sex with one of his five wives when she was 13.

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. Astronauts make repairs during spacewalk

Leaving their orbiting outpost unmanned, the international space station's two astronauts floated outside on a spacewalk Friday and plugged in new antennas and replaced a worn-out piece of cooling equipment.

Gennady Padalka and Mike Fincke successfully finished the fourth and final spacewalk of their six-month mission. They installed three antennas for a new type of cargo carrier to be launched by the European Space Agency to the space station late next year and replaced a 2-foot-square Russian pump panel, part of a critical system for cooling station equipment.

Because no one was left inside the 225-mile-high complex, flight controllers in both Moscow and Houston kept close watch over the two men and all systems. The spacewalk lasted 5 1/2 hours, and everything was accomplished.

CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. Reservist convicted of abuse is demoted

A Marine reservist who tearfully asked to remain in the Marine Corps after being convicted of abusing inmates in Iraq was sentenced Friday to 60 days of hard labor and demoted to the rank of private.

NATION / WORLD DIGEST

Sgt. Gary Pittman stood stoically as the verdict was read and left without speaking to reporters. Pittman's civilian attorney, John Tranberg, said "This was about as light a punishment as they could give. This was a tremendous outcome."

Earlier Friday, Pittman asked the jury of nine Marine officers to allow him to remain in the Marine Corps. In military court, the jury, not the judge, sentences the defendant. The same panel convicted Pittman on Thursday of one count each of dereliction of duty and abuse. He was cleared of two other charges, including abusing a 52-year-old Iraqi man who died in custody.

PHILADELPHIA State police settle sex case for \$5 million

The state police have agreed to pay \$5 million to settle allegations that commanders failed to rein in a rogue trooper who was sexually assaulting women.

The settlement announced Thursday covers civil lawsuits filed in federal court by four women, including one who was 14 years old in the late 1990s when she was assaulted by former Trooper Michael Evans.

Evans pleaded guilty in 2000 of corruption of minors, indecent assault, solicitation to promote prostitution, official oppression and indecent exposure. He is serving a 5- to 10-year prison sentence.

Evans met all the victims while on duty, although the suits do not make clear whether all of the incidents occurred while he was on duty.

ISRAEL Israeli troops kill two Palestinians

Israeli troops killed two Palestinians in two separate incidents Friday, and Israeli helicopters fired three missiles at a Gaza Strip warehouse the army said was used for making weapons.

The airstrike in the Mughazi refugee camp in central Gaza set off a fire but caused no injuries. The army said the building was owned by a well-known Hamas activist.

Earlier Friday, Israeli soldiers shot at two Palestinians approached an Israeli-controlled area near the Karni crossing between Gaza and Israel, the army said. One was killed and the second man apparently fled the area. After nightfall, Israeli troops near the Jewish settlement of Rafiah Yam in southern Gaza shot at two Palestinians who appeared to be carrying an explosive device, the army said. One of the Palestinians was killed and the other seriously injured, Palestinian doctors said.

GERMANY Human chain rescues books in library fire

A fire that ripped through one of Germany's most precious historical libraries destroyed or damaged tens of thousands of irreplaceable books, officials said Friday.

About 25,000 books were destroyed, and 40,000 others damaged by water and smoke from the fire Thursday night in Weimar's Duchess Anna Amalia Library, said Ulrike Bestgen, an expert with the Weimar Classics Foundation.

Some 6,000 works, including a 1543 Martin Luther Bible, were spirited to safety by a chain of people. German Culture Minister Christina Weiss pledged up to \$4.9 million to help repair the building and restore damaged books.

LEBANON Parliament's action extends Lahoud's term

Lebanon's parliament amended the country's constitution Friday to extend pro-Syrian President Emile Lahoud's term, ignoring U.N. calls to hold an election to choose the head of state.

The result, secured after Lahoud supporters mustered more than the two-thirds of votes needed, had been expected. Neighboring Syria, the main power broker in Lebanon, backed Lahoud's bid to extend his six-year term, which was due to expire Nov. 24.

Late Thursday, the U.N. Security Council narrowly approved a resolution aimed at pressuring Lebanon to reject a second term for Lahoud and calling for an immediate withdrawal of all its foreign forces -- an indirect reference to Syrian troops.

Graphic

photo; Photo by NORBERT MILLAUER / AFP / GETTY IMAGES - Firefighters on Friday inspect the roof of the historic Duchess Anna Amalia Library in Weimar, Germany, after a fire gutted the building and destroyed tens of thousands of priceless books.

Load-Date: September 4, 2004

End of Document

Israeli soldier guns down Palestinian; The military calls the shooting an accident and expresses regret

Telegraph Herald (Dubuque, IA)

July 26, 2003 Saturday

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Byline: ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dateline: JERUSALEM

Body

An Israeli soldier fired a tank-mounted machine gun at a pickup truck carrying a Palestinian family Friday, killing a 4-year-old Palestinian boy and wounding two other children. The Israeli military said the shooting was an accident and expressed regret.

In Washington, Palestinian Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas was due to meet President Bush later Friday amid growing impatience among Palestinians over the slow pace of progress along the U.S.-backed "road map" peace plan.

In a reflection of the tension, hundreds of Israeli police guarded entrances to Jerusalem's Old City and stopped young men from entering the Al Aqsa Mosque, fearing unrest after Friday's Muslim prayers. The area of the mosque, a site holy to Jews and Muslims, has been the site of clashes in the past.

Israeli-Palestinian violence has fallen sharply since a June 29 truce declared by Palestinian militants, but the road map has stalled over which side should make the next move and sporadic violence has continued.

Friday's shooting took place in the West Bank town of Barta.

Israel's military said the soldier accidentally discharged a burst of fire from a machine gun atop an armored vehicle, striking a truck and killing 4-year-old Mahmoud Kabaha. The military expressed regret for the shooting and said the two injured children were being treated in an Israeli hospital.

The Israeli military commander in the area - a colonel who would give only his first name, Dan - said an initial investigation "shows clearly that this was an accident and not some kind of a shooting incident." He said an inquiry was under way to determine whether the shooting was the result of mechanical malfunction or human error.

Witness Khalil Kabaha - who belongs to the same extended clan as many people in the village - said the vehicle had stopped at the checkpoint and was being approached by two Israeli soldiers when the firing started.

The shooting also wounded the boy's two sisters, aged 6 and 7. One of them was hurt in the hand, the other in the leg, he said.

A photographer at the scene counted 17 bullet holes in the vehicle.

Israeli soldier guns down Palestinian; The military calls the shooting an accident and expresses regret

The mayor of the village, Ghassan Kabaha - a distant relative of the boy - said he didn't believe the shooting was an accident.

"All the people here, even the other soldiers, were stunned," he said.

In Jerusalem, Israeli police kept up a heavy presence around Friday prayers at the Al Aqsa Mosque.

Friday prayers have been a flashpoint for violence in the past, and police spokesman Gil Kleiman said police were limiting entry to women and men over 40 after intelligence that "extremists in the Arab community" intended to cause violence.

Tensions around the site - known as the Temple Mount to Jews and Haram as-Sharif to Muslims - have risen since Israel began allowing small groups of Jewish tourists to visit three months ago.

Non-Muslims had been barred since the latest round of violence began in September 2000 after Ariel Sharon - then opposition leader and now Israel's prime minister - visited the site.

The road map aims to end the almost three years of violence and create a Palestinian state by 2005.

After the cease-fire, Israel withdrew from part of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Bethlehem, but Sharon is reluctant to make more moves required by the road map - such as freezing construction in Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Gaza - until Abbas cracks down on militant groups.

Abbas, fearing a violent confrontation with the heavily armed militants, hopes to instead persuade them to disarm.

Sharon's office on Friday announced more steps aimed at easing restrictions on Palestinians, including removing three road blocks in the West Bank, opening a road linking Nablus and Jenin and transferring \$16 million of frozen Palestinian assets to the Palestinian Authority.

In a statement, the government said Israeli Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz would meet Palestinian counterpart Mohammed Dahlan next week to set a date for two West Bank cities to be transferred to Palestinian control.

The two sides remain far apart on a key issue - the estimated 7,700 Palestinian prisoners held by Israel for alleged involvement in terrorism. Although the issue is not addressed in the road map, the Palestinians want the prisoners freed.

Israel has agreed to free only a few hundred and has not said whether the list will include members of Hamas and Islamic Jihad, two of the militant groups. The militants say they will abandon their truce unless prisoners are freed.

A senior official in Sharon's office said a list of prisoners to be released would probably be published once he returns from his own trip to Washington. Sharon is scheduled to meet separately with Bush at the White House on Tuesday.

Meanwhile, police searching for missing Israeli soldier Oleg Shaichat said he had most likely been kidnapped or killed by Palestinians. Security officials have said repeatedly they have intelligence warnings of militant intentions to kidnap Israeli soldiers.

On Thursday, an Israeli Arab driver was shot and killed by Israeli police after refusing to stop at a roadblock near the West Bank. On Tuesday, police in northern Israel on the lookout for a Palestinian attack fatally shot an Israeli Arab driver who ignored an order to pull over.

Also Thursday, a rocket-propelled grenade was fired at the office of a Palestinian security official in Gaza City, apparently by Palestinians. The grenade missed the office and struck a prison, injuring 10 inmates.

Israeli soldier guns down Palentinian; The military calls the shooting an accident and expresses regret

End of Document

Your Say

Herald Sun (Melbourne, Australia)

July 25, 2003 Friday

Copyright 2003 Nationwide News Pty Limited

Section: OPINION; Pg. 19

Length: 938 words

Body

Happy to see Arafat gone too?

THE US is happy that it has killed the two sons of Saddam, but if Israel had killed Arafat or the head of **Hamas**, would the Americans be so happy?

Would it be reported in the same way as the killing of Saddam's sons?

Arafat and others have caused a lot of misery, not only to Israelis but also to the Palestinians.

Shlomo Gurewicz, Melbourne

Get tougher on bullies

NOT enough is being done to stop bullying in schools.

My son was bullied but when I went to the school principal about it, all she could say was the school had an anti-bullying policy.

Because there is no corporal punishment in schools there is no way to sort out the bullies.

My experience is that the kids who are being bullied do not want to tell their parents because they feel that it will just get worse for them at school.

Making bullies stand up and say sorry in front of the class or keeping them in is not enough.

Pamela Fox, Melbourne

Exciting move by the church

THE majority of letter writers opposing the ordination of gay clergy have been male, which should not surprise us.

A 2001 Morgan poll showed men were 18 per cent more likely than **women** to think homosexuality was immoral.

This suggests two things: that men fear homosexuality and those same men project their own psyche into their religious beliefs.

Tolerance, compassion and inclusiveness should be the guiding light for the church.

Your Say

God should not be used as a tool to perpetuate hatred, bigotry and division.

The Uniting Church's decision to allow practising homosexuals to become clergy is a monumental and exciting symbol of social justice and we should get behind this move.

Luke Williams, East Oakleigh

Come one, come all

IF Pastor Peter Curtis knew of love or life, he would speak of tolerance and acceptance and not hatred and loathing ("Church vote a blow," July 23).

I am a Christian, a gay man and a parent and, for the record, my partner and I have been together for 13 years, we own a house, we have families and we have friends.

We share our life with a foster child. We are a family. We are like our neighbours. We are no different.

Perhaps when you next read the Bible, note that it says, "Come to me all".

There is no disclaimer that that offer excludes homosexual or gay men and lesbians, transgender and intersex people.

Name and address supplied

Bible has many views

AS evidenced by letters to these pages, an issue such as gays and lesbians in the church will quickly bring the Bible fundamentalists out of the woodwork.

Quoting directly from their good book, they are eager to point out that scripture abhors homosexuality.

One wonders if they are as enthusiastic to invoke the same scriptures when it comes to providing the death penalty for working on the sabbath, not being virginal when married, being a stubborn and rebellious son and being a witch or wizard.

As always, the Bible means whatever a believer wants it to mean, hence all the disputes.

Michael Keen, Bayswater

Rage at revenue cameras

THE Government would do well to reflect upon the road rage incidents experienced by speed camera operators.

The incidents are simply an expression of the growing anger and resentment of the community, particularly motorists caught in speed traps.

Despite the Government's propaganda, the people will not be fooled; such rampant fundraising at the expense of motorists is crystal clear.

Greedy overlords who unfairly tax the people while steadfastly refusing to listen to their concerns will eventually suffer their wrath. This random road tax must cease.

David Barton, Matlock

Put disabled in first class

V/LINE commuters in wheelchairs should be offered disability passes and travel in first-class carriages ("Forced to ride with chooks," July 15).

Your Say

People with seeing-eye dogs also need to travel first-class for the safety of the dogs because of crowding and inconsiderate behaviour from travellers crowded into other carriages.

These travellers might not mean to, but they shuffle their feet and kick the dogs, stand on their tails or drop packages on the dogs.

The only reason for not giving these people passes is because V/Line stands to miss out on the fares, but how many people with wheelchairs and seeing-eye dogs use V/Line?

The hardest thing is to get someone from government to say "this is not right and I'm going to do something about it".

J. Shields, Geelong

Ashamed of ticket inspectors

I AM amazed to see letters supporting ticket inspectors, many of whom make me ashamed to be an Australian.

I have seen them not only intimidate commuters, but also assault, abuse and insult them, unlawfully detain them and carry on as if they were some sort of secret police.

The fact is that they are usurping people's common law rights. If you cannot buy a ticket because of a faulty machine, you are treated as if you have committed murder.

I am sure the public is overwhelmingly against these try-hard auxiliary police officers and wants them gone.

Chris Fairbank, Maribyrnong

Letters must be short and are submitted on the condition that The Herald and Weekly Times Ltd, as publisher of the Herald Sun, may edit and has the right to, and license third parties to, reproduce in electronic form and communicate these letters. Names, addresses and telephone numbers must be included. Letters with pen names will generally not be considered for publication.

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FILM REVIEW; The Sinister Evolution of the Most Intimate Form of Political Violence

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June 25, 2003 Wednesday
Late Edition - Final

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Length: 919 words

Byline: BY STEPHEN HOLDEN

Body

"Human Weapon," a gripping and important documentary, examines the history of suicide bombing as a tool of warfare and comes to some unsettling conclusions. The premise of the movie, directed by Ilan Ziv, a New York-based Israeli filmmaker, is that this most intimate expression of political violence, like other forms of warfare, has systemically evolved as a technique. Initially applied to military and political targets, it has only in the last decade expanded to include the intentional slaughter of civilians.

The biggest (but my no means the only) incentive to self-destruct in the service of a cause is the promise of religious martyrdom, the movie suggests, and the film shows how easy it is to train impressionable teenage boys to turn themselves into human bombs by firing them up with images of glorious sacrifice. Before they die, many of the bombers videotape grandiose final messages that are shown on television to whip up militant fervor.

The forerunners of today's suicide bombers, according to the movie, were the thousands of Japanese kamikaze pilots who flew to their deaths during World War II, especially when Japan was losing the war. The film dates the birth of the latest round of suicide attacks to April 18, 1983, when an anonymous terrorist drove a truck packed with 2,000 pounds of explosives into the lobby of the American Embassy in Beirut, killing 63 people, 17 of them Americans. Six months later two suicide bombers killed more than 250 soldiers in coordinated attacks on the barracks of United States Marines and French paratroopers in Beirut.

During the Iran-Iraq war, in which more than a million people were killed, Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, sanctioned suicide, which is traditionally forbidden by Islamic law, as a legitimate and heroic enterprise so long as it was used as a weapon. Thousands of teenage warriors competed to clear minefields with their bodies and to march in waves directly into the fire of the better-equipped Iraqi army. Their eagerness to sacrifice their lives helped equalize the forces' uneven military balance.

The ayatollah promised future martyrs a heavenly afterlife of gardens, castles and beautiful angels. One former Iranian soldier describes his indoctrination (which involved viewing Arnold Schwarzenegger and karate movies) as "neutralizing the sensual instinct and instilling a warrior instinct."

But such self-destructive zealotry doesn't necessarily require a religious sanction. During the civil war in Sri Lanka, some 30 to 40 percent of the roughly 200 suicide missions of the Tamil separatists against the government were carried out by women indoctrinated in revenge by films depicting the enemy's atrocities against women.

FILM REVIEW The Sinister Evolution of the Most Intimate Form of Political Violence

Examining the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the movie cites as a turning point the 1994 Hebron massacre, when an American-born Israeli settler protesting the Oslo peace accords killed more than two dozen Islamic worshipers before being killed himself. The militant Palestinian group **Hamas** retaliated two months later in a raid that killed eight Israelis. Since then, the two sides have played increasingly deadly games of tit for tat.

Among the many thoughtful voices in the movie, which opens today at the Film Forum in New York, the most eloquent belongs to the American author and psychologist Robert J. Lifton, who has the film's opening and closing remarks. He worries that in the effort to end what he calls "apocalyptic violence," it is all too tempting to combat it in a way that resembles it.

Sharing the bill with "Human Weapon" is "My Terrorist," Yulie Cohen Gerstel's deeply personal reflection on the cycle of violence in the Middle East. Ms. Gerstel, a sixth generation Israeli who was injured during a 1978 attack on an El Al flight, seeks out Fahad Mihi, one of the attackers, who had spent the last 22 years in an English prison. She initiates a correspondence in which he expresses contrition for his youthful deeds, and she considers supporting his release from prison.

Her impulse for reconciliation is contrasted with the unforgiving rage of the parents of a flight attendant (and colleague of Ms. Gerstel) who was killed in the same raid. But then the World Trade Center is attacked, and the tumultuous emotions it re-awakens in Ms. Gerstel prompt her to reconsider her offer. The movie's disparate voices coalesce here as an emotionally charged microcosm of the conflict and suggest how difficult it would be to sustain any peace, when all it takes is one vengeful dissenter to undermine the noblest of intentions.

HUMAN WEAPON

Directed by Ilan Ziv; written (in English, Arabic, Farsi, Hebrew and Tamil, with English subtitles) by Mr. Ziv and Nancy Peckham; directors of photography, Alberto Marquart, Sam Shin, Uri Ackerman, Suher Ismail, Abdel Salam Shihada and Jean Cadin; edited by Enat Sidi; music by Eugene Levitas; produced by Mr. Ziv and Serge Gordey; released by First Run/Icarus Films. Shown with "My Terrorist" at the Film Forum, 209 West Houston Street, west of Sixth Avenue, South Village. Running time: 54 minutes. This film is not rated.

MY TERRORIST

Produced and directed by Yulie Cohen Gerstel; in English and Hebrew, with English subtitles; directors of photography, Oded Kirma, Moshe Gerstel and Yulie Cohen Gerstel; edited by Boaz Lion; music by Tal Segev; released by **Women** Make Movies. Shown with "Human Weapon" at the Film Forum, 209 West Houston Street, west of Sixth Avenue, South Village. Running time: 58 minutes. This film is not rated.

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Graphic

Photo: Hezbollah children in training, from the documentary "Human Weapon," on the growth of suicide bombing. (First Run/Icarus Films Release)

Load-Date: June 25, 2003

FILM REVIEW The Sinister Evolution of the Most Intimate Form of Political Violence

End of Document

Israeli troops cut off camp in Gaza Attack on homes, buildings in refugee camp leaves three Palestinians dead

Charleston Gazette (West Virginia)

May 18, 2004, Tuesday

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Section: News; Pg. P07A

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Byline: Tamer Ziara The Associated Press

Body

RAFAH, Gaza Strip - Israeli tanks cut off the Rafah refugee camp from the rest of Gaza Monday, sending panicked residents fleeing. Palestinians said an Israeli helicopter fired missiles at the camp hours later that killed three people.

Early Tuesday, Palestinian security officials said armored bulldozers moved to the edge of the camp near the border with Egypt and began leveling land in an Israeli-controlled zone. It wasn't clear if it was the start of a large-scale move against the camp.

Israel wants to widen a military patrol road between Rafah and the Egyptian border after Palestinians blew up an armored vehicle there last week, killing five soldiers assigned to destroy arms-smuggling tunnels.

The Israeli helicopter fired three missiles at the surrounded refugee camp, killing three people and wounding seven, one critically. Hospital officials said at least two of the dead were gunmen, but the wounded were civilians, including a 35-year-old woman.

The Israeli military said the target was a group of armed Palestinians approaching Israeli forces. Israel Radio has reported that troops were prepared to fight from house to house in the camp.

Frantic residents on Monday loaded belongings onto trucks and donkey carts and headed to the neighboring town, also named Rafah. The U.N. Relief and Works Agency set up shelters in schools and pitched a tent camp.

Women balanced mattresses on their heads, children carried blankets and men carted away sofas. One man lowered a cooking gas container by rope from a second-floor window, and another piled fire wood onto a horse cart.

Raouf Abu Jazar said dozens of people crowded his store, stocking up on rice, bottled water and baby food. "Many had no money to pay, but I gave them what they want, because we all are brothers," he said.

Last week, Israeli troops destroyed about 100 houses in the camp, and officials said hundreds more may be torn down. In all, more than 11,000 Palestinians in Rafah - out of a population of 90,000 - have been made homeless by Israeli demolitions since the outbreak of fighting in 2000.

At the United Nations in New York, Arab nations requested a Security Council meeting Tuesday to consider Israel's move against the camp.

Israeli troops cut off camp in Gaza Attack on homes, buildings in refugee camp leaves three Palestinians dead

The Arab Group called on members to take "necessary measures" against Israel for violating international law.

Palestinian militants planted bombs around Rafah, residents said. A 23-year-old Palestinian was killed early Tuesday when a bomb he was assembling exploded, they said.

Israeli security officials said they plan to expand the patrol road to a width of 250 yards, almost double its current size in some places. The army is also considering digging a deep trench, or even a moat, to block the tunnels that lead from Egypt to Rafah.

The Israeli patrol road was carved out in the 1980s after Israel and Egypt signed a peace treaty and Israel withdrew from the Sinai Peninsula.

The international border created then went through the camp, and thousands of houses were destroyed on both sides to create the Israeli-controlled zone, with compensation paid to the displaced.

Yuval Dvir, an Israeli reserve colonel who oversaw that destruction, said Israel must leave Gaza now, and the plan to widen the patrol road would not enhance Israeli security. "We are following our guts and not our brains," he told Israel Army Radio.

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon has proposed a unilateral pullout of soldiers and settlers from Gaza, but his party rejected the plan. Officials said Monday that he would make minor revisions in the plan and present it to his Cabinet later.

A senior Israeli official said an eventual pullout would not stop Israeli operations like the move into the Rafah camp.

The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said Israeli intelligence shows the Palestinians, supported by Hezbollah and Hamas abroad, are trying to create a situation in Gaza like the one in Lebanon, by bringing in long-range missiles.

Hezbollah guerrillas pounded Israel's north with Katyusha rockets for two decades in a guerrilla war that ended with Israel's pullout from southern Lebanon in 2000. Hezbollah is armed by Iran and Syria.

Deputy Defense Minister Zeev Boim said civilian hardships are unintentional but unavoidable. Some people in Rafah, he said, "rent their houses for digging tunnels, so not all of the people there are blameless."

A senior Israeli military official said high-ranking Palestinian security officers are involved in arms smuggling.

Palestinian security officials were not immediately available for comment. Secretary of State Colin Powell denounced the destruction of houses, a rare U.S. criticism of Israeli policy.

On Monday, Palestinian Foreign Minister Nabil Shaath pleaded with National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice during a meeting in Berlin to stop the Israeli offensive. Shaath told Rice he has received calls from fearful relatives.

"She (Rice) said that she and President Bush will act to stop what is going on in Rafah," Shaath said.

The U.S. ambassador to Israel, Daniel Kurtzer, met Sunday with the Israeli army chief, Lt. Gen. Moshe Yaalon, to discuss the Israeli operation.

"We understand Israel's need to defend itself from attacks, but as a matter of policy we oppose the use of home demolitions to achieve this end and we are concerned about the humanitarian consequences of such demolitions," said embassy spokesman Paul Patin.

Palestinian legislator Mohammed Hijazi said hundreds of families have left the camp since the exodus began Sunday; local officials put the number of evacuees at more than 2,000. UNRWA said Israel has demolished or damaged nearly 2,000 houses in Rafah since 2000.

Israeli troops cut off camp in Gaza Attack on homes, buildings in refugee camp leaves three Palestinians dead

Amr Moussa, Arab League secretary-general, condemned the destruction and charged that Israel's leaders are wrecking chances for peace. "Who would sit down with these people?" he asked.

Load-Date: May 18, 2004

End of Document

NEWS SUMMARY

The New York Times
June 14, 2003 Saturday
Late Edition - Final

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Section: Section A; Column 3; Metropolitan Desk; Pg. 2

Length: 944 words

Body

INTERNATIONAL A2-5

Attacks Against Americans Continue North of Baghdad

American troops fanning out to reinforce allied control of Iraq came under attack in at least three places north of Baghdad where they had less of a presence during the war. Retaliating, they killed at least seven people, military officials said. A1

Iraq's two main Kurdish political parties, which have run separate governments in the region since its quasi-independence in 1991, agreed to merge in a bid to wield greater influence in Iraq's national politics. A7

Top Qaeda Suspect in Kenya

Fazul Abdullah Muhammad, suspected of leading Al Qaeda's operations in East Africa, was spotted in Mombasa, prompting an urgent terrorism alert in Kenya and frustrating investigators who have been searching for him for five years. A1

Radioactive Bomb Plot Foiled

The authorities in Thailand, acting on American intelligence, seized a large amount of radioactive material from a Thai man, breaking up a plot to sell it to terrorists, American law-enforcement officials said. A6

Israeli Strikes Continue

Israel pressed its campaign against ***Hamas*** militants with two more missile strikes in Gaza. The attacks came the day before American monitors were scheduled to arrive to prop up a new peace plan now badly weakened by nearly a week of violence. A3

Protests Continue in Iran

Violence continued in Tehran, where a student-led protest against university privatization has turned into a larger demonstration against the country's Islamic government, with calls for more social, economic and political freedom. A3

Belgian War Crimes Law

NEWS SUMMARY

Belgian officials responding to comments by Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld said they had addressed American concerns about their war crimes legislation by allowing cases to be transferred to defendants' home countries. A5

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Issue of Iraqi Weapons Divides Democratic Party

Democratic Congressional leaders and presidential candidates are struggling over how far to push President Bush about the failure to find biological or chemical weapons. A1

Compound Problems at NASA

Independent investigators say they have found problems with four other components that could threaten future missions as NASA tries to eliminate the dangers of falling foam insulation that apparently doomed the shuttle Columbia. A1

Universal Health Care in Maine

The Maine legislature passed a comprehensive health insurance plan that will make low-cost coverage available to all residents by 2009. A10

Medicare Advantages Argued

Members of Congress said that a bill to add prescription drug benefits to Medicare would give employers a powerful incentive to curtail the drug coverage that they now provide to retired workers. A12

Religion Journal A13

SCIENCE/HEALTH

Prairie Dog Spreads Pox

A state health official in Wisconsin warned that contact with one prairie dog has accounted for more than half of the 34 human cases of monkeypox in Wisconsin. A10

EDUCATION

Tuition Easement Sought

Several Democratic members of Congress called for the suspension of a bureaucratic adjustment that will increase college costs for millions of families. A11

Cyberschools on the Rise

In two years, the number of schools in which professors and pupils communicate online has doubled, to 67. A1

NEW YORK/REGION B1-6

State Racing Association Is Corrupt, Spitzer Says

The New York Racing Association is unaccountable, and the state should consider eliminating its stewardship of the Saratoga, Belmont and Aqueduct racetracks, said a report prepared by the office of Attorney General Eliot Spitzer. A1

Ex-Mayor Is Sentenced

Philip A. Giordano, 40, a three-term mayor of Waterbury, Conn., was sentenced to 37 years in federal prison for having oral sex with two young girls while in office. B6

Army Casanova Apologizes

NEWS SUMMARY

The colonel whom scores of women accused of simultaneously promising to marry them apologized but said their reactions were too visceral. B1

SPORTS D1-7

2 Milestones for Clemens

Roger Clemens won his 300th game and recorded his 4,000th strikeout as the Yankees beat the St. Louis Cardinals, 5-2, in a constant rain. A1

Spurs Take 3-2 Lead

San Antonio beat the New Jersey Nets, 93-83, in Game 5 of the N.B.A. finals. D1

ARTS & IDEAS B7-16

Hall of Fame Inductions

Phil Collins, Little Richard, Van Morrison and Queen were inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame on Thursday night. B12

OBITUARIES A16

Sir Bernard Williams

The Oxford professor who is credited with reviving the field of moral philosophy and considered by some to be the greatest British philosopher of his era, he was 73. A16

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I.B.M. Eschews Settlement

I.B.M. said that it had no intention of reaching a quick settlement with SCO Group in a legal fight that is causing concern among the many corporations that use the Linux operating system. C1

Disney Suit Causes Concern

Corporate directors are fearing for their own liability after a Delaware judge ruled that a shareholder suit against Disney and its directors regarding former president Michael Ovitz can proceed to trial. C1

Stewart Seen as Guilty

A recent telephone poll of New Yorkers found that 60 percent of those interviewed thought Martha Stewart was guilty of insider trading. C4

Ruling Against SpikeTV Name

A New York State appellate court denied a motion by MTV Networks, the owner of TNN, that would have allowed TNN to rebrand itself as SpikeTV. The movie director Spike Lee had objected to the name. C4

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Editorials: Freddie who?; a growing fury in Iran; searching for slime on Mars; last-minute excuses.

Column: Bill Keller.

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<http://www.nytimes.com>

Load-Date: June 14, 2003

End of Document

THE NEW 'EVIL EMPIRE'

DAILY MAIL (London)

November 22, 2003

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Section: ED_1ST; Pg. 12

Length: 2142 words

Byline: ANN LESLIE

Body

SO IT'S all George Bush's fault. George Bush is responsible for the death of our consul Roger Short, leaving his wife and three children utterly bereft. George Bush killed Mr Short's secretary Lisa Hallworth who, like the consul, was blown to pieces by Thursday's bomb.

George Bush is the reason why a busy Istanbul shopping street was suddenly drenched in blood, scattered with severed hands and heads and the limbs of innocent passers-by.

George Bush is the reason why Muslim mothers, fathers, sons and daughters are still desperately scanning hospital lists to see if their loved ones have been slaughtered like sacrificial cattle by fellow Muslims, who acted in the name of a bizarre and mutant version of Islam.

If (in the words of one of his critics yesterday), this 'stupid bloodthirsty Texan cowboy' hadn't come to London, spent three nights in Buckingham Palace, had dinner with the Queen and given a passionate, powerful and articulate speech lauding freedom and democracy 'as the alternative to instability and to hatred and terror' - well then, obviously none of this horror would have happened!

The world would obviously be much safer if George Bush didn't exist; 60 per cent apparently consider him to be a danger to world peace.

Are we now so unhinged by global terror that we're actually going slightly mad?

We have long ago abandoned the idea that each and every rape victim somehow 'asked for it'; we regard as deeply uncivilised the idea, prevalent in some societies, that, by being raped, a woman has brought 'dishonour' on her family, and therefore that she - rather than the rapist - must be punished for the crime committed against her.

Yet we say that we, and especially President Bush, because of our 'provocative' actions in Afghanistan and Iraq, have 'asked for' the carnage in Istanbul on Thursday. And that Muslim Turkey with a moderate Islamic government has, by being an ally of the West, also somehow 'asked for' this carnage.

FRANKLY when I, as a Londoner-heard 'my' Mayor, Ken Livingstone, declaring before the President arrived that George Bush 'is the greatest threat to life on this planet that the world has probably ever known', I didn't know whether to laugh, cry or simply be deeply embarrassed that my fellow Londoners had chosen this addlebrained exhibitionist to run one of the greatest cities in the world, merely to spite Tony Blair, who understandably doesn't like him.

THE NEW 'EVIL EMPIRE'

As I listened to 'peace campaigners' on Thursday spouting variants of 'cuddly' Ken's absurd, deluded and deeply dangerous drivel, I felt close to despair. Even the horrific news of the Istanbul bombings didn't bring them to whatever senses they might once have had.

One young woman, carrying a mass-produced placard with a portrait of George Bush beneath the slogan 'The World's No 1 Terrorist', was asked how she could accuse Bush of 'terrorism' when it was Bin Laden's disciples who were causing innocent people to die in the streets of Istanbul. She replied confidently: 'They're dying because of him!' No, dear lady, they're dying, not because of President Bush, but because a small and highly organised group of Islamic fascists chose to kill them.

Islamic fascists have been murdering fellow Muslims for decades, long before George Bush came to power. We tended not to notice because, in our comfortable complacency, we believed that we personally had nothing to fear.

When Islamic fascists chose to target U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998, we simply shrugged. The majority of those who died were black; 252 of those killed, and the many others who were maimed for life, were innocent, hapless, mostly poverty-stricken Africans.

Alas, I suspect that many people subconsciously thought: 'Oh well, terrible things are always happening in Africa, so what's new?' When 58 tourists were murdered in Luxor in 1997 - including three generations of one British family, which included a five-year-old girl - we were appalled, but felt that it was somehow a self-contained 'incident' which would not in the long run affect our safety, our civilisation, or our way of life. How deluded we were.

Now I realise that a spot of history-might bore you, young lady with the 'Bush the No 1 Terrorist' placard - and I will probably fail to puncture your self-righteous ignorance. But bear with me.

Two allied groups proudly claimed responsibility for the mass murder in Turkey this week. One, the so-called Great Eastern Islamic Raiders' Front was founded in 1984 and has spent the last decade attacking bars, churches and discotheques in Turkey. The other, of course, was the Al Qaeda network.

QAEDA'S terrorism did not begin because - or when - 'the toxic Texan' George Bush became President. Indeed, when it made its first attempt to destroy New York's Twin Towers ten years ago, Bill Clinton was in power.

Al Qaeda was, in fact, emboldened by Clinton's lack of serious action against it and its already well- documented training camps in Afghanistan.

The West, concluded Bin Laden, was so 'decadent' and ideologically weak, so sated - indeed, almost sedated - by its own comfort and wealth, that it couldn't even be bothered to defend itself properly.

Al Qaeda's origins date as far back as 1928 - long before George Bush was born, long before Israel came into existence - when the world's oldest Islamic fundamentalist organisation, the Muslim Brotherhood, was founded in Egypt.

The Muslim Brotherhood, if only for tactical reasons, declares itself to be ' nonviolent', but it has spawned numerous, extremely violent off- shoots which include Al Qaeda.

I have interviewed members of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt , as well as its disciples in Palestine, Hamas. One Hamas spokesman in Jerusalem, defending the use of suicide bombers, told me that he was 'ideologically inspired by membership of the Muslim Brotherhood', and that he was ' disappointed' by its recent tactical disavowal of violence.

He believes passionately, not only in the obliteration of the state of Israel, but in the conversion of the entire Muslim world of over one billion people into one vast 'caliphate', where everyone would live under the most extreme forms of Sharia, Islamic law. 'Democracy is incompatible with Islam, because it puts the laws of man above the laws of Allah'.

THE NEW 'EVIL EMPIRE'

It was every Muslim's duty, including those who live here in Britain, not only to wage 'jihad', holy war, against 'Jews and

Christians', but even against those Muslim of 'the lesser faith', i.e.

moderates who believe in a 'manmade' rule of law and democracy. These Muslims must be 'converted' - if need be by force - to abide by rules codified in the Arabian desert in the 7th century.

'Islam is the Solution' is the Muslim Brotherhood's political slogan. Its version of Islam insists that only by returning to the puritanical and militant Islam of the Prophet Mohammed's time will the Muslim world be 'saved'.

Embracing the modern world, freedom of choice, the secular rule of law - all are 'heresies', and all those who embrace those 'heretical' views must be destroyed. Turkey's own moderate Muslim ways are therefore an affront to these fundamentalist fanatics.

But surely, if we had not stirred up a hornets' nest by our actions in Afghanistan and Iraq, our Western way of life could continue to flourish, utterly untroubled by the spread of fanatical Islam? Alas, history shows that the hornets' nest analogy is false.

Newspaper columns, written by journalists much younger than myself, describe George Bush as 'the most vilified U.S. President in history'.

Sorry, boys and girls, but most of you were still at school when Ronald Reagan was in the White House. He, too, was denounced as an affable but dangerous nincompoop. (Some 37 per cent of the British apparently believe 'Dubya' Bush is 'unintelligent' - but then they, unlike myself and others who have actually spent time with Bush 'one-on-one', have been deluded by the lazy caricatures of the bien pensant press.) You young things don't remember the uproar occasioned by Reagan's frank description of the Soviet Union as the 'evil empire' (which, of course, it was). You don't remember how, in the House of Commons in 1982, he also gave a speech whose sentiments almost exactly mirror the speech given by President Bush on Wednesday.

said then: 'I've often wondered about the shyness of some of us in the West about standing for those ideals that have done so much to ease the plight of man and the hardships of our imperfect world.' He was accused of 'cultural imperialism' by stating that so-called 'Western values' were, in fact, basic human values, and that people - whatever their culture or history - did actually want freedom whenever they were offered it. 'It would be cultural condescension, or worse, to say that any people prefer dictatorship to democracy.' He was denounced by many so-called 'experts' for not appreciating the fact that the people of the Soviet Union, who had never known democracy - were somehow culturally, even genetically, incapable of embracing it.

Today, similar 'experts' denounce Bush for his refusal to believe that the Arab Muslim world is not culturally, or genetically, suited to freedom, democracy or the rule of law.

When Reagan and Mrs Thatcher decided that there was no 'moral equivalence' between the Soviet empire and Western democracy, and that the latter had to be defended, they were denounced as warmongers, just as Bush is now.

When Reagan and Thatcher decided to station nucleararmed cruise missiles at Greenham Common in Berkshire, a mass protest movement - similar to the 'Stop the War' movement today - was launched.

When I argued with the women at the Greenham Common protest camp that perhaps Reagan and Thatcher were trying to defend the Western way of life and, indeed, the Greenham women's right to protest, I was told - with many a shriek of fury - that the Soviet Union was well-known to be in favour of world peace, whereas our own leaders were obviously hell-bent on war and the ultimate destruction of the planet.

The old 'moral equivalence' argument was still in force at Thursday's demonstration when a 17ft-high statue of Bush was pulled down in Trafalgar Square, mimicking the toppling of Saddam's statue in Baghdad. To the protesters-Bush's 'crimes' were, by implication, equivalent to those committed by Saddam.

THE NEW 'EVIL EMPIRE'

Bush, indeed, has his faults but, as far as I know, America does not contain the mass graves of 300,000 innocent people who oppose the President; he does not cut out the tongues of those who criticise him; he does not order his army to massacre whole families, including small children who are tossed into their graves still clutching their toys; he has not gassed his own people; he has not caused the deaths of around a million of his co-religionists in order to remain in power.

Ronald Reagan was right when he denounced Moscow's 'evil empire' and, as a result of his 'stupidity', 'arrogance' and 'cultural imperialism', the Soviet Union, as it deserved to, imploded.

One of those leading the 'Stop Bush' march on Thursday was, of course, that old friend of the Saddam regime, George Galloway, who has declared that 'the saddest event of my entire life' was the collapse of the Soviet Union.

GEORGE Bush's vision will be vindicated in the long run, as Reagan's has been. This vindication by history will not - as Bush admits, and as Reagan did before him - come about easily or overnight. And yes, even in these dark and terrifying days, there is already a slim glimmer of hope.

China's Chairman Mao once declared that 'the guerilla fighter is like a fish in water; and the water is the people'.

The more that the mass of ordinary people in the Muslim world (even those who resent the power and wealth of the West) realise that they - as much as we - are victims of Islamic fascism, the more they will turn against the 'guerilla fighters' who pretend that they speak and act in their name.

When innocent fellow Muslims, especially their wives and children, were recently slaughtered in the foreigners' compounds in Saudi Arabia, ordinary Saudis broke the rules of tribal loyalty and hurried secretly to the authorities to give evidence about who, they believed, was responsible.

The theocratic House of Saud is, cautiously, beginning to reform its undemocratic and corrupt ways - but it is that modernisation itself which is anathema to these Islamist killers.

We cannot, as the 'peacemongers' insist, 'negotiate' our way to a quiet life. The demands of those who slaughtered the innocents in Istanbul are utterly nonnegotiable - because their stated aim is to destroy Western civilisation itself.

Taking refuge in trivial, selfregarding, self-deluding stunts like pulling down the effigy of George Bush in Trafalgar Square will simply play into the terrorists' hands. Still, I imagine it was a fun thing to do at the time.

END

Graphic

VICTIMS OF THE BOMBING IN ISTANBUL:THE NEW FRONT LINE IN THE WAR ON CIVILISATION IS THE CITY STREET

Load-Date: November 23, 2003

Faithful following on Capitol Hill AMITY SHLAES

Financial Times (London, England)

March 29, 2004 Monday

London Edition 1

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Section: COMMENT; Pg. 21

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Byline: By AMITY SHLAES

Body

Has there ever been an American president as pious as George W. Bush? If press reports and commentaries are anything to go by, you would not think so. Mr Bush's faith is frequently discussed in the media, especially outside the US. That faith is routinely presented as uniquely Republican, extreme and unmodern.

This week, for example, we have been hearing about the Bush administration's righteous efforts to keep the phrase "under God" in the daily "pledge of allegiance" taken in US schools. Then there was the story in the Herald of Glasgow that described Mr Bush as demonstrating an "obsession with religion". This obsession, the article charged, was something Mr Bush shared with Ahmed Yassin, the recently assassinated head of the militant Hamas group.

Mr Bush is indeed pious. But the idea that his piety is somehow exceptional or extreme is wrong. In fact, many American presidents - from both parties - have been actively religious, including some relatively recent ones.

Start with the Democrat and Baptist, Jimmy Carter. Mr Carter was not merely religious; he was ostentatious about his religion. As president, Mr Carter attended Bible classes in Washington. When he secured the peace deal between Israel and Egypt, he used the occasion to warn the media against misinterpretation with a fiery quote from Isaiah: "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil." Then of course there was the famous 1976 confession in Playboy magazine, in which Mr Carter confessed that he lusted in his heart after women who were not Rosalynn, his wife. But perhaps the best religious factoid about Mr Carter is that he took the opportunity of a private car ride to the airport in 1979 to try to convert Park Chung Hee, then president of South Korea and a Buddhist, to Christianity. What is more, Mr Carter was so proud of his effort that he told his Bible class all about it.

Imagine what would befall Mr Bush if he tried a similar caper with Hosni Mubarak, president of Egypt.

Another pious modern president was Franklin Roosevelt. Like Mr Bush, whose life changed around the age of 40 when he stopped drinking and embraced the Bible, FDR came to a turning-point when he contracted polio in his late 30s. His subsequent paralysis drove him both into seclusion and towards the pursuit of the presidency. Roosevelt, like Mr Bush, came to see faith as a core component of his identity. "I am Christian and a Democrat, that's all," he replied when asked to define himself.

His 1937 tax return shows he made contributions to his church at home in Hyde Park, New York state, several churches in Washington, DC, and a one-off donation of Dollars 2,000 - a lot of money in those days - to the Cathedral of St John the Divine in New York city.

Faithful following on Capitol Hill AMITY SHLAES

Frances Perkins, his labour secretary, reported in her memoirs that while FDR regularly attended church when in Hyde Park, in Washington, his attendance at St Thomas's, where he had once been a vestryman, was less regular. This, she notes, was not a lapse but rather a result of FDR's sense of privacy. "I can do almost everything in the 'goldfish bowl' of the president's life," he told her, "but I'll be hanged if I can say my prayers in it."

Roosevelt's sense of religion, Perkins continues, "was so complete that he was able to associate himself without any conflict with all expressions of religious worship". An Episcopalian, he liked the more humble culture of the Methodists and once took Churchill along to a Methodist service. When someone queried his decision he retorted: "What's the matter? It is good for Winston to sing hymns with the Methodys (sic)."

In September of 1933, Roosevelt placed his own New Deal in a religious context. Discussing the impact of the Depression, he said: "We shall not succeed in solving (the problem) unless the people of this country hold the spiritual values of the country just as high as they do the economic values." He went on to exhort believers to use church networks to help the poor - in other words, to deliver faith-based charity. This spiritual side of the Depression tends to get obscured.

When it came to foreign policy, religion also had its role for Roosevelt. Britain had recognised the Soviet Union and pressure was on FDR to follow suit. But first, as Perkins reported, FDR made freedom of worship a condition of recognition, telling Maxim Litvinov, the Soviet negotiator: "When you come to die you are going to remember your old father and mother - good pious Jewish people who believed in God and taught you to pray to God; you know it's important." Roosevelt was naive: the hard-boiled Litvinov would have agreed to just about anything to win recognition. Nonetheless the point is that Roosevelt believed faith mattered. So did Eisenhower, the president who introduced the "under God" phrase into the pledge.

Here a reader might argue that the difference between Mr Bush and previous presidents is that Mr Bush hauls religion into spheres where it did not play a role before - abortion and gay marriage, for example. This argument ignores the fact that for most of US history abortion was unlawful and gay marriage unheard of. It also ignores the reality that changing the status of either would have been unthinkable to most presidents, precisely because they were Christians. Mr Bush is mounting a rearguard action, not an offensive one.

In short, you can take issue with the various Bush stances all you like. You can even dislike him for his occasionally sanctimonious air. In this, he resembles Mr Carter. But when it comes to religion, this president is not unusual, and it would be heresy to argue otherwise.

Load-Date: March 28, 2004

A Heresy About Bush

New York Sun (Archive)

March 30, 2004 Tuesday

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Section: EDITORIAL & OPINION; Pg. 9

Length: 938 words

Byline: By AMITY SHLAES

Body

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Load-Date: March 30, 2004

Letters from the people

Anchorage Daily News (Alaska)

September 15, 2003 Monday, STATE EDITION

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Section: ALASKA; Pg. B6; Commentary

Length: 2204 words

Body

New school name should honor first people, Dena'ina Athabascans

The new high school in south Anchorage is being built in the territory of the local indigenous people, Dena'ina Athabascans. The Dena'ina flourished in this region and many hundreds of years ago developed a sophisticated and complex culture here.

It is most fitting that the Dena'ina should be honored appropriately. To that end, I suggest the use of the Dena'ina word for Cook Inlet, which is "Tikahtnu." It is pronounced "tee-KAWT-nu," with emphasis on the second syllable.

The word literally means "Big Water River," according to professor Alan Boraas of Kenai Peninsula College. The Dena'ina knew, of course, that Cook Inlet wasn't a river, but by calling it a river they could incorporate it into their directional system, which was based on upstream and downstream. The name is geographical and historical and would highlight the fact that Captain Cook was not the first person here. The name is easy to pronounce for English speakers and has some good possibilities for a school nickname.

Dena'ina richly deserves further study by both Natives and non-Natives. Using a place name from the local indigenous people of this region would honor them and their culture.

For these reasons and many others, I urge you to consider naming the new high school Tikahtnu High School. Our original hosts here have gone without acknowledgement too long.

-- G.P. Olrun

Anchorage

Writer's response was confused; troops are in Iraq to kill terrorists

After reading the letter by Maj. Mark Johnson, "Writer who proposes U.S. kill all terrorists thinks like a terrorist" (Sept. 9), I couldn't help but conclude that he was confused and hope that he didn't confuse other people.

Mr. Johnson stated that "kill the infidels is what terrorists say, not U.S. soldiers." While on the face of it, that statement is true, let's look at the real meaning. In Islam, "infidels" refers to nonbelievers. The U.S. soldiers are not in Iraq to kill people who don't believe religiously as we do. We are there to kill terrorists.

Mr. Johnson says that "our brave servicemen are risking their lives to protect us from people like Mr. McGrew." In his letter, Mr. McGrew advocated killing all terrorists. While it is true that we will not be able to kill all the terrorists, we should kill all of them that we possibly can.

Letters from the people

Mr. Johnson is further confused when he stated that the United States is attempting to apprehend the leaders of Hamas; we are not. The Israelis know where the leaders of Hamas reside; we haven't gone after a single one of them, although the Israelis have.

I, my son, my stepson and my father took an oath to fight against "all enemies of the United States both foreign and domestic." We are bound to oath and honor to kill all terrorists.

Perhaps he is one of the many who have forgotten Sept. 11, 2001.

-- Kenneth W. Smith

Anchorage

Assembly is incorrect; mobile home parks are not affordable housing

Recent Anchorage Assembly hearings on low-income property and remarks by the Assembly about mobile home parks being an inexpensive place to live show a lack of understanding on the issue.

The average mobile home loan has an interest rate of 11 percent, with payments of \$650-plus; space rent is about \$350, plus or minus, then there are taxes, insurance, etc.

One thousand dollars to \$1,200 a month rent is not for the low income. With many parks closing in the past few years, affordable housing from older mobile homes is going, going, gone.

Hey, Assembly, Anchorage has a big need for lower-income housing.

-- David Fredericks

Anchorage

Passing of laws like Patriot Act is something of a terrorist act

This so-called Patriot Act being cooked up by the Bush administration prompts the question: Just exactly what is a terrorist?

I think it's extremely important that we get a precise definition of what is meant by the word "terrorist" before we start whittling away at basic constitutional rights, such as the right to have an attorney present during interrogation.

The word "terrorist" has at least half a dozen meanings to the last six or seven people I've asked the question.

To some, it describes anybody who means harm, in the form of a violent or aggressive action toward randomly picked American citizens in some randomly picked gathering place in any American city. To yet another person I asked, it was any Fascist or a Communist. And still to another it was anybody who was non-Christian. I didn't bother this one with any question of what his definition of "Christian" was. And still from some others, I got the distinct impression that anybody who did not vote Republican should be classified as a terrorist.

Frankly, I think the passing of laws that circumvent basic human rights or constitutional rights, a terrorist act in itself.

-- Paul K. Niehuis

Anchorage

Allowing ourselves to hate will bring us down to the level of terrorists

In response to Chuck Meister's letter "Terrorists aren't human and should therefore not be treated as such" (Aug. 19).

Letters from the people

His point sounds familiar. That's exactly what the Sept. 11, 2001, hijackers were telling themselves about America when they crashed the planes. That's what every soldier in every war in history has told himself -- that his enemy is not human. It makes hatred and violence just that much easier.

I do, however, agree with the letter in one point: Terrorists need to be dealt with. But if we can do it without violence and bloodshed, then why not? If there is a way that everyone can be happy and safe, then why not?

I, among everyone else, do not like terrorists and truly wish that they did not do the horrible things that they do. But if we stoop to their level of hatred, then what sets us apart from them?

It's easy to hate. Don't let yourself.

-- Alex Richert

Anchorage

Not enough thought was put into decision to raise speed limit on Arm

For a family that uses the Seward Highway once or twice a month, going to town before it was improved was an adventure, even at 55 mph.

Some motorhead from down south managed to convince the highway department heads that the Seward Highway (which for the most part is no better than a country road) would be safe to post at 65 mph. Well, not much thought was put into that mindless piece of science.

Reality and common sense tell me if the powers that be believed the road safe at 65 mph, they should have left it at 55 mph, and where they felt it was safe at 55 mph, left it at 45.

My experience and observation tell me that there is a large minority of drivers that insist on exceeding the legal speed limit for whatever egotistical reason (state employees included), especially on Turnagain Arm.

-- Paul and Chris Vos

Hope

Educating children is our top job, and now it's time to pay for it

I attended back-to-school night at Homer High School and received some sobering news: The excellent education and numerous extra curricular choices my daughter received during her three years at HHS are in jeopardy. The school doesn't have the money available to provide the choices we have come to expect.

This year's cuts removed our Spanish teacher, the librarian, a P.E. position, a secretary, a maintenance position and extracurricular travel funds. The athletic director and counselors are filling some of the voids, leaving less time for their jobs and fewer options for our kids. The administration expects more cuts in January and again next fall.

We have and will continue to use other methods of funding and volunteer time to keep some extracurricular activities available, but we've reached the point where core classes are beginning to be affected. The school needs more money; educating our children is the most important job a society undertakes. We can't do this one with fundraisers and bake sales.

We, as a society, have agreed to educate our kids, and now it's time to pay for it. I'm willing to pay an income tax or education tax to help fund this worthy cause.

Contact our legislators and let them know we are willing to pay for increased funding for education.

-- Scott Bauer

Letters from the people

Homer

Bush's 'damn good intelligence' doesn't look so good from here

A little while ago President Bush said he made all his decisions on "damn good intelligence."

Chemical weapons in Iraq: bad intelligence.

Biological weapons in Iraq: bad intelligence.

Nuclear weapons in Iraq: bad intelligence.

Uranium bought from Niger: bad intelligence.

Trailers to make chemical and biological weapons: bad intelligence.

Drones to deliver chemical and biological weapons: bad intelligence.

The people of Iraq would welcome us with open arms and it would only take 40,000 troops for a few months to get the country up and running: bad analysis.

Please, Mr. Bush, let us in on your "damn good intelligence."

-- Peter Jenkins

Eagle River

Thanks to shoppers, market and Daily News for aiding Swazi women

We would like to express our heartfelt thanks to the people of the Daily News and Saturday Market.

In response to George Bryson's story, "Alaska sales aid Swazi women" (Aug. 24), which was a marvelous job, hundreds of people bought baskets at the Aug. 30 Saturday Market, raising more than \$16,000 for the women and children of Swaziland.

Saturday Market responded by expanding our already free space and providing extra tables.

We are awed by our experience of the power of the press, as well as the compassionate and generous outpouring on all sides to support our cause.

-- Jerry and Killian Kidrick and family

Anchorage

Statewide income tax of 6 percent would solve the fiscal problems

Feeling the crunch of the crucial cuts being made by your elected officials yet? Serves you right for voting Republican or, worse, not voting.

The obvious answer here is a statewide income tax, probably at 6 percent with 1 percent going to existing debt and 2 percent to cities and townships. The writing on the wall was there before the state tax was abolished to begin with. One doesn't have to know bookkeeping to figure it out.

We're basically out of big-buck oil revenues. (That should have been stockpiled for emergencies and income production, not blown on our basic budget.)

To the rich and whining, you learned it kindergarten: With privilege comes responsibility. Snivel all you want, but fair is fair.

Letters from the people

Yes, 6 percent -- straight up the income brackets -- resident and nonresident, will probably cover everything. Our financially disadvantaged will be more than compensated by the services a tax would provide yet allow the dignity of contribution.

-- Sheilah Blanco

Anchorage

Safeguards are already in place to deal with crab processor issues

In response to Bob Storrs' Compass "Processor Quota rears its ugly head" (Sept. 10):

Opponents of the crab plan have cloaked themselves in self-righteous concern for the public process while strategically creating a massive deception about conspiracies, cartels and foreign control of the resources.

Let's get serious. This is not a holy war. It is about creating a balanced economic structure that will promote safety, resource conservation and the long-term viability for fishermen, processors and coastal communities. If processor quotas violate the anti-trust laws, there are state and federal agencies that will solve the problem.

Opponents parade an assortment of speculative horrors; supporters face the facts. There may be problems with the crab plan. Nothing is perfect.

Congress laid out the guidelines for Bering Sea crab rationalization. The North Pacific Council adopted the crab rationalization plan. Opponents of the plan would like the public to believe they have not been heard and their issues have not been addressed, but nothing could be further from the truth.

The Department of Justice letter does not state that processor shares are illegal, and both the council plan and the legislation are replete with safeguards.

If processors step out of line -- and they have every incentive not to do that -- then any issue that does not involve human life, community survival, the fate of the resource will be dealt with.

-- Jeff Steele, F/V Obsession

Kodiak

Quit spending money on programs that interfere with personal choices

To all those politicians who say there are no more cuts that can be made to the budget, let me suggest you look a little further. How much money is being spent to protect us from ourselves?

A case in point is "Click it or Ticket." How much is being spent on those ads? I wear seat belts, however, if I chose not to, whom am I putting in danger other than myself? If no one else is being endangered, what business is it of government? If we can afford to have troopers spending their time on this program, we have too many troopers and could save by reducing the force.

I am well aware that adults are responsible for the welfare of their children and have a duty to make sure they are belted in; not doing so is a punishable offense.

But I am not in favor of Big Brother enforcing programs that punish citizens for their choice of risks.

We could save lives by requiring everyone to wear a seat belt; we could also save lives by making high-risk actions such as mountain climbing, hang gliding, boating, motorcycle riding, snowmachining, skiing, sky diving, etc., strictly illegal.

Let's stop spending money on programs that interfere with people's private choices.

Letters from the people

-- Jack V. Porter

Homer

Load-Date: September 15, 2003

End of Document

The ultimate act of will

Guardian Weekly

January 28, 2004

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Section: COMMENT & ANALYSIS; Pg. 13

Length: 928 words

Byline: Tim Lott; The Scent Of Dried Roses, Tim Lott's memoir about his mother, is published by Penguin

Highlight: Tim Lott Suicide is often the choice of physical death over psychological annihilation

Body

The delight of some sections of the press and public at the suicide last week of the doctor and serial killer Harold Shipman left me depressed. I felt that way, not because I am high-minded enough to extract "tragedy" from Shipman's death, but because to express such merriment at the suicide of any human being, evil or good, seems a small triumph for the part of us all that hates life. I wouldn't go as far as John Donne in claiming that "any man's death diminishes me because I am involved in mankind". Yet to clap and dance at the spectacle of people, however wretched, extinguishing themselves, verges on the savage -- and that is what diminishes us.

The public tend to classify self-murder into what you might call "good" and "sad" suicides. The act of suicide is good in inverse proportion to the degree that the person who committed the act is bad. Shipman, being a very bad man, was a "good" suicide. David Kelly, being a good man, was a "sad", that is to say, regrettable, suicide.

Most suicides tend to be thought of as "sad". People evil enough to be thought to deserve it are rare.

Suicide brings into play the deepest religious, cultural and political beliefs and takes on different meanings depending on where you stand. The suicide of a Palestinian terrorist would be a "good" suicide from the standpoint of an Israeli -- if he didn't take out a busload of Jews with him. But if you are in Hamas, the suicide bomber is beyond "good" or "sad". He (or she) is positively noble.

The liberal Western position may be to see the martyr as "sad" -- Britain's foreign minister, Jack Straw, purports to feel a "degree of compassion" for the suicide bombers, as does Cherie Blair.

Our attitudes to suicide are contradictory. Many people choose to think of suicides as "cowardly", whereas practically the only unqualified statement I would venture about suicide is that it is never cowardly. I know, because 15 years ago I stood on top of a tall building and prayed for the courage to throw myself off. I couldn't do it, I was too scared. To survive is the prime biological directive of every human being, however debased. To overcome that takes courage.

The martyrs who flew into the twin towers, Shipman, Fred West -- all in their manner of death were castigated as cowards. But this simply isn't the case, however much our moral urges demand that it be so. Evil, yes. Cowards, no.

More convincing is the conceptualisation of suicide as "selfish". It is selfish, but not in the way that the word is commonly used. It is selfish because it is deeply tied up with how one sees oneself. As the psychologist Dorothy Rowe has pointed out, suicide is a desperate defence of one's identity in the face of encroaching chaos and terror of psychological annihilation. It is to choose physical death over psychological change.

The ultimate act of will

Of course, there are those who kill themselves because they are mad (the fourth category after good, bad and sad) -- schizophrenics, for instance, who might throw themselves out a window believing that they can fly. But the majority know what they are doing. And what they are doing, in most cases, is maintaining a sense of selfhood.

Suicide is an assertion that you will survive as an identity even if you can't survive as a body. For Kelly, perhaps it was a matter of continuing to think of himself as a good man in the face of potential and actual humiliation. For Shipman, it was about protecting fantasies about his blamelessness. For the Palestinian, it is maintaining a sense of selfhood in a place that has robbed individuals of any way of asserting themselves.

Palestinian martyrdom can be seen as a kind of identity crisis. As Professor Mark Harrison of Warwick University comments in his paper, *The Logic Of Suicide Terrorism*: "I see it as a contract between the young person and the terrorist faction to exchange life for identity. It's hard to construct an identity in a society where nothing works and opportunities are severely restricted." He goes on to claim that young men are prone to adopt the mantle of martyr, while young women have the opportunity to find a sense of meaning in motherhood.

What else is suicide about? It is almost always a matter of control, anger and (connected with anger) revenge. Suicide is the ultimate act of will and, as such, always appeals to those who are overwhelmed by feelings of helplessness. As for anger, it has been said that those who kill themselves are symbolically killing someone else. Shipman and Kelly alike may have been partly "getting their own back" on those whom they perceived as visiting injustice on them. And doubtless revenge and anger would feature highly on the list of any martyr.

The inner world of the suicide is complex, with conflicting, paradoxical and overlapping motives. Disliking complexity, society tries to stuff it into a simple series of pigeonholes. But it is hard to be consistent when using such crude methods. Some who felt Shipman had "cheated justice" and had the "last laugh" by committing suicide, were doubtless baying for his execution at the time of his trial. How can suicide be escape while execution is justice?

Our perception of the suicide almost never fits with the reality, but this will not stop us. Like the suicide, the deepest part of ourselves is angry and afraid, and thus we always consider the assertion of our selves, and the meaning we make of our selves, more important than the facts. That's why suicides aren't all weird, or wicked, or tragic, or cowardly. They are just like us -- only more so.

Graphic

Illustration, no caption

Load-Date: February 12, 2004

Charles has lost his bearings in the desert

The Times (London)

February 10, 2004, Tuesday

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Section: Features; 18

Length: 982 words

Byline: Michael Gove

Body

By visiting the Middle East's tyrannies, the Prince lends them legitimacy

Is the heir to the throne French? I know the Prince of Wales looks quintessentially English -double-breasted, silk handkerchiefed and traditionally barbered. But he certainly acts like a Frenchman.

His approach to marriage was nothing if not Gallic. After all, no other phrase quite captures Camilla Parker Bowles's position in our national life as well as the French coinage *maitresse en titre*. The Prince's views on agriculture are as French as they come. He hates genetically modified crops and fast food with all the passion of a Jose Bove, while idealising the closeness of the feudal paysan to his organic terroir after the fashion of Jean de Florette. The Prince is also a stickler for linguistic correctness. His support for the traditional English of the Prayer Book and Shakespeare is the sort of stand against the modernisation of language which the Academie Francaise loves to make.

It is, however, in his attitude to abroad that the Prince is most fully French.

Like Jacques Chirac, and other French leaders, he seems curiously comfortable in states which are strangers to democracy. Especially if they happen to be Islamic.

So it shouldn't come as that much of a surprise that the Prince of Wales has been visiting Iran and Saudi Arabia this week.

In the recent past Charles has visited the Gulf autocracies of Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates and Oman. He is particularly keen on Saudi Arabia, having made public visits there on a practically biennial basis, dropping by in February 1997, November 1999 and February 2001. It should be noted that the Prince has never visited the Middle East's only fully functioning democracy, Israel.

Prince Charles's trips to Saudi are only the most visible evidence of his interest in a state where public displays of Christianity are impossible, while women are denied the right to drive, walk alone in public, dress as they wish or follow the profession they choose. He has feted Saudi royals and businessmen, inviting them to dinner at Highgrove and supporting their sponsorship of educational ventures.

One wonders whether the Prince has ever used his close relationship to inquire into Saudi funding of suicide bombing in the Middle East? Or has he questioned Saudi support for extremist madrassas across the Islamic world? Might he even have taken his Saudi friends to task for their countrymen's habit of buying off fundamentalism in their own country by providing it with the funds to wreak havoc elsewhere?

Charles has lost his bearings in the desert

I suspect not. In a speech he gave in 1993, to mark the opening of the Saudi-funded Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies, the Prince went out of his way to see only the best in the Islamic world, arguing that it had retained an "integrated, spiritual view of the world in a way we have not seen fit to do in recent generations in the West". He went on to say, "There is much we can learn from that Islamic world view in this respect".

I suppose there is an "integrated, spiritual view of the world" prevailing in Saudi Arabia and other states run on a properly Islamic basis, such as Iran. There certainly was in Afghanistan when the Taleban were in charge. But I don't think we have that much to learn from countries which flog women who socialise in the wrong way, practise routine censorship, deny basic democratic rights and export terrorism.

There is something admirable, of course, in seeking to build understanding across cultures and there is a huge amount that could be done by the West to help the lives of those in Saudi Arabia, Iran and other Islamic states. But we don't help them at all by contrasting our democratic freedoms with their religious tyrannies and suggesting that they are the ones who are more enlightened. The Muslims who really are better off in this world are those who do not live in fear of religious police or fundamentalist oppression, those who breathe free in countries such as our own, Turkey and the newly liberated Iraq. If the Prince really wanted to do more to help Muslims then he could have used his trip to Iran to ask some pertinent questions.

He could have drawn attention to the absence of a free press, free elections and free speech. He could have asked why the tragic people of Bam were condemned to live in jerry-built housing in an oil-rich country that uses its resources to fund terror abroad and build nuclear weapons rather than provide the level of decent support which, say, Turkey extends to its citizens. He could also have inquired why in the week that he is visiting Iran, its mullahs are also playing host to a terrorist summit with representatives from Hamas, Hezbollah, Islamic Jihad and the al-Qaeda affiliate Ansar-al-Islam.

The Prince should have known, before he made his trip to Iran, that his visit would be seen as a blessed conferral of legitimacy on a tightly controlled religious tyranny. Many in the West have been guilty of wishful thinking towards Iran, believing that President Khatami is a moderate, even a democrat, leading a "reformist" faction.

The truth, sadly, is very different. Khatami was certainly elected, in 1997. But only after the mullahs of Iran's Guardian Council had decided that he, and three other stooges, were pliant enough to be trusted with office; 234 other candidates were denied the chance to run because they were insufficiently Islamic. In office, Khatami has supported the brutal crushing of student pro-democracy demonstrations and done nothing to prevent the imprisonment of dissidents or the exporting of terrorism.

The Prince of Wales has been brave in standing up for human rights in the past, not least by snubbing the Chinese premier Jiang Zemin in solidarity with the oppressed people of Tibet. What a pity that the Prince's traditional English love of liberty seems to vanish in the desert air.

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What will Ahmad do? Peaceful soap opera gripped Palestinians

Christian Science Monitor (Boston, MA)

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Byline: By Nicole Gaouette Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

Dateline: JERUSALEM

Body

Ahmad is fighting the tidal pull of violence, but the Palestinian high school student is slipping.

He skips classes, breaks up with his girlfriend, and nurses the angry belief that the only way to end Israel's presence in the Palestinian territories is to fight.

At the cafe where Ahmad works part-time, the regulars fret about him, especially after he fails his exams. Will Ahmad resist the conflict's call? Or is there another way?

For 13 weeks last summer, thousands of young Palestinians hung on these questions, scrolling through radio static twice a week to find stations playing "Home Is Our Home," the soap opera about Ahmad and his friends and family.

The first of its kind here, the radio soap is meant to promote nonviolent resolution to conflict. Similar programs in Africa have helped ease ethnic tension and given communities a new vocabulary of coexistence.

With the widely acclaimed success of "Home Is Our Home," the program's creators are launching a second soap in an effort to help Palestinians find creative resolutions to conflict with Israel and among themselves.

"We want to try to engage everyone in this dreadful situation, where people need to find nonviolent means to end it," says Lucy Nusseibeh, director of the Middle East Non-Violence and Democracy (MEND), the group behind the soap opera. "Any way we can do this is worth doing."

Based in Jerusalem, MEND trains political leaders and community activists in peaceful alternatives, and had been searching for a way to deliver that message to a broader audience.

When the idea of a soap opera came up in late 2001, the Washington-based group Search for Common Ground (SFCG) stepped forward.

SFCG runs conflict-resolution programs in Asia, Africa, Europe, and the Middle East. The creator of seven radio dramas in other conflict-torn areas, SFCG knows firsthand the subtle healing power of storytelling.

In Burundi, some 85 percent of the population tunes in to "Our Neighbors, Ourselves," the group's radio soap about Hutu and Tutsi families living side by side.

What will Ahmad do? Peaceful soap opera gripped Palestinians

One independent evaluation credited the show, on air since 1997, with having a fundamental impact on people's attitudes. The soap has "had a positive effect on ethnic relations," the Washington-based Management Systems International wrote in a September 2000 assessment for the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), which funded the program.

The program also opened up taboo subjects. "The soap has given people a language with which to discuss things like genocide and the role of politicians, conflict, and ethnicity," says Francis Rolt, the director of Common Ground Radio and an adviser to the Palestinian project.

He adds that some Burundian characters have become archetypes.

"In conversation, people will say 'Oh, you're behaving just like Pierre!'" says Mr. Rolt.

Targeting a young audience

The Palestinian creators of "Home Is Our Home" aspire to the same iconic status for their show, written for 15- to 25-year-olds.

"The general message is to promote active nonviolence as an alternative resistance and as a philosophy," says MEND project coordinator Fadi Rabieh. "It's about respect, individual responsibility, self-confidence, and educating people that nonviolence is the way to build a civil, democratic society. If people keep resisting in a violent way, that will be the same tool they use to solve conflict within their state."

In more than three years of conflict with Israel, it has been hard for Palestinians to publicly oppose the violent strategies of groups like **Hamas** and the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade, which has ties to Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat. As the violence continued, any inclination to dissent declined.

This worried Fuad Najab, the head of Sky Advertising Co. in Ramallah, who promoted the series.

"We had many concerns about talking about nonviolence in a situation where everybody wakes up in the morning to news of houses being destroyed and people killed by Israeli incursions," he says. "Radio stations expressed concern that they would be criticized for airing ... a USAID-funded soap opera. They connect the US with its presence in Iraq and the positions it is taking, not exactly against the Palestinian people but with [Israeli Prime Minister Ariel] Sharon."

Najab says it's time to show young Palestinians that "you can join hands with your family, your neighborhood, your buddies, and express yourself nonviolently."

Even so, he says, "we expected resistance."

It's not about taking sides

The key to disarming this opposition, says Holt, lies in the writing. "You don't tackle issues head-on," he says. "You do it in a parallel way so that listeners identify with ideas, not a side, and recognize themselves in a middle ground."

Holt says sympathetic, realistically drawn characters who undergo an evolution pull listeners along with them.

In "Home Is our Home," Ahmad hits rock bottom when he fails at school, and his future and relationship are in shambles.

A male friend is headed for jail; a **female** friend, shamed by divorce, has attempted suicide. The soap follows their trajectories.

"Home Is Our Home" began airing in June on nine stations across the West Bank and Gaza in 15-minute installments. Najab estimates the show reached 60 percent of its target audience.

Give us more

What will Ahmad do? Peaceful soap opera gripped Palestinians

The response was immediate: Listeners wanted more episodes, more often, for more time.

"We got a huge amount of calls asking when it would air," says Kifah Awad from Ramallah's Amwaj Radio. "It appealed because the material and the accents reminded us of our own lives."

MEND Project Coordinator Rabieh has high hopes for the second soap.

"It will make a difference," he says. "Maybe not right away, but people became really attached to the [first] series. It raised important questions about how we resist occupation, how we treat women in our society, how we treat each other."

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Take Elmasry 'to task' over comments: Muslim panellist urges Islamic leader to explain controversial statements

Ottawa Citizen

October 26, 2004 Tuesday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A3

Length: 1013 words

Byline: Joanne Laucius and Joe Paraskevas, The Ottawa Citizen

Body

Jewish and Muslim panellists who appeared on TV with Canadian Islamic Congress president Mohamed Elmasry say they don't buy his explanation of the controversial remarks he made on the show.

Mr. Elmasry, a member of a four-person panel on the Michael Coren Show, said last Tuesday that all Israelis over 18 are valid targets of terrorism. Late Saturday, the Canadian Islamic Congress issued a statement saying Mr. Elmasry was "misunderstood" and the position was a "widely-held Palestinian view" and not the position of the Islamic Congress.

Yesterday, two of the three other guests on the show said they were shocked by Mr. Elmasry's comments and expected him to clarify them immediately -- something he never did, despite several openings.

"On something like this, you can't keep silence," Toronto Muslim lawyer Irfan Syed said yesterday. "Even if you love the man, you have to take him to task on his words."

The public affairs panel typically includes four guests, with Mr. Coren as moderator. This episode, which is to be rebroadcast tomorrow at 6 p.m. on the Crossroads Television System, centred around the definition of a terrorist.

Mr. Elmasry, a professor of computer engineering at the University of Waterloo, said all Israeli civilians are targets for Palestinian suicide bombers because all Israelis over 18 are called to serve in the military.

"Anyone over the age of 18 in Israel is a valid target?" asked Mr. Coren.

"Anybody above 18 is a part of the Israeli popular army," Mr. Elmasry responded.

"Everyone and anyone in Israel, irrespective of gender, over the age of 18 is a valid target?" Mr. Coren pursued.

"Yes, I would say," Mr. Elmasry responded.

"We were all caught by surprise," said Mr. Syed, who added the statement is not in the character of Mr. Elmasry or his organization.

After the commercial break, Mr. Syed distanced himself from Mr. Elmasry's remarks.

Take Elmasry 'to task' over comments: Muslim panellist urges Islamic leader to explain controversial statements

"All of us on the panel were surprised. It didn't make sense," he said yesterday.

However, when asked if Mr. Elmasry should resign, Mr. Syed said it is up to the constituency of the Canadian Islamic Congress. He is not a member of the group. "A broader issue is who speaks for the Islamic community?" he said.

Co-panellist Adam Aptowitzer, Ontario chairman for the Institute of International Affairs at B'nai Brith, said he is sure Mr. Elmasry was not arguing someone else's views.

"These are obviously his beliefs," he said. "He is representing his own views."

Off-camera, Mr. Elmasry continued to argue for the position. He did not once discredit that position, even when Mr. Syed gave him an opening, said Mr. Aptowitzer. "This Elmasry guy considers any Jew to be a valid target," he said. "Bottom line, I was appalled."

Mr. Aptowitzer said not only should Mr. Elmasry resign, he should also be investigated for advocating terrorism. There are former members of the Israeli military living in Canada.

But Mr. Syed said while the comments were anti-Israeli, at no time did Mr. Elmasry say anything about Judaism or Jews.

Amidst calls for his resignation, Mr. Elmasry did not return phone calls yesterday.

Conservative foreign affairs critic Stockwell Day called for his immediate removal.

"Everybody has known that groups like ***Hamas*** and other assassins have always proudly proclaimed the right to slaughter the innocent," Mr. Day said, referring to the Palestinian group, which regularly claims responsibility for suicide bombings in Israel.

"Now, with Elmasry's statement, it's confirming the fears many Canadians have that Muslims in general accept the view that slaughtering the innocent is acceptable," he said.

"I don't believe that most Muslims do accept that view ... but unless this guy is unceremoniously punted out of his position and unless there are very strong and clear statements refuting what he says, then that fear that many Canadians have will unfortunately grow."

Other members of Parliament hope Mr. Elmasry will explain himself.

"It would be incumbent on Mr. Elmasry and the association which he represents to clarify the record, that they do not in any way, shape or form, condone any type of violence towards any group of any type," said Dan McTeague, parliamentary secretary to Foreign Affairs Minister Pierre Pettigrew.

The National Council on Canada-Arab Relations executive director Mazen Chouaib said the comment was unacceptable and so was the later clarification from the Canadian Islamic Congress.

"The comments do not reflect those of the Canadian-Arab community that is dedicated to peace, justice and the rule of law. The ensuing comments that implicated Palestinians as subscribing to this view are most disturbing. Canadians of Palestinian origin oppose such views, as do most Arab-Canadians."

Verbatim

An excerpt of the televised exchange between Mohamed Elmasry and Michael Coren.

Coren: I can't remember one case where the French resistance ... or even the Allies, communists or Gaullists or nationalists would go into a school where German children were and kill them all.....

Take Elmasry 'to task' over comments: Muslim panellist urges Islamic leader to explain controversial statements

Elmasry: We're saying totally innocent people.

Coren: OK

Elmasry: And totally innocent people obviously are the children. But they are not innocent if they are part of a population, which is ... total population of Israel is part of the army.

Coren: OK.... (other voices)

Elmasry: Age 18 on they are part of the army, even if they have civilian clothes.

Coren: If Israeli children are killed that is a valid use of military force by Palestinians?

Elmasry: No, they are not valid.

Coren: What are you saying?

Elmasry: I'm saying that it has to be totally innocent. Totally innocent are the children, obviously. OK? But they are not innocent if they are military in civilian clothes. OK?

Coren: What civilians?

Elmasry: The same if they are women in the army.

Coren: Anyone over the age of 18 in Israel is a valid target?

Elmasry: Anybody above 18 is a part of the Israeli popular army.

Coren: Everyone in Israel and everyone and anyone in Israel, irrespective of gender, over the age of 18 is a valid target?

Elmasry: Yes. I would say.

Coren: We will break at that point. Commercial, then back to the Michael Coren Show.

Load-Date: October 26, 2004

***U.S. blasts Iraqi homes of suspects;
Crackdown on insurgents levels at least 15 houses.
U.S. targets homes of suspects in fight against insurgents***

The Philadelphia Inquirer

NOVEMBER 18, 2003 Tuesday CITY-D EDITION

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Length: 911 words

Byline: Jeff Wilkinson INQUIRER FOREIGN STAFF

Dateline: TIKRIT, Iraq

Body

In a tactic reminiscent of Israeli crackdowns in the West Bank and Gaza, the U.S. military has begun destroying the homes of suspected guerrilla fighters in Iraq's Sunni Triangle, evacuating women and children, then leveling their houses with heavy weaponry.

At least 15 homes have been destroyed in Tikrit as part of what has been dubbed Operation Ivy Cyclone Two. Among them were four houses allegedly belonging to suspects in the Nov. 7 downing of a Black Hawk helicopter that killed six Americans. Those houses were leveled Sunday by tanks and Apache helicopters.

Family members at one of the houses, in the village of al Haweda, said they were given five minutes to evacuate before soldiers opened fire.

"This is something Sharon would do," said farmer Jamel Shahab, referring to the Israeli prime minister, Ariel Sharon. "What's happening in Iraq is just like Palestine."

The destruction of the homes is part of a sharp crackdown on insurgents in the so-called Sunni Triangle, where guerrillas have downed at least two U.S. helicopters, one a Chinook in Fallujah on Nov. 2, killing 16 U.S. soldiers, and the other the Nov. 7 downing of the Black Hawk in Tikrit. On Saturday, two more helicopters crashed, after one of them may have been fired upon, killing 17 in Mosul.

U.S. forces struck dozens of targets yesterday, killing six guerrillas and arresting 21, the military said. The operation is expected to continue through tomorrow, said Col. James Hickey, commander of the First Brigade of the Fourth Infantry Division.

"Those four people used those houses as sanctuary, and we're not allowing them to have sanctuary," Hickey said.

U.S. blasts Iraqi homes of suspects; Crackdown on insurgents levels at least 15 houses. U.S. targets homes of suspects in fight against insurgents

"We're going to turn the heat up and complicate their battlefield," driving them into the desert, he said. "There they will be exposed and we will have them."

It was unclear whether the decision to destroy the houses was part of an overall strategy approved in Washington.

Yesterday, angry residents of al Haweda, where three of the destroyed homes were, said the tactic would spawn more guerrilla fighters and perhaps spark an Iraqi uprising similar to the Palestinian intifadah in the West Bank and Gaza.

Farmer Shahab, 41, stood amid the rubble of the former home of 55-year-old farmer Omar Khalil, who was arrested shortly before the home was destroyed. The military said Khalil's son, who escaped, was one of the suspects in the downing of the Black Hawk.

Khalil's wife, Kafey, sat wailing near her wrecked house. "I have no son. I have no husband. I have no home. I will be a beggar."

Kafey Khalil said military officials first visited the house two days ago, demanding that her husband turn in her son. He refused.

Then about 10 p.m. Sunday, the military returned, she said.

"They started shouting at us: 'Get up! Get out!' " she said. "They brought a big truck for us. It was so cold we felt like we were dying. After five minutes they started shooting. We didn't have time to get anything but blankets. They brought in the tanks and the helicopters and started bombing."

After the shooting stopped, the women and children were released and were left at the scene, they said. They were sifting through the wreckage yesterday, attempting to salvage what few items remained.

Two other homes nearby were also in shambles. What walls remained were pierced by tank rounds. A small boy held up what was left of the family's TV set.

In the backyard of one home, a cow lay dead, its stomach split open by a large-caliber round, its unborn calf half-exposed. A dog limped nearby, a piece of shrapnel protruding from its body.

The Israeli military's practice of demolishing the homes of families of convicted or suspected terrorists has brought widespread condemnation from human-rights groups and other governments - including that of the United States.

The State Department's 2002 human rights report, released in March, said such policies "left hundreds of Palestinians not involved in terror attacks homeless." In September, department spokesman Richard Boucher criticized Israel for destroying a seven-story apartment building in Gaza during a raid on a Hamas leader.

There was no official reaction yesterday in Washington.

The military had promised a tough crackdown in response to the recent surge in American military deaths and has launched two operations, Operation Iron Hammer around Baghdad and Ivy Cyclone in the heart of the Sunni Triangle.

Hickey said that counterstrikes against resistance fighters around Tikrit had been continuous but that Ivy Cyclone Two represented a higher level of coordination using more advanced weapons.

For example, Sunday night's action included the launching of a missile from Baghdad, 55 miles away, at the abandoned home of a leading Saddam Hussein deputy, Izzat Ibrahim al Douri, who is No. 6 on the coalition's most-wanted list. A reporter and photographer were allowed to witness the destruction, which was completed by laser-guided artillery fire.

U.S. blasts Iraqi homes of suspects; Crackdown on insurgents levels at least 15 houses. U.S. targets homes of suspects in fight against insurgents

Hickey said Douri's house was destroyed to deny guerrillas a meeting place, though it was unclear that such high-tech weaponry was needed to destroy the structure, which appeared completely looted.

"We know exactly what we're shooting at and why we're shooting it," Hickey said. "Collateral damage won't be a problem."

Hickey promised no letup in the campaign. He also promised to deal harshly with weapons violations. "If we see someone with a weapon," he said, "he becomes a ballistics test," meaning the man is shot.

"You won't see guns in Tikrit," he said.

Graphic

PHOTO;

DAVID P. GILKEY, Detroit Free Press

U.S. troops evacuate a family before destroying a home next door in Tikrit, Iraq. It was part of a stepped-up effort to crush insurgents' opposition, U.S. officials said. "We're going to turn the heat up and complicate their battlefield," driving insurgents into the desert, said Col. James Hickey.

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GOP EXPLOITATION OF 9/11 WAS DISRESPECTFUL, DISGUSTING

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (Pennsylvania)

September 4, 2004 Saturday

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Body

As I sit writing this, I shake with rage. I quiver with disgust. After watching Monday night's coverage of the Republican National Convention, I cannot imagine ever being this angry again. Yes, I expected distortion of facts, misrepresentation of Democratic points of view and the accounts of all of the "wonderful" things this current administration has "accomplished" since it snuck into the White House four years ago.

What I was not prepared for was the shameless manner in which the events of Sept. 11 and the universal sympathy they generated were exploited to serve the interests of the Republican Party ("Bush Hailed for Resolve on 9/11," Aug. 31). I thought that maybe the party was ready to stop using the corpses of the victims as props and let them rest with the peace and respect they rightly deserve. I thought that maybe, just maybe, the memory of the immense and tragic blow suffered by all American people on that day belonged to all the American people. I guess I was wrong.

Monday's gratuitously emotional rape of that memory has lowered my already sea-level expectations regarding the lengths to which the Republicans will go to win. Watergate pales in comparison to the perverse, craven manipulations I witnessed Monday night. It was the work of an absolutely power-crazy group of individuals masquerading as compassionate human beings, and it makes me physically ill to imagine that it may just work. May God have mercy on their souls, if they have them.

BRANDON McCARTHY

Franklin Park

Iraq opportunities

In their introduction of their mother at the Republican National Convention Tuesday night, Bush daughters Barbara and Jenna mentioned that now that they had graduated from college, they were "looking around for something to do for the next few years." I'm certain my 22-year-old niece (a naval officer serving in Iraq) could recommend plenty of opportunities for young college grads -- in the Gulf. Perhaps driving a Humvee in Najaf? Or maybe directing air traffic out of Baghdad?

Barb and Jenna would look just as fetching in fatigues and body armor (their parents could surely afford to buy them their own) as they do in their designer gowns. How about it, girls? Sign right up.

LISA RULONG

GOP EXPLOITATION OF 9/11 WAS DISRESPECTFUL, DISGUSTING

Bethel Park

Bravo, Ms. Dowd

I have to take exception to your editorial downplaying of Maureen Dowd's "Bushworld" ("Publishing World: Maureen Dowd Offers Reheated Morsels," Aug. 16). You stated that you expected a better book. Better than what?

"Bushworld" is a selection of Dowd's columns from 2001 to the present and represents a collection of indictments of the Bush administration that no other journalist -- with the possible exception of Paul Krugman and Lewis H. Lapham -- can match. It is to the credit of the Post-Gazette that it carried her columns over this period. Now to have in a single volume the complete record of her singular literary style and courageous intelligence is something to celebrate, not demean.

The aforementioned Mr. Krugman and Hendrik Hertzberg have published their collected columns over this same period to high praise, and there is no reason why Maureen Dowd should not be accorded the same -- if not even more -- credit. How many other journalists -- male or female -- have been as undeceived and outspoken as she about the casualty-producing, debt-creating, hardship-spawning policies of the Cheney-Bush junta since its selection in 2000? To my knowledge, none.

SAMUEL HAZO

Upper St. Clair

What we want

Enough of this "war hero" stuff. That was 30 years ago. What I want (and I bet everybody else does, too) is my life back the way it was on Sept. 10, 2001.

How does being or not being a war hero serve that purpose?

ARLINGTON G. KUKLINCA

Warren, Ohio

The impact of help

I am in complete agreement with the Aug. 14 letter by Steve Patterson ("America, Start Being Modest and Spread Compassion)."

If Mr. Patterson wants to see the points of his letter in action, he can spend one week "dodging cars" with me on Washington Boulevard (near the Highland Park Bridge). There he will see drivers who feel that "the road exists for me alone."

Between once a week and once a month, I find myself cast in the Good Samaritan role (such as helping to push vehicles off the street), deeds that are ignored or cursed at by other drivers.

I challenge any church leader to peddle flowers with me for a week and see what it is like to view the world as I do. However, I must differ from Mr. Patterson's statement that "Pittsburgh has no money." I routinely see many expensive cars and individuals who smoke cigarettes like chimneys.

In a speech early in 2002, President Bush spoke of fighting terrorism by aiding those in need. Americans, especially Republicans and evangelical Christians, are grossly neglectful.

Every historian who has ever written about the early Christian church has written that the Christians of the first two centuries outlasted multiple extermination attempts by providing a "social safety net." Al-Qaida, Hamas and Hezbollah draw their pools of kamikazes by providing for the needy, not being "social Darwinists" as is the dominant

GOP EXPLOITATION OF 9/11 WAS DISRESPECTFUL, DISGUSTING

trait among American Christians. Any church in southwestern Pennsylvania that would provide "living wage" jobs and affordable health/dental insurance would, within five years, outdraw the Steelers.

DAVID ISH

Sheraden

Making us better

Regarding the Aug. 28 letter from Frank Skraly ("Just Stoking Fears"). He asked sarcastically if we were voting for a president or a pope. I believe most people who believe in God or at least a higher being want a president who understands how important it is to have these faith-based organizations. These types of organizations do so much for the community and also help in times of need.

I do not think President Bush meant to offend anyone who does not believe the same way. The majority of America is "religious" in some way, shape or form, and I believe we could all use a little soul enlightening by a higher power, especially in these troubled times. I pray for my country every day, and I pray that my leaders will make right choices for the sake of me and my family.

It is your decision to believe in what you want, but you're not losing anything by having faith. When this country was attacked on Sept. 11, 2001, there was an outpouring of love and humanity in this country; "whatever" that may have been from doesn't matter. What truly matters is, if believing in something makes people "better" people, then I'm all for it and you should be, too.

DANIELLE TORREP

North Side

Load-Date: September 4, 2004

End of Document

Logic has got lost in Iraq

The Times (London)

September 30, 2004, Thursday

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Section: Features; 17

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Byline: Anatole Kaletsky

Body

The Prime Minister is dangerously unable to make reasoned judgments about the War on Terror

POLITICIANS, like people in general, should normally be judged by their actions not words. But after a chain of events has been set irrevocably in motion, when it is too late for actions to change history's course, there are times when words can speak louder than deeds. Tony Blair's address to the Labour Party conference was such a moment.

As I listened to Mr Blair in Brighton on Tuesday, I suddenly -and totally unexpectedly -felt a twinge of the same physical panic which engulfed us all on that horrible Tuesday three years ago. As the Prime Minister's speech veered from a perfectly lucid account of domestic policies in Britain into a tangled and incoherent apologia for the disaster in Iraq, it suddenly struck me that Britain was led by a man who had lost his reason. This sounds exaggerated, so let me be precise.

To judge by the three pages on Iraq in his speech to the party conference, Mr Blair has "lost his reason" in two very literal ways: He has lost his ability to make reasoned judgments about the War on Terror. And he has therefore lost the primary *raison d'être* of any prime minister, which is to protect Britain and British interests in a dangerous and complex world.

I recognise that this is a terrible accusation to level against any politician - and that none of the other commentators in Brighton seemed to react in the same way as I did. I will therefore quote at length from Mr Blair's speech, so that readers can judge for themselves whether I am the one whose reason has disappeared.

But first, let me explain why I attach such significance to a single speech. What Mr Blair said about Iraq in Brighton was not just some thoughtless off-the cuff comment. This was the most self-conscious passage in the most heartfelt speech he has delivered -the outcome of weeks, maybe months, of introspection, analysis and mental struggle. By all accounts, it was written by the Prime Minister himself, not by a spin doctor or PR hack. This was, in short, the distillation of all Mr Blair's wisdom on the most important question of his political life. So if I am right in judging this passage confused to the point of unreason, serious questions must be raised about his capacity to stay in his job.

Here is Mr Blair's main justification for invading Iraq, offered with more than a hint of intellectual pride:

"There are two views of what is happening in the world today. One view is that there are isolated extremists engaged in essentially isolated acts of terrorism.

Logic has got lost in Iraq

That what is happening is not qualitatively different from the terrorism we have always lived with. If you believe this, we carry on the same path as before September 11. We try not to provoke them and hope in time they will wither.

"The other view is that this is a wholly new phenomenon, worldwide terrorism based on a perversion of the true, peaceful and honourable faith of Islam; that its roots are in the madrassas of Pakistan, the extreme forms of the Wahhabi doctrine in Saudi Arabia, in the former training camps of al-Qaeda in Afghanistan. If you take this view, the only path to take is to confront this terrorism, remove its root and branch and at all costs stop it acquiring the weapons to kill on a massive scale."

What is wrong with this analysis? Only that the logical implications of Mr Blair's dichotomy are exactly the opposite from the ones that he draws. If the "new" terrorists are isolated gangs of madmen with no defined objectives, then the fear of "provoking" them is irrelevant, since nihilists cannot, by definition, be provoked. Such nihilists, far from being "traditional" terrorists, as the Prime Minister suggested, are the opposite of traditional groups such as the IRA, Basque militants, Hezbollah or Hamas, all of which have clearly defined objectives. The right course to follow against the first type of terrorists is what Mr Blair recommends for the second type: destroying them with overwhelming force. This, indeed, was the argument presented for the invasion of Afghanistan.

If, on the other hand, the "new" terrorism is really a malignant offshoot of the Wahhabi religious movement -then it is similar to traditional Irish and Palestinian terrorism, albeit more vicious and destructive. In that case, needless provocation should be avoided and the response must be political as well as by force. Moreover, if fundamentalism is at the root of the problem, why attack Iraq, a secular country where Wahhabis were almost unknown? Far from justifying the Iraq invasion, Mr Blair's logic points towards regime change in Saudi Arabia or armed action to seize nuclear weapons in Pakistan.

The confusion gets even worse. Mr Blair points out that some of the terrorists now in Iraq are the same religious fanatics who oppressed the women of Afghanistan.

But how does this justify the overthrow of the largely secular Saddam regime, which has sucked these maniacs into Iraq, while leaving much of Afghanistan to be reoccupied by the Taleban? Mr Blair's answer would be funny if it were not so scary.

"But Iraq was not a safe country before March 2003," he states. Then, to prove this contention and somehow link it with the invasion he makes his final leap of illogic: "Few had heard of the Taleban before September 11. Afghanistan was not a nation at peace...but the terrorists trained in the Hindu Kush could end up in British streets threatening our way of life."

In sum, Mr Blair, seems to have convinced himself that Iraq and Afghanistan are effectively one country and that al-Qaeda, the Taleban and Saddam Hussein are all the same. Britain's chattering classes haughtily patronise the 60 per cent of American voters who apparently believe that Saddam was behind 9/11. Yet in Britain we now have a Prime Minister whose whole Middle Eastern strategy rests on this same fiction, and whose analysis of global terrorism is so illogical that it makes President Bush sound like Socrates.

Mr Blair was once an intelligent and convincing leader. But Iraq has caused his brain to short-circuit, much as John Major's did after the exchange-rate debacle.

A prime minister who has lost his power to reason is too dangerous to keep in the job.

Load-Date: September 30, 2004

Hostages in Iraq: For Europe, it's personal

The International Herald Tribune

September 30, 2004 Thursday

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Byline: Katrin Bennhold

Dateline: PARIS:

Body

Paola Di Franco of Rome was speaking for much of Italy on Wednesday when she said that she felt intense joy and relief on learning of the release of the two Italian hostages affectionately known as the "two Simonas."

Indeed, like many Europeans, Di Franco has been caught up in the wave of emotion that has swept the Continent caused by the deliberate targeting of civilians in Iraq, the graphic brutality of the captors and 24-hour media coverage.

Across Europe, the fate of the hostages has become a personal matter.

"Something like this is atrocious, you don't know what they're doing to them, you worry that they're being raped, or beaten," said Di Franco, 63, who has two daughters in their 30s. "I kept thinking about the fear they must have felt." International Herald Tribune

As Italians celebrated the release of the two aid workers on Tuesday night, anxiety in Britain and France mounted about the fate of an engineer and two journalists held captive in Iraq.

The British news media firmly focused their attention Wednesday on the situation of Kenneth Bigley, who has been held hostage in Iraq for two weeks, after the Arabic news network Al Jazeera released footage showing a sobbing Bigley dressed in an orange jumpsuit and kneeling in a prison cell.

As he did in an earlier videotape released last week, Bigley pleaded with Prime Minister Tony Blair to engage with his captors to help save his life. Two American engineers, who were kidnapped with Bigley on Sept. 16, were beheaded last week, with gruesome footage of their executions circulating on the Internet.

Meanwhile, in France, the fate of a Radio France correspondent, Christian Chesnot, and Georges Malbrunot, of the daily Le Figaro, remained uncertain Wednesday. Unconfirmed assertions by a French national in Iraq, Philippe Brett, claiming their liberation had been agreed on with the hostage-takers, raised hopes for the release of the two men. But after being criticized for misplaced optimism in announcing that the journalists' release was imminent in late August, officials shied away from positive assessments. A government spokesman, Jean-Francois Cope, referred to Brett's claims as "rumors."

Like the two Simonas in Italy and Bigley in Britain, Chesnot and Malbrunot have been in the spotlight across France. Le Figaro has carried their photograph on the front page daily since their kidnapping on Aug. 20.

Hostages in Iraq : For Europe, it's personal

But if in Britain and Italy the governments supported the American-led war in Iraq against a majority of the population, in France people are indignant for being targets in a war they and their government vocally opposed.

Virginie Cathelin, a 24-year-old restaurant worker in a western suburb of Paris, said it shocked and frightened her that Iraqi insurgents should pick out French journalists.

"The worst is that they weren't there to fight a war or to take sides, in fact they were against the war," Cathelin said. "I imagine what it must be like for their wives and their children -- I think about it every day.

It frightens me, because it seems these people can go after anyone, anywhere."

One reason for the overwhelming emotional response in all three countries, with thousands demonstrating in support of the victims in Paris and Rome in recent weeks, is the unprecedented brutality of the hostage takers and their power to spread live coverage of their atrocities around the world.

Harriet Grace, a London-based job counselor and writer, said more than anything else, it was the anachronistic barbarism of watching civilians deliberately slaughtered on camera that had made a whole nation identify with one man and his family.

"Everyone is aware of the likelihood that we will see this man's head cut off with a knife," said Grace, 59. "It forces you to imagine yourself or one of your family in that situation. You think of the Middle Ages when you see this, you think: We're not in an age like this."

Bigley's video appearances, repeated public appeals by his family and the killing of his colleagues have shaken a country deeply divided over the war in Iraq.

More than 140 foreigners have been taken hostage in Iraq since April. Most have been freed, often after the demands of the captors were met.

Often mercenary groups sell hostages for financial gains.

According to Julian Lindley-French, the director of security policy at the Geneva Center for Security Research, the hostage takers' ability to use the media as an instrument has made it much harder for governments to respond to the crisis.

"This is the first time that the information flow has been taken out of government hands," Lindley-French said.

"The public sees what the hostage takers want them to see and that puts immense pressure on governments.

"The danger is that if they give in to ransom demands it will only encourage criminal groups to kidnap more."

Highlighting the dilemma governments face, speculation in the Italian press that Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi had paid a ransom of as much as \$1 million for the release of the two young women -- a charge his foreign minister denied Wednesday -- didn't affect the festive mood in the country.

Well-wishers gathered under Simona Torretta's home in a Rome suburb -- a sixth floor apartment in a nondescript building marked by two large peace flags hanging on the balcony -- and scribbled congratulatory notes in the binder that for the past weeks has been a diary of sorts for the concerned Roman neighbors.

The Italian president, Carlo Azeglio Ciampi, addressed the nation on Tuesday night in a moving speech; the Pope welcomed the two women back; and five million Italians -- one fifth of the population -- watched their return live on Rai Uno, the state broadcaster.

Patrizia Santangeli, a 43-year-old Roman copy writer, showed no concern over the question of whether money had been paid to free the two Simonas.

Hostages in Iraq : For Europe, it's personal

Even if a ransom had been paid, "it's right because they were freed," she said, adding: "Mind you, I don't think we should be in Iraq at all."

The French last month launched a high-profile diplomatic campaign across the Middle East, gathering support from groups like **Hamas** to the Egyptian government, but refused to give in to demands that they withdraw a law banning the Muslim headscarf in public schools.

The British government has so far refused to negotiate with Bigley's captors altogether. If Bigley is killed, it will inevitably lead to a lot of questions from the public, Lindley-French said. "People are bound to ask: Why didn't we get our man free like the Italians did?" he said. "We're moving into a new kind of world."

*

Elisabetta Povoledo contributed reporting from Rome.

Load-Date: October 1, 2004

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Jerusalem's Old City is peaceful on Jewish Sabbath

The Toronto Star
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Ontario Edition

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Byline: Vivian Macdonald

Body

The notice at the King David Hotel in Jerusalem is clear: "It is forbidden to light Shabbat candles in your room."

Oh, fine. In Jerusalem I can't light Sabbath candles?

Well, yes, I can, as it turns out. In the famous hotel's beautiful foyer, dozens and dozens of little candles are set out so that Jewish guests can begin the day of rest in the traditional way.

On Friday evening, at the Kotel (the Western Wall), yeshiva students dance and sing. On Saturday morning, observant Jews flock to synagogues and to the Wall for prayers. The Jewish Quarter is quiet. On Friday, the Arab Quarter is quiet when prayers are said at the Al-Aqsa Mosque near the famous Dome of the Rock. It's not so quiet on the Christian Sabbath because it's a workday in Israel.

As the Jewish Sabbath nears on Friday, I can hear church bells ringing, the call to prayer from the mosque and then the songs and prayers of the Kabbalat service floating up through my window from a nearby park. I learn later from New Yorker Robert Heisler, who had joined them, that those at Kabbalat were from the United States. Soon a group of Toronto Jews joined them. "There are Canadian Jews everywhere here," quipped Heisler. "There must be a million Canadian Jews."

When I return to my room after Shabbat dinner, I ask for a 6 a.m. wake-up call on Saturday so that I can watch the sun rise over the Old City. Bathed in the soft light of morning, it is truly the city of gold. Before breakfast, I go for a walk through the deserted streets of West Jerusalem. This is the business and residential area of the city, outside the Old City walls. The Jerusalem Sabbath being what it is, there's not even a coffee shop open.

Later in the morning, we do a walking tour of the Arab and Armenian quarters of the Old City. We enter through the Jaffa Gate, which was, in olden days, "the Broadway of Jerusalem," says our guide Moshe Nov. It was from the Jaffa Gate that caravans went to Jaffa, and from the Damascus Gate that they left for Damascus. There are few people here in the souk. The bustle of earlier years has ceased since the intifada began. Palestinian shopkeepers sit idle in front of their empty stores - at least, those who cater to tourists.

Nov, who is Jewish, chats to Palestinian friends in Arabic as we stroll through the souk. As we reach the Via Dolorosa, it becomes clear that he is a font of knowledge about the history of Christianity, quoting chapter and verse from the New Testament as we tour the site where Jesus is said to have met Pilate, then along the street he walked to Golgotha and, finally, to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

Jerusalem's Old City is peaceful on Jewish Sabbath

"We used to have to do the Via Dolorosa at six in the morning, when tourists crowded the street," says Nov. Now, at 10 a.m., we are virtually the only tourists. "I don't need to tell you how much these people are suffering," says Nov. "It's obvious."

Sadly, we cannot go to the Dome of the Rock; the area is closed to visitors during the intifada. A pity, as it is a beautiful, peaceful place: a holy site for Muslims. It is said that Mohammed ascended to heaven from this spot.

During the afternoon hours, I wander about on my own, breathing in the scent of spices and baklava, listening to the haunting strains of Arabic music in the souk, watching the wee Orthodox Jewish children play in the sun. At one small square, I pass a young couple chatting quietly; he is wearing a kippah (skullcap) - and carrying an automatic rifle, though he is not a soldier. In another corner, a group of middle-aged Palestinian men sit smoking hookahs.

I am concentrating on my camera work, wandering the same narrow streets and alleys over and over again. It's noticed. One young Palestinian man grins at me: "When are we going to do business?" he asks. "You're up and down, up and down but you don't buy anything."

I feel perfectly safe here, within the Old City walls. It is not an area that Hamas or Islamic Jihad would strike. It's pleasant, too; people are friendly and courteous. In some areas, though, I feel sad and lonely as I pass empty cafes and restaurants, and closed shops.

On Monday, we return to the Old City and the Western Wall. It is a morning on which Bar Mitzvahs are held (there are no bat mitzvahs held here where the Orthodox rule). The men in our group go to the Kotel, wandering among those reading the Torah; I stand at the back with the women who are mere spectators as their sons become Bar Mitzvah. I'm busy with my camera again (I couldn't take photographs on the Sabbath - it's not allowed).

Then I go to the Kotel on the women's side of the fence that divides male and female. I recite the Shema (the central statement of faith within Judaism) and the Schechyanu: Blessed art Thou, Adonai, ruler of the universe, who has given us life, sustained us and brought us to this season.

Following tradition, I place a small bit a paper between the stones of the temple that was built by Herod more than 2,000 years ago. On it is written a prayer for peace.

Vivian Macdonald is a freelance writer based in Stratford, Ont. Her trip to Israel was subsidized by the Israel Government Tourism Office.

Graphic

vivian macdonald photo Two men pause to chat beneath an archway in the Jewish Quarter in the Old City in Jerusalem.

Load-Date: October 18, 2003

First lady says America can count on her husband; Schwarzenegger also calls the president 'a man of inner strength'

Telegraph Herald (Dubuque, IA)

September 1, 2004 Wednesday

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Section: Obituary; Pg. a1

Length: 1078 words

Byline: ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dateline: NEW YORK

Body

Republican National Convention co-stars Laura Bush and Arnold Schwarzenegger commended President Bush to the country for four more years Tuesday night, hailing him as a man of strength leavened by compassion. "You can count on him, especially in a crisis," said the first lady.

"He's a man of perseverance. He's a man of inner strength. He is a leader who doesn't flinch, doesn't waver, does not back down," added the Austrian-born California governor in a speech that also promised recent immigrants they are welcome in the GOP.

"We Republicans admire your ambition. We encourage your dreams. We believe in your future," said the actor-turned-politician in one of several speeches crafted to show the softer side of a party known for its conservatism.

The effort to flesh out an image of the president as something more than a resolute commander in chief resulted in something akin to a prime-time Bush family hour, with twins Jenna and Barbara teasing their father gently in a brief, joint appearance at the podium. "We are so proud to be here tonight to introduce someone who read us bedtime stories, picked up carpool, made our favorite peanut butter-and-jelly sandwiches and cheered for us when we made a goal, even when it was for the wrong team," Jenna said.

Schwarzenegger and the first lady took their turns at the Madison Square Garden podium as 2,508 delegates formally bestowed their nomination on the president for a second term in office. "Four more years," they chanted in unison - then and many times more throughout the night.

Republicans met inside their heavily fortified convention hall as police made more than 560 arrests in the surrounding streets on a day heavy with non-violent protest. By evening, authorities wrapped an entire midtown Manhattan block in orange netting, working to contain demonstrators who had vowed to march on the Garden itself.

Bush, locked in a tight re-election race, campaigned across three battleground states and worked to extinguish a convention-week controversy of his own making. "In this different kind of war, we may never sit down at a peace table. But make no mistake about it, we are winning, and we will win" the war on terror, he told an American Legion convention in Tennessee, one day after saying he didn't think victory would be possible.

"I probably needed to be more articulate" in earlier comments, he conceded in a radio interview with conservative talk show host Rush Limbaugh.

First lady says America can count on her husband; Schwarzenegger also calls the president 'a man of inner strength'

Bush's Democratic challenger, Sen. John Kerry, spent the day at home in Nantucket, Mass., as his campaign settled on plans to place \$45 million in television advertising in 20 battleground states through Election Day. The commercials will run on broadcast stations and cable, and include appeals to minority voters whom Democrats need to turn out in large numbers on Nov. 2 if they are to deny Bush a second term.

A poll by The Washington Post showed the race to be a dead heat, 48 percent apiece, but found that the president moving ahead of his rival on national security issues and pulling into a virtual tie on handling of the economy.

Bush arrives in New York on Wednesday, a day ahead of a nomination acceptance speech that is expected to sketch out a second-term agenda. Vice President Dick Cheney addresses the gathering Wednesday night.

Republican convention planners scripted an evening that reintroduced the theme of compassionate conservatism that helped Bush win the White House four years ago.

A parade of speakers strode to the podium with a backdrop that read - "People of Compassion." They praised the president's efforts to battle AIDS, combat breast cancer, promote adoption and enact far-reaching educational reforms. "I am proof that the blessings of liberty are within reach of every American," said Maryland Lt. Gov. Michael Steele, an African-American.

Both the first lady and Schwarzenegger hailed Bush's leadership in terms that bordered on extravagant in speeches that did double political duty. For the first lady, that meant a glimpse at the personal side of her husband; for the governor, an appeal to new and unregistered voters from overseas who are not part of the president's conservative base.

"No American president wants to go to war," said Mrs. Bush, neither Lincoln nor Roosevelt nor her own husband.

But in a description of a commander in chief that most Americans never see, she said, "I remember some very quiet nights at the dinner table" after the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. "George was weighing grim scenarios and ominous intelligence and potentially even more devastating attacks."

"... And I remember sitting in the window of the White House, watching as my husband walked on the lawn below. I knew he was wrestling with these agonizing decisions that would have such profound consequences for so many lives and the future of the world," she said.

The world outside the convention delivered jarring news in the global war on terror.

A suicide bomber was blamed for an explosion near a busy subway station in Moscow. Hamas took responsibility for blowing up two buses in Israel. And a Web site offered a link to a video purporting to show the methodical, grisly killings of 12 Nepalese construction workers kidnapped in Iraq.

Schwarzenegger sketched his own background for the convention and prime-time audience, from a childhood in the shadow of communism to arrival in the United States as a self-described scrawny boy, to the man who moved from body builder to box-office star to governor of the nation's most populous state.

"America gave me opportunities and my immigrant dreams came true," he said. "I want other people to get the same chances I did, the same opportunities."

He flashed his trademark bravado as well. "To those critics who are so pessimistic about our economy, I say: Don't be economic girlie men." The hall erupted in cheers at that remark and Schwarzenegger smiled broadly. Earlier this year, he had encountered sharp criticism in his home state when he ridiculed Democratic legislators who opposed his budget as "girlie men."

In her remarks, Mrs. Bush said that Bush's leadership has helped 50 million men, women and children win freedom over the past four years, a reference to wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

First lady says America can count on her husband; Schwarzenegger also calls the president 'a man of inner strength'

"I want to talk about the issue that I believe is most important for my own daughters, for all our families, and for our future: George's work to protect our country and defeat terror so that all children can grow up in a more peaceful world," she added.

Graphic

Laura Bush

Load-Date: September 1, 2004

End of Document

Not a terrorist by any stretch

National Post (f/k/a The Financial Post) (Canada)

September 25, 2004 Saturday

National Edition

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Section: COMMENT; Pg. A17

Length: 1004 words

Byline: Raymond Heard, National Post

Body

A dangerous myth is taking root. Commentators are suggesting, no doubt out of ignorance rather than malice, that Nelson Mandela was a terrorist.

Last Saturday, entering the great debate over when the media should use the word "terrorist," Edward Greenspon, editor-in-chief of The Globe and Mail, declared: "It is often said that one man's terrorist is another's freedom fighter. Take former political prisoner and South African president Nelson Mandela, who went from terrorist to statesman in a generation."

Mr. Greenspon was echoing a line used six days earlier in the Toronto Star by Antonia Zerbisias. Claiming that "terrorist" is a politically loaded term, she wrote: "Remember, one nation's terrorist is another nation's freedom fighter. Depending on whom you're asking, American founding fathers George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, South Africa's Nelson Mandela and Israel's Menachem Begin could be described as terrorists."

She went on to suggest that, "in fact, the very notion of terrorists and terrorism is very much a colonialist one."

Others are better qualified than I am to defend the Founding Fathers and Mr. Begin. But as far as Nelson Mandela is concerned, the record shows -- and I was there as a young reporter-- that he was never anything approaching a terrorist, except in the eyes of the thugs who operated the Apartheid Reich.

There can be absolutely no comparison between South Africa's liberation struggle and the terrorist atrocities committed by bloodlusting swine who would massacre schoolchildren in Beslan or destroy a restaurant packed with Arabs and Jews in Israel.

To bracket Mr. Mandela with terrorists who commit such crimes against humanity does a disservice to him and his African National Congress (ANC). Through such a false analogy, commentators also rationalize -- however inadvertently -- the mindless brutality of the terrorists. The implication, no doubt unintended, is that Osama bin Laden just might also turn out to be, like Mandela, a "freedom fighter."

Far from being a terrorist, Mandela was the liberator of all South Africans from a white minority regime whose leaders held Adolf Hitler dear and whose doctrine of apartheid inflicted state terrorism on the vast majority of the population.

Not a terrorist by any stretch

This was a country, recall, in which police mowed down 69 black civilians -- many of them women and children -- in Sharpeville in 1960. Most were shot in the back as they fled; a mile away from the mass murder scene, human blood was seen flowing in street gutters.

For decades, Mandela's ANC patiently followed the passive resistance philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi -- who, in South Africa as a young lawyer, had defended indentured workers from India. The ANC resorted to guerrilla warfare only as its very last resort, after decades of pleading for racial justice was answered by bullets and the creation of prison states termed "Bantu Homelands."

In stark contrast to today's Islamist terror organizations waging a jihad that many Muslims believe is in violation of their religion, the ANC was inclusive and democratic. It accepted whites as co-inheritors of the land under the Freedom Charter -- a document that clearly stated the land belongs to all who live there.

By contrast, can one imagine Hamas taking in Jewish members?

When Mandela's obituaries are published, they will highlight the non-racial character of his crusade, which brought together Christians (including Beyers Naude, the recently deceased rebel Afrikaner clergyman), Jews, Muslims and Hindus. They will also record the fact that, in his hour of victory, Mandela forgave his enemies and his people's enemies. In a twist of fate worthy of Shakespeare, one of his white jail guards at Robben Island became his bodyguard.

Although there would inevitably be some mistakes and excesses when the ANC cadres went after military and apartheid targets, they avoided civilians. And they planted very few land mines, unlike insurrectionists in Angola and other parts of Africa, where minefields still abound and amputees are legion.

This moderation annoyed some of the ANC's more militant members, who were being lured to the more violent and racist Pan African Congress. But the ANC held firm because it was not inherently anti-white. When it won, it would thus inherit a country with a functional infrastructure rather than a wasteland.

In an interview 20 years ago with my brother Anthony Heard, then editor-in-chief of the liberal Cape Times, Mr. Mandela's comrade Oliver Tambo (then the exiled president of the ANC) made it plain that as a matter of policy the ANC never went after soft targets.

"No, we will not go for civilians as such," Mr. Tambo said. "We think that civilians will be hit as they are hit always. They were hit in Zimbabwe."

"In a crossfire situation?" my brother asked.

"Crossfire situation ... we will not go into cinemas and bars and places like that," Mr. Tambo replied. "We won't do that. But we will certainly be looking for military personnel, police and so on."

Because the ANC always held the line against undisciplined terror, the total number of innocent civilians killed or hurt overall was remarkably small considering the scale of the official terror launched by the white terrorist regime.

Tragedies did happen. Perhaps the worst episode of violence against civilians was on Church Street, Pretoria, when an ANC bomb aimed at military personnel went off prematurely and killed a number of civilians. But this was not in the same league as today's deliberate acts of terrorism aimed at innocents.

The philosophical basis of understanding violence, for those debating the use or misuse of the word "terrorist," should surely be *wederstandsrecht* -- the right to revolt. The German dissidents in the Second World War were very clear on the need for this: The question is whether a situation has gone so far beyond the pale that violence is the only solution. Much the same as it was justified for outsiders to take recent action in Afghanistan and Iraq, it was justified for the ANC to do so in South Africa.

Not a terrorist by any stretch

Graphic

Black & White Photo: Adrees Latif, Reuters; Former South African president Nelson Mandela acknowledges the cheering crowd at an AIDS conference in Bangkok in July.

Load-Date: September 25, 2004

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Palestinians sift through rubble of homes after tunnel raid

The Times (London)

October 14, 2003, Tuesday

Copyright 2003 Times Newspapers Limited

Section: Overseas news; 14

Length: 985 words

Byline: Stephen Farrell

Body

Refugees claim that the latest Israeli incident was a pretext to widen no man's land, reports Stephen Farrell

Balanced atop walls shattered by Israeli tanks and bulldozers, Palestinian refugees yesterday were stripping what remained of their jerry-built homes. They were fleeing after the largest raid into the isolated border town of Rafah for three years.

After a three-day Israeli incursion in which eight Palestinians died and more than eighty were wounded in the southern tip of Gaza, families tore out doors, windows, even asbestos ceilings, desperate to rescue property before nightfall and the feared return of Israeli forces to the Yibnah and Block J refugee camps.

As the Palestinians piled everything but the rubble on to donkey carts and lorries, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency estimated that 1,240 had been left homeless by the razing of up to 120 shelters and homes in the camps.

Israeli officials challenged the UN figures, but defended the raid, codenamed "Operation Root Canal", which began late on Thursday night and was intended to shut down tunnels allegedly used to smuggle arms to Palestinian militants.

Israel claims that **Hamas**, Islamic Jihad and al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades have long used secret tunnels through the sand beneath the Egyptian border to sneak in weapons used in attacks on Israeli towns. It claims that they have recently increased their operations, planning to bring in anti-aircraft missiles such as Stingers. Palestinians deny this, accusing the Israeli Government of using the tunnels as a pretext to demolish scores of houses and widen the no-man's-land of sand and rubble beside the huge steel wall along the Egyptian border.

Yesterday **women** tugged at children's clothing and birdcages buried beneath rubble as their husbands either worked to rescue what they could or gave up in despair.

Abu Saadi, 40, gestured to the 15 tiny refugee homes demolished in Yibnah -a camp named after the village near Tel Aviv from which many of its residents fled in 1948, when the state of Israel was created -and said that even if tunnels existed, this did not justify demolishing so many homes.

"This is the second time they have left Yibnah," he sighed, pointing to the families packing up their belongings. "We feel this is worse than what happened in 1948. Then at least they didn't use bulldozers, tanks or helicopters. They give us no warnings. They just knock down houses with people still inside them."

Palestinians sift through rubble of homes after tunnel raid

Pointing to the fist-size holes left by machinegun rounds in his children's bedroom wall, Adel Abu Fakhar said that he barely had time to rush his family out of the house before Israeli snipers opened fire from a school for the deaf, shooting at anything that moved.

The school itself was pockmarked with scores of bullets, a clear indication of the heavy gunfight that raged for hours between militants and Israeli soldiers, who fought at close quarters. The tracks of tanks and bulldozers wound a crazy paving route through the dense back streets.

Rafah, a town of 150,000, is the most isolated Palestinian population centre in the West Bank and Gaza. Days before the raid, Israel cut off Rafah's main road north. The only other routes involve perilous excursions along back roads, risking fire from Israeli snipers and tanks protecting Jewish settlements.

At Abu Yousef al-Najjar Hospital, the only medical facility in the town apart from a UN clinic, Ali Musa, the director, said that his 45-bed capacity had been swamped in the first hour of the incursion and, because of the road closure, he was unable to transfer patients north to the larger towns of Khan Younis and Gaza.

"This was the biggest raid I have seen in the last three years. We have had similar numbers of people killed in a few hours before, but this one lasted so long and such a huge number of homes were destroyed and people made homeless," Dr Musa said.

Amnesty International last night condemned the Israeli raid, describing it as a "war crime". "The repeated practice by the Israeli army of deliberate and wanton destruction of homes and civilian property is a grave violation of international human rights and humanitarian law ... and constitutes a war crime," Amnesty declared.

UN officials say that the incursion brings to 7,523 the number of Palestinians made homeless in Rafah since the beginning of the intifada, with the total for the whole of the Gaza Strip now 11,987. The agency's relief teams confirmed that 120 refugee shelters and homes were demolished or made uninhabitable, and a further 117 buildings damaged.

The Israeli Defence Forces last night held open the prospect of more raids, saying that it was determined to close down tunnels. Captain Jacob Dallal, a spokesman, dismissed the UN figures of 120 destroyed homes, saying that only 10 houses and 20 outbuildings were destroyed, the latter often abandoned shells providing cover for gunmen.

But challenged on the 60 destroyed buildings visited or seen by The Times which was unable to visit all the areas because of gunfire -Captain Dallal conceded that the total could be greater.

The operation had been a great success, he said: "We discovered and dismantled three tunnels. Usually to find even one tunnel takes much longer. We had to go into this densely populated area because that's where the tunnels are. When these houses are used either for tunnels or as cover for shooting, under international law they lose their status as private property."

Israel says it has found more than 30 tunnels used for smuggling arms this year, and 70 tunnels since September 2000.

The tunnels -one of which was seen by The Times on an earlier visit -are elaborate, dropping 12ft to 15ft beneath houses, then levelling out to run beneath the border. They often have trolleys attached to pulleys and cables, with telephones to contact the other side.

Gerald Kaufman, page 20 TIMESONLINE www.timesonline.co.uk

For latest news

Load-Date: October 14, 2003

Palestinians sift through rubble of homes after tunnel raid

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SEPTEMBER 11: FOLLY TAKEN TO A SCALE WE HAVEN'T SEEN SINCE WWII

The Independent (London)
September 11, 2003, Thursday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 6

Length: 944 words

Byline: ROBERT FISK

Body

WHEN THE attacks were launched against the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon two years ago today, who had ever heard of Fallujah or Hillah? When the Lebanese hijacker flew his plane into the ground in Pennsylvania, who would ever have believed that President George Bush would be announcing a "new front line in the war on terror" as his troops embarked on a hopeless campaign against the guerrillas of Iraq?

Who could ever have conceived of an American president calling the world to arms against "terrorism" in "Afghanistan, Iraq and Gaza"? Gaza? What do the miserable, crushed, cruelly imprisoned Palestinians of Gaza have to do with the international crimes against humanity in New York, Washington and Pennsylvania?

Nothing, of course. Neither does Iraq have anything to do with 11 September. Nor were there any weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, any al-Qa'ida links with Iraq, any 45-minute timeline for the deployment of chemical weapons nor was there any "liberation".

No, the attacks on 11 September have nothing to do with Iraq. Neither did 11 September change the world. President Bush cruelly manipulated the grief of the American people - and the sympathy of the rest of the world - to introduce a "world order" dreamed up by a clutch of fantasists advising the Secretary of Defence, Donald Rumsfeld.

The Iraqi "regime change", as we now know, was planned as part of a Perle- Wolfowitz campaign document to the would-be Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu years before Bush came to power. It beggars belief that Tony Blair should have signed up to this nonsense without realising that it was no more nor less than a project invented by a group of pro-Israeli American neo-conservatives and right-wing Christian fundamentalists.

But even now, we are fed more fantasy. Afghanistan - its American-paid warlords raping and murdering their enemies, its women still shrouded for the most part in their burqas, its opium production now back as the world's number one export market, and its people being killed at up to a hundred a week (five American troops were shot dead two weekends ago) is a "success", something which Messrs Bush and Rumsfeld still boast about. Iraq - a midden of guerrilla hatred and popular resentment - is also a "success". Yes, Bush wants \$ 87bn to keep Iraq running, he wants to go back to the same United Nations he condemned as a "talking shop" last year, he wants scores of foreign armies to go to Iraq to share the burdens of occupation - though not, of course, the decision-making, which must remain Washington's exclusive imperial preserve.

SEPTEMBER 11: FOLLY TAKEN TO A SCALE WE HAVEN'T SEEN SINCE WWII

What's more, the world is supposed to accept the insane notion that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict - the planet's last colonial war, although all mention of the illegal Jewish colonies in the West Bank and Gaza have been erased from the Middle East narrative in the American press - is part of the "war on terror", the cosmic clash of religious will that President Bush invented after 11 September. Could Israel's interests be better served by so infantile a gesture from Bush?

The vicious Palestinian suicide bombers and the grotesque implantation of Jews and Jews only in the colonies has now been set into this colossal struggle of "good" against "evil", in which even Ariel Sharon - named as "personally" responsible for the 1982 Sabra and Chatila massacre by Israel's own commission of inquiry - is "a man of peace", according to Mr Bush.

And new precedents are set without discussion. Washington kills the leadership of its enemies with impunity: it tries to kill Osama bin Laden and Mullah Omar and does kill Uday and Qusay Hussein and boasts of its prowess in "liquidating" the al-Qa'ida leadership from rocket-firing "drones". It tries to kill Saddam in Baghdad and slaughters 16 civilians and admits that the operation was "not risk-free". In Afghanistan, three men have now been murdered in the US interrogation centre at Bagram. We still don't know what really goes on in Guantanamo.

What do these precedents mean? I have a dark suspicion. From now on, our leaders, our politicians, our statesmen will be fair game too. If we go for the jugular, why shouldn't they? The killing of the UN's Sergio Vieira de Mello, was not, I think, a chance murder. Hamas's most recent statements - and since they've been added to the Bush circus of evil, we should take them seriously - are now, more than ever, personally threatening Mr Sharon. Why should we expect any other leader to be safe? If Yasser Arafat is driven into exile yet again, will there be any restraints left?

Of course, America's enemies were a grisly bunch. Saddam soiled his country with the mass graves of the innocents, Mullah Omar allowed his misogynist legions to terrify an entire society in Afghanistan. But in their absence, we have created banditry, rape, kidnapping, guerrilla war and anarchy. And all in the name of the dead of 11 September. The future of the Middle East - which is what 11 September was partly about, though we are not allowed to say so - has never looked bleaker or more bloody. The United States and Britain are trapped in a war of their own making, responsible for their own appalling predicament but responsible, too, for the lives of thousands of innocent human beings - cut to pieces by American bombs in Afghanistan and Iraq, shot down in the streets of Iraq by trigger-happy GIs.

As for "terror", our enemies are closing in on our armies in Iraq and our supposed allies in Baghdad and Afghanistan - even in Pakistan. We have done all this in the name of the dead of 11 September. Not since the Second World War have we seen folly on this scale. And it has scarcely begun.

Load-Date: September 11, 2003

NEWS SUMMARY

The New York Times
August 13, 2003 Wednesday
Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2003 The New York Times Company

Section: Section A; Column 3; Metropolitan Desk; Pg. 2

Length: 1043 words

Body

INTERNATIONAL A3-14

Suicide Bombings Kill 2 And Threaten Peace Plan

Two Palestinian teenagers blew themselves up in separate suicide bombings, killing two Israelis and inflicting the most serious blow yet to the fragile American-led plan to forge peace between Palestinians and Israelis. Al Aksa Martyrs Brigade claimed responsibility for the first attack, at a supermarket, and Hamas claimed responsibility for the second, at a bus stop. A1

Briton Seized on Missile Charge

A British arms dealer was arrested in Newark on charges that he tried to sell a Russian-made, surface-to-air missile, capable of bringing down a commercial airliner, to an American undercover agent posing as an operative for Al Qaeda, law enforcement officials said. A1

U.S. Weighs North Korea Deal

The Bush administration is considering conciliatory steps toward North Korea. In return, the government of Kim Jong Il would have to either fully disclose its weapons or allow international inspectors into the country, administration officials said. A3

Rebels Agree to Pull Back

One set of rebel troops signed an accord agreeing to open up the vital Free Port of Monrovia while another clashed anew with government soldiers in the southeast, the day after President Charles G. Taylor left the country and raised fresh hopes for peace. The day's developments raised the specter of fighting between the two rebel factions, now that their common enemy has departed. A8

Serbia Proposes Kosovo Plan

Serbia rejected calls for the independence of the United Nations administered province of Kosovo, instead adopting a draft document proposing substantial autonomy, but within the federation of Serbia and Montenegro. A4

Japan Apologizes to China

Japan apologized to China after acknowledging that chemical weapons left in northeastern China by Japanese troops at the end of World War II caused 36 people to get sick early this month. A5

NEWS SUMMARY

NATIONAL A16-22

California Governor Gains A New Adviser: Bill Clinton

Bill Clinton has become one of the key strategic advisers to Gray Davis, the California governor facing a recall election Oct. 7, associates of both men say. A1

DeLay Presses Justice Dept.

House Majority Leader Tom DeLay's office pressed the Justice Department in May to determine whether federal officials had the authority to intervene in a legislative redistricting standoff in Texas, but senior officials dismissed the idea as inappropriate. A16

Cuban-Americans Warn Bush

Thirteen Republican state legislators, including 10 Cuban-Americans, sent President Bush a pointed letter urging that if he did not make "substantial progress" toward fulfilling four Cuban-American demands, "we fear the historic and intense support from Cuban-American voters for Republican federal candidates will be jeopardized." A16

Atlantans Split on Airport Name

A tempest is brewing in Atlanta over a proposal to rename the city airport, the world's busiest, for Maynard H. Jackson, the late three-term mayor who helped expand it. A20

Maps Faulted for Mine Accident

Federal safety investigators said that the accident that flooded the Quecreek mine in Pennsylvania last summer could have been avoided if the mining companies had realized they were using old maps. A22

Military Tribunals Scrutinized

The American Bar Association called on Congress and the White House to ensure that all defendants before military tribunals have adequate access to civilian lawyers. A18

SCIENCE/HEALTH

Advice on Vaccine Program

A panel of scientists said that the focus of the nation's smallpox preparedness program should move away from vaccinations and toward measures to improve coordination and quicken response time. A20

NEW YORK/REGION B1-8

Fraud Ring Uncovered, Causing 567 Indictments

Law-enforcement officials said they had cracked a fraud ring that used Russian immigrants to stage thousands of car accidents and then employed its own network of doctors, acupuncture therapists and fake medical clinics to bilk an insurance company out of \$48 million. A1

Suburb Tries to Limit Children

Lopatcong Township of New Jersey defended a new ordinance that would keep down the number of families moving in. The courts will decide whether the restriction, limiting new multifamily housing units to two bedrooms, crosses a fine line between zoning meant to slow galloping development and zoning meant to keep out families with children. A1

EDUCATION B7

SPORTS D1-7

NEWS SUMMARY

ARTS E1-8

Diversifying Capitol Art

Senator Christopher J. Dodd, a Connecticut Democrat and member of the Senate Commission on Art, is seeking to increase the number of images of women and members of minorities in the corridors of the United States Capitol building. E1

OBITUARIES C12

DINING F1-8

The Julie/Julia Project

Julia Powell is close to completing what maybe only Julia Child has done, cook all 524 recipes in the 1961 classic, "Mastering the Art of French Cooking." Ms. Powell has kept an increasingly popular Web log of her progress on Salon. F1

BUSINESS DAY C1-11

No Interest Rate Change

The Federal Reserve left its key overnight interest rate unchanged at 1 percent as expected, but it cheered financial markets by strongly suggesting that it would not raise interest rates until at least next year. C1

Unions Look to Add Leverage

Organized labor officials are planning a campaign to collect the names of people willing to switch their service to AT&T, raising the stakes in their negotiations with Verizon. C1

Merrill Rehires Executive

Merrill Lynch rehired Robert J. McCann as a vice chairman overseeing its brokerage and money-management operations. C1

'Worm' Attacks Computers

A computer program aimed at recent versions of the Microsoft Windows operating system rapidly spread through the Internet, infecting tens of thousands of home computers and corporate networks. C1

Change in Lawyers' Code

The American Bar Association amended its model code of conduct to allow a lawyer advising a company to disclose client confidences. C4

Business Digest C1

World Business W1

EDITORIAL A24-25

Editorials: A get-along voice at the E.P.A.; Moscow machinations; Judge Roy Moore's lawless battle; windfall publicity for Al Franken's book.

Columns: Thomas L. Friedman, Maureen Dowd.

Crossword E8

TV Listings E7

NEWS SUMMARY

Public Lives B2
Weather D8

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Graphic

Photo

Load-Date: August 13, 2003

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***Groups think twice before taking checks;
Rules for a federal fundraising drive anger some nonprofits: They must
show they have no terrorist ties.***

Star Tribune (Minneapolis, MN)

August 16, 2004, Monday, Metro Edition

Copyright 2004 Star Tribune

Section: NEWS; Pg. 1B

Length: 1072 words

Byline: Robert Franklin; Staff Writer

Body

These are the names - 140-plus pages of them - that are supposed to strike terror into the hearts of America's charities.

Nonprofit groups that want to participate in the Combined Federal Campaign, the big federal employee fundraising drive, have been ordered to certify that they don't employ anyone on federal government terrorism-related lists and don't give money to charities suspected of supporting terrorism.

It's an order that has raised controversy nationally and has created an additional administrative burden for charities.

While there haven't been any Minnesota nonprofits firing employees or dropping out of the drive because of the requirement, the executive director of the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits said the list feels "like McCarthyism."

"It should be challenged in court," said Jon Pratt, the executive director. "It's a laudable goal, but this is a poor way to go about it. It's really hard to identify who is who, there are tons of aliases, and the implication is that you should be careful if you hire people with names like these names.

"If there are known people who are conspiring to harm this country, clearly we need to act against them. ... They should be arrested."

The Combined Federal Campaign is a fairly big deal in Minnesota, giving federal employees about 1,800 choices for charitable donations. It raised about \$950,000 in the seven-county Twin Cities area last year (\$250 million nationally).

This year, it covers 62 Minnesota counties with more than 29,000 federal employees as diverse as postal workers (more than three-eighths of the total), as well as those who work in the military, Veterans Administration hospitals, agriculture, Indian affairs, and with fish and wildlife.

Suspicious giving

Since Sept. 11, the federal government has tried to halt U.S. charitable contributions funneled to terrorist causes. A Muslim charity and seven of its senior officers were charged last month with illegally funneling millions of

Groups think twice before taking checks; Rules for a federal fundraising drive anger some nonprofits: They must show they have no terrorist ties.

dollars to support Hamas, a Palestinian terrorist organization. In 2001, President Bush froze assets of an Islamic group that had a fundraising arm in the Twin Cities and presented itself as a charity.

However, the American Civil Liberties Union recently dropped out of the federal charity campaign rather than sign the antiterrorist disclaimer. Last week, it announced a coalition of 15 groups, including Amnesty International, the National Women's Law Center and the Sierra Club, fighting the requirement.

The list watch "has created a climate of fear and intimidation that threatens the health and well-being of all nonprofits, the people who depend on them and, indeed, the nation as a whole," Anthony Romero, ACLU executive director, said in a statement.

A spokesman for the federal Office of Personnel Management, which oversees the campaign nationally, could not be reached for comment. However, the agency told other officials that it now anticipates changes in its list of eligible national charities.

In a 2001 executive order, President Bush declared a national emergency to impose sanctions on certain charities "because of the pervasiveness and expansiveness of the financial foundation of foreign terrorists."

Frustration and anger

Pratt said he has gotten inquiries from nonprofits about the regulation. However, D.J. Jensen, who manages the federal campaign for most of Minnesota, said that he hasn't gotten any calls and that no local charities have been rejected.

The hundreds of nonprofits - ranging from the United Way to small, grass-roots groups - that are seeking support must check a box on their applications saying they do not knowingly employ individuals or give money to groups on the terrorist lists.

"We essentially take them at their word," Jensen said. "We haven't been poring over documents and being suspicious of the charities that apply."

But the charities have been poring over documents, namely the three terrorist lists, the largest of which is from the Treasury Department and includes 140 pages of names, aliases, home cities and titles in small print, three columns to a page.

The ACLU, which estimated it would lose \$500,000 by dropping out of the campaign, said the lists are prone to error, compiled without individuals' knowledge and not subject to appeal. One name on the list, Julio Ramirez, fits hundreds of people across the nation, it said.

Byron Laher, director of public affairs for the Greater Twin Cities United Way, said the organization would prefer not to go through pages and pages of lists "every time we hire a new employee." The United Way already does a criminal background check on each new employee, he said, and "I suspect the likelihood [of a terrorist] applying for a job here and using their real name is not real high."

Charities that receive money from the United Way do not have to screen employees for the federal campaign - so far, Laher said.

Pratt said perusing the lists constitutes one of a raft of regulations, existing or proposed, that charities have to cope with when there's more pressure for them to reduce administrative expenses.

"Interestingly, in this case, it's not actually government money" that's involved, he said. "These are charitable contributions from people who happen to be government employees."

Librarian Sandy Date contributed research for this article.

Groups think twice before taking checks; Rules for a federal fundraising drive anger some nonprofits: They must show they have no terrorist ties.

Robert Franklin is at rfranklin@startribune.com.

MORE INFORMATION

- On the Combined Federal Campaign: <http://www.opm.gov/cfc/index.asp>
- On terrorism-related lists: <http://www.opm.gov/cfc/opmmemos/2003/list.asp>
- On the ACLU's positions: <http://www.aclu.org>. Then follow links to the issue. What it is: Charitable drive for federal employees and military personnel, soliciting from 4 million nationally and, under the local drive, an estimated 29,000 in 62 Minnesota counties.

What it does: Raised \$250 million last year for hundreds of charities nationally and about \$950,000 in the Twin Cities area. The local drive is run by the Community Solutions Fund, a grass-roots and social-justice federation with headquarters in St. Paul.

The issue: Participating charities must certify that they haven't hired anyone on three federal government terrorism-related lists or given money to any group on the lists. Some groups, including the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), have objected.

Load-Date: August 17, 2004

Hotbed of moderation: Seat of Islamic learning represents silent majority of Muslims

Times Colonist (Victoria, British Columbia)

July 10, 2004 Saturday Final Edition

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Section: Religion; Pg. D7; News

Length: 1124 words

Byline: Donna Bryson

Dateline: CAIRO, Egypt

Body

CAIRO, Egypt -- Al-Azhar's grand sheik, one of Islam's most influential figures, is unequivocal: his faith stands for peace and justice. But the definitions seem up for debate at his historic university and mosque and beyond in these troubled times for Muslims.

Since the Sept. 11 attacks focused attention on Islamic extremism, Grand Sheik Mohammed Sayed Tantawi -- who perhaps more than any other leader embodies moderate, official Islam -- has often condemned terrorism and al-Qaida. He repeated his denunciations in a rare interview, but also called "occupying others' lands" -- code for Israel in Palestinian territory, but also relevant in connection with the United States in Iraq -- the "ugliest kind of terrorism." Associated Press

The mixed signals Tantawi sends can be confusing -- reflecting the crosscurrents and political mood among mainstream Muslims.

At a time when Osama bin Laden is capturing imaginations with his calls on Muslims to strike the West, moderate Islamic thinkers say Al-Azhar should be helping Muslims move beyond rhetoric and find a peaceful way forward.

But Al-Azhar, confident in its hold on the silent majority, seems to see little need to directly debate the vocal minority of extremist ideologues.

Among the University of Al-Azhar's 300,000 male and **female** students, a sense of grievance is unmistakable.

"There is a war on Islam," declares Ahmed Hussein, a third-year accounting student. The 22-year-old accuses the United States of targeting Muslims in Iraq, of bias toward Israel and against Arabs in the Palestinian territories, and of labelling anyone who fights back a terrorist.

Tantawi, appointed grand sheik by the Egyptian president in 1996, rejects the idea that conflict between Islam and the West is inevitable, saying his institution works to spread universal ideas of "peace, justice and communication and co-operation between all the peoples of the world."

Fahmi Howeidi, a Cairo-based writer on Islamic affairs, said intellectuals and hardline Muslims believe Al-Azhar has lost its independence because of its alliance with the Egyptian government. That has undermined Al-Azhar's authority, creating a vacuum, he said.

Hotbed of moderation: Seat of Islamic learning represents silent majority of Muslims

"In this vacuum, the extremists found a good opportunity to try to propagate their views and to try to lead the Muslim world," Howeidi said.

Radwan Masmoudi, director of the Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy, a Washington think tank, said Al-Azhar has the reach and prestige to be a leader in discussions about Islam and modernity, but has not been "innovative enough or forward-thinking enough."

"It's vital for the Muslim (community) and for Islam that we have a modern interpretation of Islam and that that modern interpretation of Islam is seen as genuine, coming from within Islam, not from outside, not from the West," Masmoudi said.

Old institutions can be slow to change. The university grew out of groups of scholars who discussed and debated around the pillars of Al-Azhar Mosque, where prayers were first held in 972. The main university campus's modern, dust-coloured concrete buildings sit on reclaimed desert in a newer part of Cairo, a short drive from the ancient mosque.

Azharis -- "men of Al-Azhar" -- say that with the institution's international prominence and its history, their vision of Islam is sure to prevail over extremism. Al-Azhar, after all, is no upstart like Yemen's nine-year-old Iman University, regarded as a haven for radicals, or the one-room madrassas of Pakistan and Afghanistan that produced the Taliban.

Asef Bayat, director of the Dutch-based International Institute for the Study of Islam in the Modern World, said the Azharis may have a point. For many, particularly in Egypt, Al-Azhar remains a main source, if not the main source, of religious guidance and knowledge, Bayat said.

As angry as he is at what he sees as the West's assault on his faith, Hussein -- beardless and sporting chic eyewear -- is focused on a middle class future, not taking up arms against the West.

"The thing I have learned here at Al-Azhar is that if I concentrate on God, I will be successful," he said. "If you really know God, you will be a really successful doctor or teacher or accountant."

It was seen as an aberration when five Russians studying at Al-Azhar were arrested late last year on suspicion of belonging to a radical Muslim group that advocates violence.

Bayat said a minority of fundamentalists remain at Al-Azhar and its graduates may go forth to preach extreme views. But he said Tantawi has largely succeeded at suppressing the influence of those who argue, for example, that Al-Azhar should be actively working to implement strict Islamic law, not just educating pious accountants.

"You shall have always in any assembly one or two who are extreme," said Ali El Samman, an adviser to Tantawi. "We are one billion," El Samman added, referring to the number of Muslims in the world. "If you imagine Al-Azhar can control all that, that's difficult."

Tantawi has reached out to other faiths, angering extremists who have said he should be stripped of his position for meeting with Jewish rabbis.

He counts among Al-Azhar's most important activities formal exchanges with Roman Catholic, Protestant and Jewish leaders started in 1998 through his Permanent Committee for Dialogue with the Monotheistic Religions.

"Al-Azhar is an institution of dialogue, and dialogue has become the magic word in international relations," particularly since the Sept. 11 attacks, said El Samman.

Tantawi is given to pausing before responding to questions, seeming to weigh each syllable of his answers. His comments are cited as religious rulings, or fatwas, by followers of the main Sunni branch of Islam around the world.

But he is no Pope. Islam has no such rigid hierarchy. Tantawi's authority rests only on his power to persuade and on Al-Azhar's prestige. Any Muslim who disagrees with him is free to seek another fatwa elsewhere.

Hotbed of moderation: Seat of Islamic learning represents silent majority of Muslims

Tantawi's critics can be vocal, as when he backed a French ban on Islamic head scarves and other conspicuous religious symbols from French secular schools. Tantawi asked Muslim women in France to comply, saying minorities living in the West should respect local laws and customs.

The French law had sparked protests across the Islamic world, including at Al-Azhar. Some accused Tantawi of speaking not out of religious conviction, but at the behest of an Egyptian government hoping to defuse tensions.

Its close ties to the government rob Al-Azhar of credibility in the eyes of militants who say Egyptian and other Arab governments should be toppled and replaced with theocracies. Al-Azhar gets funding and support from the government, but says that doesn't affect its independence.

Graphic

Photo: Mohamad Al-Sehety, Associated Press; Egyptian worshippers say a prayer for Hamas founder Sheik Ahmed Yassin after midday prayers at al-Azhar mosque in Cairo last March.

Load-Date: July 10, 2004

End of Document

Letters from readers

Star Tribune (Minneapolis, MN)

June 15, 2003, Sunday, Metro Edition

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Section: NEWS; OP EX; Pg. 4AA

Length: 990 words

Body

Where's their pain?

At the beginning of the past legislative session, there was much talk of sharing the pain; the idea was that if we each took a little hit, we could all get through the budget shortfall.

Now the session is over, and the DFL has been going around describing the share of the pain allotted to the poor, the elderly, students _ whether K-12 or postsecondary _ to the ill, the imprisoned, to historical societies, parks and the arts, to transportation, etc.

Maybe the Republicans could describe the pain the session inflicted on the rich and powerful.

John Sherman, Moorhead, Minn.

Bring on the cameras

Oh, how I wish that "1984" had never been written! I am growing weary of the trite references to the "chilling" realizations of what the future holds for us.

From Star Tribune columnist Doug Grow's viewpoint, the book has given him scads of mileage. I think cameras downtown are great, and if I want to "scratch" myself or pick my nose, I will do so surreptitiously. What I won't do is urinate on the walkways' walls, panhandle, molest women and children, hassle people or commit a multitude of other criminal acts because I will know that I am being watched and could be identified later.

It is no different from having a police officer or security guard stationed every 100 feet except it is a whole lot cheaper and, to me, far less intrusive. So the next time I'm in downtown Minneapolis, I will be sure to wave to any cameras, smile and say, "Have a nice day, folks."

Mike Auspos, Aitkin, Minn.

Wanted: a watchdog

Thanks for printing Susan Lenfestey's June 12 commentary on the role of the press in the weapons of mass destruction deception.

Let me add that it was also the press _ the New York Times with the Pentagon Papers and the Washington Post with Watergate _ that finally forced the nation to confront deceptions by the Johnson and Nixon administrations. It is not too late for the press to take an active role in exposing this administration's deceptive practices.

Letters from readers

Unless the press takes an active role in rooting out these perversions, they will go unchallenged _ particularly now, when, for all practical purposes, we have a one-party system of government. And the public proves with every poll that it is perfectly willing to be deceived.

One truly does fear that media consolidation will eliminate the press' watchdog role _ and with it, our future as a free people.

Robert Veitch, Minneapolis.

Bush's credibility gap

President Bush had a hard enough time convincing the other nations of the world of the threat of Saddam Hussein. If no weapons of mass destruction are found in Iraq, it will be even harder to gain support for future military attacks.

It will be like the boy who cried wolf. The next time Bush warns the world that a country is dangerous, no one will believe him.

Jerry T. Johnson, Bloomington.

Try reading the book

A June 12 letter writer said that he went to buy Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton's new book but couldn't find it in the "new fiction" section.

It's amazing how someone can proclaim a book fiction without having read it. But conservatives seem comfortable simply parroting the slogans, sound bites, and criticisms of Newt Gingrich, Rush Limbaugh and Jerry Falwell rather than having the fairness and intellectual honesty to think for themselves.

Tom Hammond, Woodbury.

Thought it was a gun shop

I was really amused by the June 12 letter about Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton's new book. A Republican in a bookstore? Good one!

Doug Stern, Wanda, Minn.

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Peck's early honor

Our losses on June 12 of Gregory Peck and David Brinkley were poignant. They remind me of this:

We moved to Scottsdale with our three kids in the late 1950s, and lived there until the mid-'60s, and the town went in that brief period from what was literally a tiny grid of dirt roads to a destination.

As the town strived to become more, it opened a homegrown zoo. Among the zoo's first residents were two wild desert pigs that are known (depending on your language preference) as both peccary and javelina.

A naming contest for the pair yielded this splendid result: Gregory Peccary and Olivia de Javelina.

Ray Warner, Edina.

A lawbreaking board

The Hennepin County Board willfully violated the laws of Minnesota regarding the new conceal-carry law ("Hennepin board bans guns at county sites," June 11).

Letters from readers

The board's duty is not to change or otherwise interpret state law.

Marianne Stebbins Beck,

Excelsior.

It's Abbas' turn

During the Middle East summit in Aqaba, Israel pledged to take action as a tangible expression of its commitment to moving the road map forward. In fact, on June 9 Israel began dismantling 14 illegal settlement outposts as promised.

Palestinian Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas also made a promise to stop terrorism. His strategy, to talk to the terrorists rather than crack down on them, clearly is not working.

Israelis can't afford any more talk. It is time for Abbas to take definitive action to stop **Hamas** and other terror groups.

The Palestinian Authority claims that it can't fight terrorists because its security services were decimated by the Israeli Army. But to quote an old proverb, "It is better to have tried something and failed than it is to have tried nothing and succeeded."

For the sake of Israelis and Palestinians, Abbas must stop the terror!

Harlan Brand, Minneapolis.

Bittersweet birthday

For many years, Kermit Pietz has delivered the Star Tribune for most of Golden Valley. Each weekday morning at exactly 4:17, I could hear a gentle thump as the paper arrived, accurately centered on my doorstep.

And now, because of a foolish promise to his wife that he would quit on his 80th birthday, my paper was delivered today at 6:30 by mere mortals. Another step on the downward slide of civilized life.

Happy birthday, Kermit.

Pat Moore, Golden Valley.

Load-Date: June 17, 2003

Letters from readers

Star Tribune (Minneapolis, MN)

March 27, 2004, Saturday, Metro Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 26A

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Body

Supporting McLeod

As an obstetrician who has referred hundreds of moms and new babies to Dr. James McLeod's care, I am astonished by the recent revelation of criminal charges against him ("Pediatrician faces charges of sex abuse," March 23).

I can truthfully say, in 30 years of medical practice, I have not had a single patient give me negative feedback regarding McLeod's medical skills or his behavior. Quite the opposite, my patients universally have found him to be a wonderful pediatrician and a wonderful man.

I sincerely hope the accusations are unfounded. Unfortunately, even if he is proven innocent, the negative publicity generated by the press reports will be detrimental to his practice. The damage has already been done.

Dr. Art Bearon, Minneapolis.

James McLeod has been my son's pediatrician for nine years. During all those years, he has maintained the highest medical standards. It is inconceivable that he could have done what he has been accused of doing.

Erika Walker, Minneapolis.

Twisted priorities

With millions of Americans unemployed and underemployed, 43 million without health insurance and terrorists attacking U.S. citizens, all Sen. Michele Bachmann and Rep. Mary Liz Holberg do is push their own religious agenda.

Now that is compassionate conservatism.

Michael LaFave, Minneapolis.

Lucky there was no vote

How ironic that the two leaders of the legislative effort for a constitutional amendment to ban gay marriages are women.

I wonder if Sen. Michele Bachmann and Rep. Mary Liz Holberg have considered where they would be today if there had been a referendum on women's suffrage.

Letters from readers

They would not be elected officials. They certainly would not be leading an effort to deny civil rights to people. They would not even be able to vote on such an issue should it come to the public for a vote.

Jay Jaffee, Minneapolis.

Learning about love

Some folks may think that a rally to support the right of same-sex marriage is walking a line of extremism. There is nothing extreme about wanting the same rights to love, and be loved in return. To take seriously fidelity to one's partner and life commitment until the very end, even when sickness and death are painful.

I was lucky enough to have two parents who stuck it out for 53 years of good times and tough. While my mother was slowly dying of cancer, my father, even though he was emotionally and physically exhausted, never let go of his devoted love for her, not even after she passed.

Whether we are straight or not, our lives are God-given and we can all learn from each other about love. The voices at the rally were clear: Don't judge love, even if it's different from your own.

Karen Regan, Minneapolis.

And your point is?

A March 26 letter states that the reason "the gays" are pushing for marriage is because we all want legal and economic privileges associated with marriage ("Not normal").

Duh! How would the letter writer feel if his spouse were in the hospital and he could not see her because they weren't recognized as a couple? If she needed help from an illness, he could not take off work because his employer did not consider them "married."

Paul Perea, St. Paul.

An even greater enemy

Lost in all the talk about the assassination of Sheik Ahmed Yassin is the fact that **Hamas** has seriously upped the ante.

An attack last week, which killed 10 people, was aimed at blowing up two chemical tanks. If the attackers had reached their target, who knows how many hundreds or thousands would have been killed in a chemical cloud?

Israel has an obligation to its citizens to stop these attacks.

Lisa K. Forstein, Golden Valley.

McManus and Ngo

I want to publicly commend the new Minneapolis Police Chief William McManus for his leadership and his continued investigation of the Duy Ngo case.

He showed true leadership by visiting Ngo on his first day in office, showing his priority for his officers. He also began reviewing the case when he was named a finalist for chief. He showed leadership and integrity by calling a press conference to clear Ngo's name from a malicious rumor and to support him returning to work.

Dixie Lee Riley, Brooklyn Park.

Now that's service

I e-filed my tax return on Feb. 28. The Minnesota Department of Revenue deposited my refund on March 2. Great job, MnDOR.

Letters from readers

John Berryhill, Wayzata.

Where was Clinton?

So the Bush administration "sat on its hands for eight months" prior to the Sept. 11 attacks ("Clarke's lament / That Bush downplayed terror," March 25). The assertion that George W. Bush could have prevented the tragedy ignores a critical fact: Most of the preparation for Sept. 11 occurred before he was sworn in.

Mark Griffin, White Bear Lake.

All of your blather on the alleged failures of the Bush administration in preventing the attacks of 9/11 doesn't place the blame squarely where it belongs: on the Clinton administration for its failure, after eight years and numerous attacks, to take any meaningful action whatsoever.

Edward M. Harris, Jr., Eagan.

No perjury on TV

Why is National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice on all of the talk shows but is unavailable to testify publicly under oath to the 9/11 Commission? She won't go to jail for lying on TV.

Penny Van Kampen, Edina.

A tale of two witnesses

On March 24, Richard Clarke testified, under oath in public, before the 9/11 commission. On March 25, Condoleezza Rice requested to return to the 9/11 commission to rebut his testimony, but behind closed doors and not under oath. What is wrong with this picture?

Al Raney, New Brighton.

Sliming Clarke

Republican partisans on the 9/11 commission say former White House counterterrorism chief and fellow Republican Richard Clarke is dishonestly portraying those in the Bush administration as arrogant know-it-alls who disregarded important security information passed to it from the Clinton administration.

The Republicans, who have fought tenaciously to hamper the commission's work, want us to believe that Clarke is just a deceitful, dishonest former employee out for personal gain. In other words, they are making their standard all-out personal attack, having failed in their efforts to bury the commission's investigation by stonewalling and legal maneuvering.

Joe Zweber, Northfield, Minn.

Assaulted by the system

The 19-year-old woman accusing Kobe Bryant of sexual assault has endured delays in setting a trial date, death threats and three hours of testimony detailing her sex life, while Bryant goes on with life as usual. And people wonder why victims of violent crimes often don't come forward.

Leigh Thomas, Shoreview.

Load-Date: March 29, 2004

Putting faith in the future

The Weekend Australian

April 3, 2004 Saturday All-round Country Edition

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Section: FEATURES-TYPE- FEATURE-COLUMN- INQUIRER; Pg. 29

Length: 1159 words

Byline: Sian Powell

Body

When Australia's giant neighbour Indonesia votes next week, the Islamic parties will be fearing a loss of support in a blow to pro-Osama bin Laden radicals. Jakarta correspondent Sian Powell reports from Solo, central Java

The overlap between extremist Indonesian Muslims who have been accused (and convicted) of terrorism and the hardline Islamic parties is unsettling

THE banner stretched across a busy, muddy lane in Solo, central Java, tells good Muslims exactly what to do in Monday's national elections. It's a fatwa, or edict, from the terrorist-linked preacher Abu Bakar Bashir, whose notorious Ngruki school is just around the corner.

Decorated with a symbol of the conservative Prosperous Justice Party, the banner's words command: "It's obligatory to ensure the victory of Islamic parties which have been proved sincere in the struggle for sharia Islam." MATP

Plastered on nearby walls are posters with Bashir's "declaration from jail", exhorting Muslims to vote for sharia Islamic parties and forbidding them to give the "smallest opportunity" to anyone else.

Illustrated with photos of the cleric and his associate, the radical (and recently freed) preacher Habib Rizieq Shihab, the Brigade Hizbullah posters feature silhouettes of armed and helmeted warriors.

Radical Islam in Indonesia has been dangerously squeezed. A simmering frustration with the perceived oppression of Muslims across the world has galvanised a solid proportion of the electorate, but the movement's adherence to the tenets of sharia law (which include whipping and hand-lobbing) and its connection with terrorism have alienated many others.

The tide of overlap between the extremist Indonesian Muslims who have been accused (and convicted) of terrorism and the hardline Islamic parties is unsettling.

Two prominent Islamic party leaders visited Bashir in prison; the Solo headquarters of Justice Minister Yusril Izha Mahendra's Crescent Star Party (PBB) sports a large poster of bin Laden on the wall; and one of Bashir's chief lawyers, Mahendradatta, is general-secretary of the Islamic Reformation Star Party.

Understanding the disfavour trailing the Bali and Jakarta Marriott hotel bombings, some of the Islamic political leaders have sought to tone down the rhetoric.

Putting faith in the future

Islamic politicians have looked nervously north to Malaysia, where the conservative Islamic party PAS was trounced two weeks ago. Indonesian Vice-President Hamzah Haz, leader of the once-strictly Islamic United Development Party (PPP), has declared that Indonesia doesn't need to become an Islamic state. Other Islamic party leaders, including Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) leader Hidayat Nurwahid, have sounded wobbly on the need to implement sharia law.

It's different out in the sticks. Solo is a city known for its extremes of permissiveness and piety, where women can be seen peering through the slit in their full Islamic chador veils and prostitutes stand openly on the streets. In Solo, posters of bin Laden are easy to find.

In the PBB office in central Solo, political candidate Roko Patriajati says Indonesia's problems come mainly from a lax morality. More religious education is needed, the 22-year-old says, to overcome the enormous hurdles the nation faces.

Asked about the bin Laden poster, he smiles. "Osama bin Laden is a good man," he says. "He raised the flag to fight against violence; it's because the US keeps oppressing Muslims." Patriajati's fellow candidate, Mohammad Juwari, agrees. "If we fight for Indonesia, automatically we will fight for the people of Islam," he says.

Stickers on the wall reflect the mood: "Don't be frightened of America; Allah will protect us."

In the 1999 election, the Islamic parties won about 14 per cent of the vote from an electorate that is about 88 per cent Muslim. It was a huge plunge from the 42 per cent in 1955, the last comparably free election. Yet despite the shortage of support, in 1999 Islamic parties felt they had been freed from the oppressive anti-religious atmosphere of the Suharto years and they saw good things on the horizon.

Their hopes could well come to nought. Along with many other political analysts, University of Indonesia politics expert Arbi Sanit doesn't expect the radicals to improve their support this time around. "There is nothing significant to increase their vote," he says. "There is no change and nothing new on offer from the parties."

Sanit notes that no one is really spruiking sharia law or the Jakarta charter (an addition to the constitution that would officially make Indonesia an Islamic nation).

An Australia-funded Centre for Democratic Institutions report released last month concluded that the new election rules could shift support from the Islamic parties (especially the smaller ones) to the two secular giants, the Golkar party and President Megawati Sukarnoputri's Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P). "The longer-term effect might even be to increase the splintering of an already fragmented political Islam in Indonesia," the report says.

Conservative Muslims shrug off such pessimism. Supporters of the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS), clad in white, roar around Solo in a convoy of motorbikes and trucks. More than 100,000 supporters turned up at a giant Jakarta rally this week and the party is likely to at least double the 1.4 per cent of the vote it got in 1999.

Haryanto, who heads the public policy department of the Solo PKS, says he expects a solid increase in support, regardless of whether sharia is a policy platform. "The PKS wants to show that Islam is part of politics," he says. "Many of our laws are adopted from sharia."

Yet the central party leaders have been concentrating on the PKS's reputation as a clean party, one that will work to rid Indonesia of corruption, rather than focusing on religion.

Almost drowned out by the noise of raucous PDI-P supporters revving their bikes up and down the street, Haryanto says he is confident about the future.

Certainly there is a lot of pro-Islamic feeling in the district. A rally in Solo last week to mourn the killing of Palestinian Hamas leader Sheikh Ahmed Yassin drew thousands, perhaps tens of thousands, bearing placards about the death of a hero.

Putting faith in the future

At the central mosque in Solo, a hundreds-strong crowd from the Majelis Tafsir al-Qoran (Council of Koran Explanations) waits to rally for whichever Muslim party needs them.

"Our activity is to support Islam," says Achmadi. His fellow riders wait patiently, ready to put on whichever T-shirt is required.

There is a reservoir of Islamic feeling waiting to be tapped, Haryanto says. "I think in Indonesia the development of Islamic parties will increase," he explains, shrugging off the Malaysian disaster. "In Malaysia, it's not as democratic as Indonesia."

These Solo Muslims are pragmatic. The city is a PDI-P stronghold, held by the party of the bull, and they all concede it will still be PDI-P red after the election. But perhaps not quite so red.

Load-Date: April 2, 2004

End of Document

At a time of division, turbulence in France ;
Globalist

The International Herald Tribune

April 10, 2004 Saturday

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Length: 1006 words

Byline: Roger Cohen

Dateline: TOULON, France

Body

The night after Israeli forces killed the spiritual leader of ***Hamas***, Sheik Ahmed Yassin, a little incident occurred in this southern French town where the sea glitters and the sun glows but all is not quite as tranquil as it appears.

Traces of the incident remain: the broken glass, blackened walls, stricken plants and boarded-up window at the Jewish community center and synagogue in the middle of town. On the night of March 22, part of the building was set on fire after one assailant, or several, used iron scaffolding to smash a window and toss inflammable liquid inside.

Nobody was hurt. The damage, at least physical, will soon be repaired. Life has returned to its seductive rhythms on the Cote d'Azur. The killing of Sheik Yassin will no doubt feed Palestinian anger for many years; the little fire in Toulon may soon be forgotten by almost everyone.

International Herald Tribune

Still, the incident was serious enough for President Jacques Chirac to send a letter, dated March 23, to the president of the local Jewish community, Yves Haddad, expressing his "great sadness and emotion" at "an odious act that offends the Republic." He added: "You can count on the determination and firmness of my government, which will not allow anti-Semitism, racism or xenophobia to install themselves in France."

Jean-Pierre Raffarin, the prime minister, followed up with his own letter calling the attack "intolerable" and saying that instructions had immediately been given for the assailants to be brought to justice.

But more than two weeks after those strong words, nobody has been arrested. A police spokesman says every avenue is being examined, "from young Arabs to the extreme right." The attack, similar to 33 incidents at synagogues and Jewish schools in France last year, remains a mystery.

The most commonly heard theory in Toulon is that the arson was the work of youths from the town's large Muslim community who were enraged by the killing of Sheik Yassin. As the European Union noted in a report last month on anti-Semitism, "It seems clear that The Middle East conflict has a negative impact on the lives of the Jewish communities" in Europe.

But of course, until an arrest is made, the notion that the arson was another illustration of the growing spillover into Europe of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict will remain no more than a theory. The town is also a stronghold of the

At a time of division, turbulence in France ; Globalist

National Front, whose own anti-Semitic prejudices are well known. What is clear is that the unsolved crime has added to a climate of unease.

"Anti-Israeli feeling in France, which is virulent, is increasingly a cover for anti-Semitism, with the result that Jews here have not been in such a bad situation for a long time," said Haddad, a lawyer.

There is some evidence for that view. A week ago, Raffarin received the annual report of a prominent French human rights group, which described the trend in anti-Semitic acts as "grave." It noted that the number of anti-Semitic incidents had fallen to 588 in 2003 from 932, but now accounted for almost three-quarters of all racist acts in France, up from 60 percent in 2002.

It is important to avoid hyperbole. France's large and venerable Jewish community, deeply embedded in national life, is not under assault; prejudice, even outright racism, toward Muslims remains widespread. But in a time of doubt and division -- between Palestinians and Israelis, Arabs and Jews, Iraqis and Americans, Islam and the West -- France has not remained immune to the turbulent currents from the Middle East and America's post-9/11 wars in the Islamic world.

Indeed, as the home of the largest Jewish community in Western Europe and four to five million Muslims, the country has become a nexus of those currents. Managing them will require determination and diplomacy. "France is less tolerant today," said Genevieve Levy, a member of Parliament from Toulon. "We have to face that and fight it."

At a small mosque in the middle of Toulon, Mustapha El Ouammou, the imam, presides over afternoon prayers. He is a man with gentle, smiling eyes. "Destruction," he says, "is against Islam." He condemns the attack on the synagogue and talks of his efforts to impress on young Muslims that "no man like bin Laden who kills women and children has anything to do with our faith."

But he also notes that Israeli violence against Palestinians, repeatedly seen on Arab television networks delivered through satellite dishes, and the war in Iraq have a provocative effect, especially on youths. Everyone, he says, is against the war in Iraq, "even my 90-year-old grandmother."

Outside is a street full of stores selling Oriental pastries. On the corner is a kosher butcher store owned by Pierre Abecassis, 45, whose Jewish family came to Toulon from Algeria in 1962. In 2001, the establishment was partially burned when a gasoline bomb was thrown through the window.

Three North African youths were later arrested and given suspended prison sentences. "If I had the courage to go to Israel or America, I'd go," Abecassis said.

All these people -- Abecassis, Haddad, El Ouammou -- came from North Africa, where France's governance of Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco ended in various degrees of upheaval. That experience, and particularly the devastating Algerian war, form a deep undercurrent in the French assessment of America's war today in Iraq and in policy toward the Middle East generally.

France views the policies of George W. Bush and Ariel Sharon with deep skepticism in part because it knows the depths and endurance of Arab pride: that French skepticism, even anger, is the sea in which the currents of domestic mistrust between Muslims and Jews eddy today.

Earlier this week, Haddad's son, Michael, who wears a yarmulke, was strolling in Toulon. A group of children, aged seven or eight, passed by. "Damn Jew," one shouted.

"Who said that?" Michael asked. The children ran, but one remained. "The kid who said that is an Arab who doesn't like Jews," the solitary child explained.

*

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At a time of division, turbulence in France ; Globalist

Load-Date: April 11, 2004

End of Document

Letters from readers

Star Tribune (Minneapolis, MN)

March 24, 2004, Wednesday, Metro Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 14A

Length: 1136 words

Body

Israel defends itself

Israel has shown tremendous restraint involving its counterterrorism tactics. It uses as many precautions as possible to limit the scope of damage inflicted. It targets specific terrorist leaders and strikes in a fashion so as to prevent loss of innocent life. Why is it that a homicide bombing is met with little or no public rebuke, but Israel's reaction to one brings it harsh criticism?

Andrew Molnar, Hopkins.

Israel, like any other nation in a grueling battle against terrorism, has every right to take out terrorists who incite hate and evil against its people. Israel's attack against Hamas founder Sheik Ahmed Yassin was legitimate, warranted and, in fact, too slow in coming.

Millie Grayston, Minneapolis.

Call the vote

Minnesota's DFL senators should be ashamed of themselves. Despite belonging to a political party that calls itself "Democratic," they seem intent on being as "undemocratic" as possible with regard to the bill that would allow the people of Minnesota to be heard on the issue of the definition of marriage (Star Tribune, March 23).

This is the most critical issue facing voters this year. Nothing compares to it in terms of its long-term ramifications upon society. It should not be a partisan matter. Come on, Senate DFLers, do what is right.

Roland Mossberg, Stillwater.

A taste of the '60s

When I was a young child, I frequently saw news footage showing angry mobs of people protesting the integration of blacks into Southern schools. There was always some local politician protesting along with these citizens, challenging the authority of judges to "impose" something so wrong and unpopular on the mainstream citizens of the locale.

Flash forward to St. Paul in 2004. This week we saw a similar gathering of people protesting the rights of homosexuals to marry. There, in their midst, was our governor arguing for his self-anointed views of "the mainstream citizens" of our state.

Letters from readers

Perhaps "Teflon Tim" has become "Billy Bob Pawlenty."

Jill M. Manske, St. Paul.

Hurt by the hate

We wept when we read the paper this morning. To see so many people filled with such misunderstanding gathering on the State Capitol grounds brought back the feelings we felt when our son, Jake, first came out. We had "FAG" scrawled on our driveway, broken eggs in our mailbox, lamp posts broken, pink paint balls splattered across the front of our house and unsigned letters filled with hate and damnation.

Monday, people flooded the Capitol and listened to our governor expressing his support for a constitutional amendment banning gay marriage. This rally was an attack on every gay person and their families.

Jake is our youngest child. He was baptized by his uncle in our Lutheran church. Jake was always looking out for others. He has a big heart. He is an honor student at Northwestern University and writes a column on faith issues. He is also the young adult coordinator for a group called Soulforce. They work to bring understanding of homosexuality to the churches. Jake's faith is important to him.

When Jake told us he was gay, we sought advice from our church. The pastor we spoke with told us Jake could change. We knew nothing about homosexuality, and we realized we had to educate ourselves. We read books and talked with many psychiatrists, psychologists and doctors. Not one of them said Jake could change, and not one said we should try.

We realized very quickly that Jake was gay and this was the life he was meant to live. There was no choice on Jake's part to be gay but as parents we had a choice, and the choice we made was to celebrate Jake's life and give thanks to God once again for our beautiful son.

Randi and Philip Reitan,

Eden Prairie.

Civil-rights support

I would like to thank the Minnesota Family Council for its full-page ad in Tuesday's Star Tribune promoting a ban on gay marriage and listing all DFL senators as well as their phone numbers. The number of calls our office has received from people in support of civil rights who are sick of the council's hate-filled agenda has dramatically increased.

Jessica Null, Minneapolis;

legislative assistant.

Just who was in the loop?

Vice President Dick Cheney has responded to Richard Clarke's accusations by saying Clarke "wasn't in the loop, frankly, on a lot of this stuff (Star Tribune, March 23)." I am curious why the administration's top expert on terrorism "wasn't in the loop" regarding counterterrorism efforts? Anyone else see a problem here?

Peter Vickerman, Hopkins.

Just the silver lining

I second the motion by the March 20 letter "Good news out of Iraq." Let's have a single day without any bad news out of Iraq.

Letters from readers

In fact, let's have a single day when the Star Tribune does not print any bad news. No stories about people losing their jobs because of the bus strike. No stories about dubiously elected politicians deliberately misleading the American public.

Above all, no stories about how much of the world feels the American government is acting like a playground bully.

This happy paper will make us all feel better about our daily lives. Surely, if we don't hear any bad news, then none happened.

Andre Johnson, St. Paul.

Peppin earned vote

The District 32A Republican endorsement for the state House went to Joyce Peppin because she deserved it (Star Tribune, March 21).

District 32A needed to consider a change in representation. Our six-term legislator, Arlon Lindner, had never been the chief sponsor of even one significant bill affecting this district in 12 years! Nor does he hold a committee assignment that could be influential regarding district matters.

The day after the precinct caucuses, Peppin had biographical materials on our doorstep. Within days she was in our living room, giving us two hours of her time. She never focused on Lindner, never mentioned her husband's staff position with the state caucus, but did focus on the enthusiasm and skill she would bring to the job. She covered a lot of ground in three weeks.

She won my vote the old-fashioned way, with hard work.

Mike McGee, Maple Grove.

Converting Sid

University of Minnesota women's basketball star Lindsay Whalen can add another accomplishment to her list - making Sid Hartman sit up and take notice of a remarkable woman athlete.

Helen Nikiel, Bloomington.

Pick a Kerry, any Kerry

From what I have read, John Kerry seems to be the man to vote for.

Whether you are for or against the war, so is he. If you want to raise taxes or lower them, it doesn't matter, he strongly supports both positions. Whether you support gay marriage, or not, he definitely supports your view!

Phil Pollock, Chaska.

Load-Date: March 25, 2004

The Will To Win

New York Sun (Archive)

January 6, 2004 Tuesday

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Section: ARTS & LETTERS; Pg. 17

Length: 1047 words

Byline: By IRA STOLL

Body

A White House speechwriter for President Bush and one of Mr. Bush's campaign foreign policy advisers say in a new book that Mr. Bush should fire his director of Central Intelligence and stop lying about Saudi Arabia's support for terrorism. The authors assail the notion that Libya's Muammar Gadhafi is becoming more moderate - a notion that undergirds an agreement Mr. Bush recently announced with Libya - as "a symptom of the seemingly incurable wishful delusions that afflict the accommodationists in the foreign policy establishment."

The speechwriter, David Frum, and the campaign foreign policy adviser, Richard Perle, are careful not to frame their book as an attack against the president, and on some matters, they side with Mr. Bush. Still, it's hard to escape the conclusion that there's a considerable gap between their prescription for victory in the war on terrorism and the course President Bush is now pursuing.

"We can feel the will to win ebbing in Washington," the authors warn.

In both form and substance, their arguments sometimes sound more like the Democratic presidential candidates' than like the Bush White House. Here are Mr. Frum and Mr. Perle, for instance, on Saudi Arabia:

We should tell the truth about Saudi Arabia. It's past time to drop the happy talk about how splendidly the Saudis are cooperating. ('The Saudis have done everything we've asked them to.') These transparent untruths demean the U.S. government. ...The Saudis qualify for their own membership in the axis of evil. ... Our policy has been abject because so many of those who make the policy have been bought and paid for by the Saudis - or else are looking forward to the day when they will be bought and paid for.

And here is President Bush on Saudi Arabia in a Rose Garden appearance on September 24, 2001, with Secretary of State Powell. "As far as the Saudi Arabians go - and, again, the secretary can comment on this, he's had more recent contact with them than I have - but they've been nothing but cooperative." Mr. Powell piped up, "That's exactly right, Mr. President. They have not turned down any requests that we have presented to them."

Closer to the Frum-Perle position on this issue is a Democratic presidential candidate, Rep. Richard Gephardt, who, as The New York Sun's Luiza Ch. Savage reported from Iowa last month, tells campaign audiences, "This president isn't talking about Saudi Arabia. ... Maybe that's because he is from the oil industry and so is Cheney."

So, too, is another Democratic candidate, Howard Dean. "Our oil money goes to Middle Eastern countries such as Saudi Arabia, which then turn it around and use it to fund Hamas, and worse, the teaching of small children

The Will To Win

throughout the Islamic world to hate Americans and Christians and Jews," Dr. Dean said last month in Los Angeles. "I would like to see a president who will stand up to the Saudis and say, 'Enough.'"

Or consider Mr. Frum and Mr. Perle on one of Mr. Bush's top national security aides: "George Tenet has been the director of central intelligence since 1997, time enough to have changed the Agency's culture. He has failed. He should go." Sounds a lot like another Democratic presidential candidate, Senator Kerry, on the "Charlie Rose" television show on October 27, 2003, who called for Mr. Tenet's ouster.

Mr. Perle (a board member of Hollinger International, which is a minority investor in The New York Sun) and Mr. Frum even begin their book with a quotation from Thomas Paine in 1780: "These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands it now, deserves the loves and thanks of man and woman." It is a quotation that Dr. Dean uses prominently in his own campaign literature.

These similarities between the neoconservative critique of the Bush administration and that of the Democrats are intriguing, but it is not as if Messrs. Perle and Frum are about to join the Dean campaign. On the contrary, the most useful of many useful services "An End To Evil" provides is a bracing reminder of the problems with multilateralism and the United Nations. Even Democrats who favored the Iraq war, like Senators Clinton and Lieberman and Mr. Gephardt, criticize Mr. Bush for going it alone. Write Messrs. Perle and Frum: "What some Europeans decry as 'unilateralism' many Americans regard as leadership."

Though at points the authors are eloquent in calling for a free market in goods, they fail to extend the logic to a free market in labor. Mr. Frum, an immigrant to America from Canada, and Mr. Perle call for vigorous enforcement of existing immigration laws, which set the quotas for migrants to America at artificially low levels. Particularly galling is their invocation of Mayor Giuliani's crackdown on crime in New York as a justification for a crackdown on illegal immigrants. Mr. Giuliani as mayor was a friend of immigrants.

The authors relate an anecdote about a Palestinian Arab family in St. Louis, whose 16-year-old daughter, Tina Isa, a public school student, went on a date with a black boy. When she returned home, her father stabbed her to death while her mother held her down; it was an "honor killing," which the authors define as "the murder by men in the family of a female relative who has overstepped the rules that define female chastity."

What we are supposed to gather from this account is unclear. Immigration restrictionists surely would marshal it as evidence against admitting the likes of the Isa parents into America. But the most telling part of the story to me is that the attraction of American culture is so strong that it led a 16-year-old daughter to defy her parents' closed-mindedness.

The attractiveness of America to immigrants is reason to be optimistic about the spread of freedom. It isn't certain - the authors note that despite Jacques Chirac's "warm reminiscences" of his weekend job as a Harvard student serving sodas at a Howard Johnson's, France has been openly hostile to American policy in the war on terror. And democratizing the Middle East is a big job. But, as the authors note, "The good news is, we've done it before - in Western Europe, in East Asia, and in Central America. That suggests it is not hopeless to try it again."

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NEWS SUMMARY

The New York Times
October 24, 2003 Friday
Late Edition - Final

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Section: Section A; Column 3; Metropolitan Desk; Pg. 2

Length: 1068 words

Body

INTERNATIONAL A3-12

Senate Rebuffs President In Vote to Ease Cuba Travel

In a firm rebuke to President Bush over Cuba policy, the Senate overwhelmingly voted to ease travel restrictions on Americans seeking to visit the island. The vote came less than two weeks after Mr. Bush announced that he would tighten the travel ban in an attempt to bring more pressure on the government of Fidel Castro. A1

Islamic Revival in Syria

Two decades after Syria ruthlessly uprooted militant Islam, killing an estimated 10,000 people, the country is experiencing a dramatic religious resurgence. Syrian experts attribute it to various factors, including Islam's appeal as a means to protest corrupt, incompetent governments and the widespread sense that the faith is being singled out for attack by the United States. A1

Turkey Wavers on Iraq Troops

Caught between the Bush administration's entreaties to commit troops for peacekeeping duties and equally strong resistance from the Iraqis, Turkey has begun to back away from its initial agreement to deploy thousands of its soldiers to help police Iraq. A12

Bush administration officials expressed growing confidence that they would raise large sums to reconstruct Iraq at a donors conference in Madrid. But they faced intensive questions about whether Iraq's security troubles would prevent at least some of the money from being spent. A12

Kurds Speaking Out in Turkey

In a Turkish courtroom last week, a handful of Kurdish villagers broke the silence that has prevailed in that country over what human rights groups say was one of the most violent secrets of the 1990's: the systematic campaign by Turkish security forces to burn down villages of Kurds suspected of harboring separatist guerrillas. A3

3 Israelis Killed in Gaza Attack

Three Israelis were killed and two wounded when at least one Palestinian gunman entered a Jewish settlement in the Gaza Strip and opened fire, Israeli security officials said. A11

NATIONAL A14-21

NEWS SUMMARY

Immigration Agents Raid Wal-Marts Across Country

In the largest immigration crackdown in years, federal agents raided scores of Wal-Mart stores and arrested more than 250 illegal immigrants employed by contractors. A1

The Right vs. the Right to Die

Religious conservatives hope the passage of a Florida law empowering the governor to demand the reinsertion of Terri Schiavo's feeding tube will help them attack court rulings they oppose in other states. A1

G.O.P. Wariness Over Rumsfeld

Senior Republicans have begun openly complaining that Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld has left them underinformed on critical and sensitive political issues. A1

Muslim Leader Tied to Al Qaeda

Abdurahman M. Alamoudi, one of the country's most prominent Islamic leaders, was charged with laundering hundreds of thousands of dollars from Libya, and is suspected of providing money to Al Qaeda, Hamas and other terrorist groups. A19

General Wins Confirmation

The Senate Armed Services Committee approved the promotion of an Army general who commanded a base where a gay soldier was beaten to death in 1999. A16

Kerry's Views Under Scrutiny

Senator John Kerry, a Democratic presidential candidate, is on the defensive over foreign policy, less than a year after having been widely viewed as a front-runner in the Democratic field largely because of his foreign-relations expertise. A1

Schwarzenegger Meets Davis

Gov.-elect Arnold Schwarzenegger of California met with Gov. Gray Davis as part of a "relationship-building" effort with the state's top elected officials. A14

Bishop-Elect is Confident

Even as Episcopalians opposed to a gay bishop laid the groundwork for a formal separation from the Episcopal Church USA, the man at the center of the controversy, the Rev. V. Gene Robinson, said he intended to proceed with his consecration as bishop of New Hampshire. A14

NEW YORK/REGION B1-12

Anthrax Cleanup, at Last, For New Jersey Mail Plant

The mail sorting plant in Hamilton, N.J., that trafficked at least two of the contaminated envelopes in the October 2001 anthrax scare will be decontaminated this weekend, ending a long wait for residents of the community and the plant's 1,000 workers. B1

Killing an Accident, Heir Says

Robert A. Durst, the New York real estate heir on trial for shooting and dismembering a neighbor, told a jury that the man was killed accidentally after the two struggled over a gun and it went off in the man's face. B3

Niagara Survivor Is Released

Kirk R. Jones, the man who earlier this week survived a plunge down Niagara Falls, emerged from police custody, saying the experience snapped him out of the depression that drove him to it. B9

NEWS SUMMARY

SCIENCE/HEALTH

Making AIDS Drugs Cheaper

Former President Bill Clinton announced that his foundation has brokered an agreement with four generic drug companies to cut the cost of certain AIDS antiretroviral drugs by about a third for distribution in poor countries. A8

New Study on Breast Cancer

A new study confirms that women who carry genetic mutations linked to breast cancer are at high risk, and are more likely to develop the disease at an early age than were previous generations of carriers. A19

WEEKEND E1-30; E31-40

ESCAPES F1-14

SPORTS D1-7

Marlins Win, Lead Series

Florida beat the Yankees, 6-4, giving the Marlins a 3-2 lead in the World Series. Game 6 will be played tomorrow night in New York. D1

BUSINESS DAY C1-10

Mistrial Likely for Banker

The jurors in the trial of Frank P. Quattrone, the former Credit Suisse banker, told the judge that they would be unable to reach a unanimous vote on any of the three counts against him, leading to the likelihood that a mistrial would be declared. C1

Airport Competition Heats Up

San Francisco International Airport is cutting landing fees by half on new routes to better compete with Oakland International, which has won the business of two of the most profitable airlines, Southwest and JetBlue. C1

Big Spinoff by Cablevision

Cablevision Systems plans to spin off a company called Rainbow DBS from a collection of assets, including its fledgling satellite TV service and three cable channels. C1

Business Digest C1

World Business W1

OBITUARIES C11

EDITORIAL A22-23

Editorials: Decoding Rumsfeld's memo; farewell to supersonic flight; let the public see the plans; Verlyn Klinkenborg on Margaret Murie's vision.

Columns: Bob Herbert, Paul Krugman.

Crossword E40

TV Listings E29

Public Lives B4

NEWS SUMMARY

Weather D8

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Load-Date: October 24, 2003

End of Document

**A long and winding road: Booker-nominated novel does many of the things
that fiction does best**

Ottawa Citizen

October 12, 2003 Sunday Final Edition

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Section: The Citizen's Weekly: Reading; Pg. C11; Review

Length: 1101 words

Byline: Chris Lehmann

Body

Monica Ali's feverishly hyped debut novel -- which landed the author on Granta's list of Britain's top 20 young writers solely on the strength of its unpublished manuscript -- is distinguished by how ordinary it is. That is no insult: **Women** writers in England who hail from the Indian subcontinent labour under what might be called the White Teeth syndrome. They are expected to lay heavy stress on the boisterous, exotic and culturally polyglot cast of immigrant life in London, as Zadie Smith did with the publication of her celebrated debut novel in 2000.

But where White Teeth teemed with a cast of characters careening across one another's lives in tangled subplots, Brick Lane is a stoutly simple tale, chronicling the fortunes of a Bangladeshi woman named Nazneen, who immigrates to England to consummate the marriage her father has arranged with a middle-aged civil servant she has never met named Chanu. He, too, is a first-generation Bangladeshi immigrant, and the lore in Nazneen's village -- which her father has endorsed -- holds that all such men are successes, or "Big Men," graced with intelligence, charm and wealth.

The Washington Post

It is soon plain enough to Nazneen -- a very young 18 at the time she journeys to London -- that Chanu is no Big Man. He lives in an East End public housing complex called Tower Hamlets. His apartment is in dubious repair and crammed with garish mismatched furniture. And Chanu's head is crammed with an endless succession of plans to get ahead: to win a promotion at work, to curry favour with other "respectable type" Bangladeshis, to accumulate degrees and certificates from adult education institutions, in everything from economics to art history.

Her new husband and surroundings leave Nazneen by turns dismayed and bewildered, and it scarcely helps that Chanu forbids her to leave the house most days and expects her to trim the corns on his feet each night. But like many Muslim **women**, she is conditioned to accept her fate uncomplainingly, and so as time passes, she settles into the rounds of traditional housekeeping and motherhood -- they have two daughters, Bibi and Shahana -- while cautiously adapting herself to the strange new contours of life as an outsider in London.

And Nazneen comes by her fatalism as something more than simply a cultural and religious legacy; her very birth, as Ali recounts, was a veritable fable on the power of fate: Her mother delivered her prematurely, and to all appearances Nazneen was stillborn. She stirred to life in the very moment that a village midwife pronounced her dead. And even after her birth, as her mother loses no opportunity to remind her, Nazneen rallied to sustain herself only when her mother refused any intervention from midwives and medical professionals and placed her destiny entirely in the hands of Allah.

A long and winding road: Booker-nominated novel does many of the things that fiction does best

If that weren't enough of a spur to stay put and passively endorse the verdict of fate, Nazneen also has before her the cautionary counterexample of her sister, Hasina, who eloped to carry out a "love marriage" with a village tough, and then fled the marriage when he began beating her. We read of Hasina's travails as Nazneen does, in episodic letters.

The novel's prominently earmarked big themes of fate and free choice might easily have translated into some paint-by-numbers typecasting, whereby glaringly symbolic characters -- Chanu the patriarch, Hasina the romantic libertine -- serve as the occasion for Ali to deal appropriately instructive fates of her own devising. Fortunately, however, Ali is much too supple and clear-eyed a writer to succumb to such broad scripting.

Indeed, most of *Brick Lane* is devoted to Nazneen's gradual unlearning of most of her life's designated object lessons. As Ali alerts us early in the narrative, Nazneen comes to be "as startled by her own agency as an infant who waves a clenched fist and strikes itself upon the eye."

As events come to upend Nazneen's constitutional fatalism, so too do they undermine Chanu's dreams of never-ending upward mobility: His promotion is never forthcoming, and his extravagant pride compels him to resign his post, sparking his own descent into an anything but "respectable" livelihood as a cabdriver. Larger forces, too, impinge on Nazneen's cloistered life, notably when the household's mounting economic distress propels her further into the world to take in piecemeal sewing work -- and when the aftermath of the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks stir many Bangladeshi residents of Tower Hamlets into painful new reckonings with their Islamic identity.

Ali renders these bigger events, too, in plainly wrought but affecting fashion. When Nazneen -- spurred in no small part by a growing infatuation with a young Muslim leader who brings in sewing work from his father's business -- starts attending the meetings of a fledgling local group of Islamic activists called the Bengal Tigers, she is not stirred to fire-breathing militancy. Rather, the grim and politicized tenor of the gatherings serves to make her feel her private distresses more acutely: "When she walked the anxious tightrope between (her) children and their father, when she was disquieted by her undisciplined mind or worried about her sister -- now she felt the smallness of it all. She mistook the sad weight of longing in her stomach for sorrow, and she read in the night of occupiers and orphans, of Intifada and Hamas."

Ali refuses to confine her characters in the tidy boxes that fate or immigrant life or global politics would seem to dictate they occupy. She will not even make the ever-striving-and-failing, comically deluded Chanu her own fictional sport; when his marriage to Nazneen inevitably creaks and gives way, Ali supplies a genuinely moving portrait of the husband's panicked distress and desperate, if insufficient, love for his family.

In a feverishly fragmenting and often character-resistant fictional landscape, *Brick Lane* manages to do many of the things that fiction does best: to create a fully rounded, satisfyingly complicated world of its own that opens onto our own lives, provoking us to measure ourselves by its terms rather than vice versa.

Ali's novel also has some notable shortcomings: Like many books that revolve around a central character struggling to make up her mind, it can grow frustratingly longsome, and for all the inventive care that Ali shows with language, she also tosses off some unwieldy and/or clichéd metaphors.

But in all the ways that fiction matters most, *Brick Lane* is no ordinary achievement.

Chris Lehmann writes for the Washington Post where this first appeared.

Graphic

Colour Photo: The unpublished manuscript of *Brick Lane* landed Monica Ali on Granta's list of top 20 young writers. Now that published novel is up for the Booker Prize.

A long and winding road: Booker-nominated novel does many of the things that fiction does best

Load-Date: October 12, 2003

End of Document

***Suicide bomber kills 19 in Israel;
Israeli officials renewed calls to retaliate against Palestinian
leader Yasir Arafat after the attack in a seaside restaurant.***

The Philadelphia Inquirer

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Dateline: HAIFA, Israel

Body

A **female** suicide bomber affiliated with the Palestinian militant group Islamic Jihad destroyed a packed seaside restaurant here, killing at least 19 Israelis, including four children, and prompting renewed calls for Israel to retaliate by targeting Palestinian leader Yasir Arafat.

Last month, after a suicide bombing at a Jerusalem caf killed eight people and another bombing in central Israel killed seven, the Israeli cabinet decided in principle to "remove" Arafat from his Ramallah, West Bank, compound because of what Israel says is his complicity in terror attacks. Israeli leaders raised the possibility of killing or deporting him should Israel suffer another severe attack.

Last night, as Israeli military commanders met to plan what army chief of staff Moshe Ya'alon said would be a "harsh" response, and following a statement by Arafat condemning the Haifa attack, several cabinet ministers said the time had come for Israel to act.

"This awful attack today is definitely an opportunity . . . to implement the cabinet decision to get rid of Arafat," Health Minister Danny Naveh said.

Failure to go after him immediately, Labor and Social Affairs Minister Zevulun Orlev said, "implies weakness and may encourage attacks."

Early today, there were reports of Israeli helicopters firing missiles at targets in Gaza City and at a Gaza Strip refugee camp. There was no immediate information on the extent of injuries, if any, from the attacks.

Israel holds Arafat responsible for more than 100 suicide attacks in the last three years, even those carried out by groups, including Islamic Jihad and **Hamas**, opposed to the Palestinian leader's rule.

Suicide bomber kills 19 in Israel ; Israeli officials renewed calls to retaliate against Palestinian leader Yasir Arafat after the attack in a seaside restaurant....

Palestinian sources said the woman who struck yesterday at Maxim's, a popular restaurant founded in 1965 and co-owned by Israeli Arabs and Jews, was Hanadi Jaradat, 27, a Palestinian lawyer-in-training from the West Bank city of Jenin.

The sources said her brother, Fathi, and a cousin, Salah, both members of Islamic Jihad, were killed in June in an Israeli military operation.

Israeli military analysts said Yom Kippur, the holiest day of the Jewish calendar, which begins at sundown tonight, made it unlikely that Israel would take immediate action against Arafat. More likely, they said, is that Israel would step up its policy of targeted killings of Palestinian militant leaders and tighten its military blockades of Palestinian cities.

President Bush, who has opposed Arafat's expulsion, called the Haifa attack "despicable" and said Palestinian authorities must do more to stop terrorism.

Arafat supporters called on the international community to guarantee his safety.

Initial reports of yesterday's attack, which in addition to the death toll wounded 55, said the armed guard posted outside the restaurant may have been shot before the bomber entered.

But Israeli national police spokesman Gil Kleiman said subsequent investigation showed that "not to be true."

Instead, it seems the bomber entered the restaurant unnoticed after 2 p.m., situated herself amid the lunchtime crowd seated at tables, and detonated her explosives.

Gideon Zilberstein, 63, a Haifa accountant, was dining with his wife, Lydia, and his son and daughter-in-law when the explosion occurred. They had a table in the middle of the restaurant, looking out through the windows at nearby Mount Carmel, with the Mediterranean Sea at their backs.

From his bed at Haifa's Ramban Hospital, where he was treated last night for hearing loss and multiple shrapnel wounds, Zilberstein said the force of the blast sent his family flying.

"Everything around us was destroyed," he said. And amid the debris, he saw bodies "lying atop tables" and in twisted shapes on the floor.

"My wife was wounded the worst. She couldn't walk. We lay there waiting for the ambulances," he said.

His wife of 35 years was taken to another area hospital, where she was being treated for shrapnel in her abdomen and spine. He was unclear about the severity of injuries to his other family members.

Police estimated the bomb weighed more than 20 pounds. It blew out windows, spattered interior walls with shrapnel holes, and blew chunks of plaster off pillars throughout the restaurant.

Muli Nir, 28, a son of the Jewish family that co-owns the restaurant, said: "All the people who work here are Arabs, and a lot of them died today. Why do they do this here?"

Haifa Mayor Yona Yahav, standing at a police line at the edge of the rubble, said at least four Israeli Arabs were among the dead. The restaurant is a popular hangout for members of the local pro soccer team, Maccabi Haifa, and several of its officials were among the wounded, the mayor said.

A security fence that Israel is building to run the length of the West Bank is supposed to deter such attacks. An 80-mile span of the barrier, in northern Israel not far from Haifa, is complete, but appears not to have stopped the attacker.

She reportedly left her home in Jenin yesterday morning and traveled about 30 miles to Haifa, probably with the aid of an accomplice in a car, police said.

Suicide bomber kills 19 in Israel ; Israeli officials renewed calls to retaliate against Palestinian leader Yasir Arafat after the attack in a seaside restauran....

The Israeli cabinet recently approved a new phase of the barrier that will add fences deep inside the West Bank to shield four large Jewish settlements. Palestinians and the United States oppose the path of the barrier, saying it preempts peace negotiations by unilaterally defining the border of an eventual Palestinian state.

"Unfortunately, there is only half a fence," said Zilberstein, his face dotted with blood clots as he lay in the hospital. "Maybe when it is finished, there will be more security."

The attack, the first suicide bombing in Israel in nearly a month, came despite a blanket closure Israel imposed Friday on the West Bank and Gaza Strip ahead of Yom Kippur - standard procedure in the run-up to Jewish holidays, when Israel goes on heightened alert against possible attacks.

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Graphic

PHOTO;

EITAN HESS ASHKENAZI, Associated Press

Shrapnel marks pock a window at a restaurant in Haifa, in northern Israel. A woman linked to the Palestinian group Islamic Jihad set off a bomb in the restaurant, co-owned by Arabs and Jews.

Load-Date: August 17, 2005

End of Document

In secular Syria, an Islamic revival

Christian Science Monitor (Boston, MA)

October 3, 2003, Friday

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 06

Length: 1048 words

Byline: By Nicholas Blanford Special to The Christian Science Monitor

Dateline: ALEPPO, SYRIA

Highlight: A state with a history of quashing rebellious Islamic groups is seeing an upswing in religious faith

Body

Turmoil in the Middle East and the sluggish pace of domestic political reform is fuelling an Islamic resurgence here.

Although the regime is deeply hostile to extremist Islam, analysts and diplomats believe that Islamic groups could play an increasingly influential role if the state's hold on the country weakens.

Young Syrians are filling mosques, many women have taken to wearing the head scarf known as the hijab, and underground women's religious discussion groups are increasingly popular despite being banned. The austere Wahhabi brand of Islam practiced by Osama bin Laden is preached in some small towns in northern Syria. Even longtime Baath partisans are embracing religion.

"The Islamic awakening dominates conservative neighborhoods in cities and small Sunni towns," says Samir al-Taqi, a Syrian political analyst. "In Damascus, through a network of mosques, they dominate between 60 to 65 percent of pious Muslims... I see many secular people, including Communists, turning to religion."

Analysts say the Islamic resurgence is a reaction to the American-led wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the continuing violence between Israelis and Palestinians, and the faltering domestic reform program. The Syrian authorities are closely monitoring the Islamic resurgence, buying off some clerics as a means of controlling them, analysts say.

But diplomats and analysts believe that the regime's control over Islamism could slip in the face of mounting frustration with rampant corruption and the failure to implement promised reforms.

"A constituency is being created for Islamic leaders who might emerge if there is instability or the regime falls," says a diplomat in Damascus.

The Islamic resurgence in Syria also resonates with thousands of foreign Muslims who study Islam and Arabic in Damascus.

Islamic educational institutions are closely watched, not only by the Syrian authorities but also by Western intelligence agencies concerned that they may become recruiting grounds for militant Islamic groups. Mohammed Atta, the ringleader of the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, studied urban planning during the 1990s in this conservative Sunni Muslim city in northern Syria.

In secular Syria , an Islamic revival

In April, Asif Mohammed Hanif, a British Muslim suicide bomber blew himself up in a Tel Aviv pub. He had studied Arabic at Damascus University in 2000 where it is speculated - although unproven - that he was recruited by Hamas. Captain James Yee, a Muslim military chaplain at the Guantanamo Bay detention center who was arrested two weeks ago after being caught with classified documents, studied Islam and Arabic in Damascus for four years in the mid-1990s.

Diplomats say there are no indications that radical Islam is being preached in the schools, as they are closely supervised by the Syrian authorities. Indeed, one diplomatic source believed that the number of foreign students visiting Damascus had probably not increased significantly. "It's just that we are paying much closer attention to who is here now," the source says.

Sheikh Saleh Kuftaro, the son of Sheikh Ahmad Kuftaro, the grand mufti of Syria, said that only moderate Islam was taught in Damascus.

"We are ensuring that the Islamic awakening among our youth is kept clear of extremism," he says. "We know that our mosques are full of young people. Thank God we do not have extremism here. But we are always afraid that it might prevail in countries around us."

Sheikh Kuftaro runs the Sheikh Ahmad Kuftaro Islamic Foundation, a Damascus-based group for religious education which caters to some 5,000 students, 20 percent of them foreigners. "As an Islamic thinker, I am for a moderate secular state working for the religious beliefs of all... There is no room for political Islam on our agenda," he adds.

Such sentiments sit well with the views of the Baathist regime in Syria. Syria has a long and bloody history combating radical Islamist movements. A violent campaign against the regime by the Brotherhood in the late 1970s and early 1980s was ruthlessly suppressed with tens of thousands of people killed and imprisoned.

But a stronger brand of Islam than that espoused by Sheikh Kuftaro is beginning to emerge in some of the more conservative towns. Sheikh Mohsen al-Qaqa, who preaches at the As Sahour mosque in the outskirts of Aleppo, has gained a popular following through his fiery anti-American sermons.

"Our hearts are filled with joy when we hear about any resistance operations in Iraq against the American invaders. We ask people to keep praying to God to help achieve victory for Iraq against the US," Sheikh Qaqa says.

Qaqa's Islamic values go far beyond vocal - and popular - hostility toward US Mideast policy. For example, he openly calls for an Islamic state based on sharia law in Syria, the antithesis of established Baath Party ideology.

"Yes, I would like to see an Islamic state in Syria and that's what we are working for," Qaqa says. There are even indications that Qaqa's support base is becoming organized. His followers hold meetings in a building that serves as an office and library. Several of his followers wear camouflage military trousers.

"It's a symbol," he says, "of our readiness to protect ourselves from any foreign invasion."

But this is still Syria and the sheikh is careful not to portray himself at odds with the authorities.

"We are calling for, and working with, the government to cooperate together to prevent a clash and achieve national unity in an Islamic manner," he says.

And despite his support for the Iraqi resistance, he says that he is constantly dissuading Syrians who seek his advice from crossing into Iraq as volunteer fighters. Furthermore, on one wall of the As Sahour Mosque is an inscription in Arabic reading "No to Explosions" beside a cartoon depiction of a bomb with a red line through it. It is Qaqa's symbol of reassurance to the regime that he and his followers do not support violence.

Syria's deep secular roots and its broad confessional and ethnic composition - with Christians, Kurds and Bedouins - is likely to weigh heavily against the creation of an Islamic state, says Mr. Taqi, the political analyst.

In secular Syria , an Islamic revival

"But it's now becoming a more militant populist Islam here," he says. "They are more ready to act but it's still a time of gathering forces."

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Load-Date: October 2, 2003

End of Document

**19 DEAD IN SUICIDE BOMBING;
BLAST AT RESTAURANT IN HAIFA, ISRAEL, INJURES 50**

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (Pennsylvania)

October 5, 2003 Sunday

TWO STAR EDITION

Copyright 2003 P.G. Publishing Co.

Section: WORLD,

Length: 996 words

Byline: JOHN WARD ANDERSON AND MOLLY MOORE, THE WASHINGTON POST

Dateline: HAIFA, Israel

Body

At least 19 people were killed and 50 others injured when a **female** Palestinian suicide bomber set off an explosion yesterday in a landmark beachfront restaurant packed with a lunch crowd at the start of a long holiday weekend, according to Israeli police.

The bombing at the Maxim restaurant, which is co-owned by Arab and Jewish families, renewed debate among Israeli officials over potential action against Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat and raised questions about the effectiveness of a massive fence that Israel is building to separate the West Bank and Israel. The northern section of the fence east of Haifa has been completed.

"It was an awful explosion," said Salim Khouri, 40, an Arab waiter who has worked at the restaurant for seven years. "I was on my way to the kitchen and turned around. The tables, the chairs -- everything -- were turned upside down. Children were killed. There was one without a head. It was a horror."

Among those killed were a 2-month-old infant, three other children, ages 1, 5, and 6, a newlywed couple and four Arabs who were residents of Israel, according to preliminary identifications by medical and police officials.

"This restaurant was a microcosm of Haifa society -- Jews, Christians and Arabs worked together in this restaurant for many years," said Haifa Mayor Yona Yahav, standing several yards from the blackened and gutted eatery, which overlooks the Mediterranean on the edge of this northern port city. "The suicide bomber tried to jeopardize the co-existence we've worked so hard to build up."

About 12 percent of the 280,000 residents of Haifa are Arab, the mayor said.

The attack, on the eve of the Jewish holy day of Yom Kippur, prompted senior Israeli officials to ratchet up threats of retaliation against Arafat and elicited sharp condemnations from his newly nominated prime minister, Ahmed Qurei.

Hours later, Israeli helicopters fired missiles at an empty home near the beach in Gaza City and at a house belonging to an Islamic Jihad leader in the Boureij refugee camp in central Gaza, witnesses said. There were no immediate reports of casualties.

19 DEAD IN SUICIDE BOMBING; BLAST AT RESTAURANT IN HAIFA, ISRAEL, INJURES 50

The Gaza house targeted by the helicopters belonged to the Kanita family, one of Gaza's largest, but had been empty for a long time. The Kanita family has members in all the main Palestinian groups, including the violent **Hamas** and Islamic Jihad, Palestinians said.

The attack at the Boureij camp targeted the home of Islamic Jihad leader Morshet Shahin, but residents said he escaped.

President Bush, who has watched peace efforts collapse under recent weeks of continuing Palestinian suicide bombings and Israeli targeted killings of militant leaders, said, "This despicable attack underscores once again the responsibility of Palestinian authorities to fight terror, which remains the foremost obstacle to achieving the vision of two states living side by side in peace and security."

The bombing was the fourth major attack in Haifa since the Palestinian uprising against Israeli began slightly more than three years ago. Fifteen people died in a bombing at the Matza restaurant in the city 18 months ago, and 32 people were killed in two separate bus attacks, the most recent six months ago.

The Islamic Jihad militant group claimed responsibility for the attack in statements issued to television networks and wire services and identified the bomber as Hanadi Tayseer Jaradat, a woman from Jenin who was in her 20s and had recently graduated from law school in Jordan. The statement said Jaradat had watched as Israeli troops shot and killed her brother and a cousin, both Islamic Jihad supporters, at their family home in June.

Associates of Jaradat's said that since the killings, she had become increasingly religious, reading from the Koran twice a day and fasting regularly, according to Palestinian media accounts.

Yesterday, at 2:20 p.m., Jaradat strode into the Maxim restaurant, which was filled with patrons enjoying late lunches on a warm fall afternoon, without rousing the suspicions of either the guard at the front door or diners, according to police and witnesses.

"The restaurant was full," said Col. Danny Kuffler, a northern district commander in the Israeli National Police. "The bomber passed the security guard at the entrance, went inside, turned on the explosive device and all the restaurant exploded."

"Everything around us was destroyed," said Gideon Zilberstein, a 63-year-old accountant who was lunching with his wife, son and daughter-in-law. "People were lying on the floor. Next to us was a small girl who probably died."

"All my friends hit the ground," said Khouri, the waiter, who was undergoing treatment at Carmel Medical Center for pains in his ears and stomach. "Two were nearby and were not moving. They were bleeding from the mouth. I pushed them three or four times. They didn't give any sign of being alive. I turned around and saw people on the floor without heads, without faces, it was something terrible."

The restaurant is owned by a Jewish family and managed by an Arab family that had been in partnership for nearly 40 years, according to family members at the scene.

Qurei, who is trying to form a new Palestinian government after his nomination by Arafat last month, issued a statement condemning the attack and urging militants to show "self-restraint and to fully halt these actions that target civilians." But Gideon Meir, a senior Israeli foreign ministry official, said, "The Palestinian leadership could have dismantled the terrorist groups. We are losing patience. We cannot let our people continue being killed."

Several senior Israeli officials renewed demands that Arafat be expelled from the compound in the West Bank city of Ramallah, where he has been confined. When Israeli authorities made similar threats after a double bombing that killed 15 people at a military base bus stop south of Tel Aviv and at a Jerusalem cafe on Sept. 9, Palestinians and international officials rallied around him.

Notes

19 DEAD IN SUICIDE BOMBING; BLAST AT RESTAURANT IN HAIFA, ISRAEL, INJURES 50

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

Graphic

PHOTO: Alon Israel/Associated Press: A wounded child is rushed to an ambulance after yesterday's bombing at the Maxim restaurant in Haifa, northern Israel.

PHOTO: Hanadi Jaradt -- Suicide bomber

MAP: Associated Press; ESRI

Load-Date: October 13, 2003

End of Document

Mayor's Israel Trip Marks Higher Profile for Him on Jewish Issues

New York Sun (Archive)

August 28, 2003 Thursday

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Section: NEW YORK; Pg. 3

Length: 1028 words

Byline: By BENJ AMIN SMITH Staff Reporter of the Sun

Body

When Michael Bloomberg was trying to convince New York's Jews to help elect him mayor in 2001, he made a stop at Makor on the Upper West Side, a hip Jewish cultural center known for concerts and topical lectures. Asked there about his contributions to Jewish life, he boasted of producing the movie "Focus," based on an Arthur Miller play about anti-Semitism.

Among more traditional segments of the Jewish community, however, the candidate was dogged by comments he'd made in an unguarded moment in 1995. "I won't give too much money" to the United Jewish Appeal, he told the Jerusalem Report at the time, "because of the hold the religious have on Israel. I have one wish: Shoot all the clerics."

But when Mayor Bloomberg was choosing a traveling companion for his first official trip to Israel Tuesday, he didn't look to the largely liberal Upper West Side or to the Upper East Side of Manhattan, where he lives.

Choosing among nearly a dozen Jews in the City Council, he picked the only one who wears a yarmulke to work, the council member from Borough Park, Simcha Felder. He brought along an Orthodox rabbi from Manhattan who has been a vocal supporter of Israel's tough stance toward Palestinian terrorism, Haskel Lookstein. Two of the mayor's Orthodox Jewish deputies, Jonathan Greenspun and Ester Fuchs, also made the trip.

Mr. Greenspun, the director of the Community Assistance Unit who also serves as Mr. Bloomberg's Jewish liaison, said the trip marked a new, higher profile for Jewish issues.

"The mayor has always been outspoken in his support for Israel and his condemnation of Palestinian terror, but this recent trip highlights his willingness to be more demonstrative when it comes to supporting issues that are important to the city's Jewish community," he said.

The choice of guests provoked some grumbling among other Jewish members of the City Council. One called the selection of Mr. Felder a "ham-handed" move, a reflexive attempt to pander by choosing the most visibly Jewish council member.

Another, David Weprin, said he asked to go along, only to be told that there weren't enough seats on the mayor's private jet.

But political observers pointed to the trip as an attempt to reach beyond the narrow base of Manhattan liberals to the overlapping groups of more religiously observant and more politically conservative Jewish voters.

Mayor's Israel Trip Marks Higher Profile for Him on Jewish Issues

"Bloomberg has the secular Jews, the Manhattan types - but the Orthodox Jews in the outer boroughs - that's where he has a problem," said a Democratic political consultant with close ties to the city's organized Jewish community, Hank Sheinkopf. "The Jewish community has moved to the right and Bloomberg is beginning to understand the demographics."

There are no clear polls on which Jews support Mr. Bloomberg, but he apparently did quite well among those Orthodox Jews when he was elected in 2001.

In that election, he split the Jewish vote evenly with Mark Green; each got 49%, according to exit polls, and Mr. Bloomberg did particularly well in heavily Orthodox Brooklyn neighborhoods. But recent polls - which don't measure his Jewish support - show the mayor's strongest backing in Manhattan.

"If the election were held today he probably would carry the East Side-West Side group of Democratic voters, and he's probably not strong in the other Jewish sectors of the city," said another political consultant, Norman Adler.

The Israel trip isn't the only signal that Mr. Bloomberg is focusing more closely on appealing to the city's organized Jewish community. The executive director of the Metropolitan Council on Jewish Poverty, William Rapfogel, said he felt the administration warm up to his Jewish social services group in recent months.

"Over the past six months we've developed a much closer relationship with the Bloomberg administration," he said. "His administration worked very hard to restore funding cuts that had been in the preliminary budget even before the City Council began pushing for them."

Mayor Bloomberg has also stopped dodging the issues of Middle East politics that are important to many in the city's organized Jewish community. Early in his administration, the mayor drew fire from some for taking too soft a line in his approach to Palestinian terrorism. He appointed to his Human Rights Commission a lawyer with ties to the Council on American-Islamic Relations, which much of the organized Jewish community sees as sympathetic to Hamas and other groups, drawing fire in the City Council, including from Mr. Felder.

But the criticism from the right has died down, and Mr. Bloomberg has stepped firmly behind Prime Minister Sharon's government in Israel. "You can see that America is not letting terrorists win. We are striking back, and that's what I think Israel has always done and I would urge you to continue to do it," he told Israelis.

The politically conservative Jews who used to stage occasional protests against the mayor were replaced outside City Hall yesterday by the group Jews Against the Occupation. One protester carried an image of the mayor pointing a machine gun at a Palestinian child.

"Bloomberg's Israel visit wasn't about peace, it was about pandering to New Yorkers who believe Palestinians are just an obstacle, and that peace is achieved by slaughtering anyone who resists you," the group's spokeswoman, Emmaia Gelman, said in a press release.

Mr. Bloomberg's other guest on his trip to Israel was Mayor Koch, whom the mayoralty transformed from a secular Jew into an international symbol of American Jewry and of its unflagging support for Israel. Indeed, a passage from Mr. Koch's 1984 autobiography, describing the effect of his mayoral aspirations on his politics, seems to fit his successor.

"I was always proud of being Jewish, but I had never been a Jewish activist. In my district in 1968 or 1969 a lot of people did not know I was Jewish. My name was not particularly Jewish," he wrote. "I had been an activist to be sure, and in congress I was soon involved in every civil rights issue for the blacks and Hispanics and women, and worked for every oppressed group in the country - except the Jews. Well, I changed that, and made the Jews one of my priorities."

Mayor's Israel Trip Marks Higher Profile for Him on Jewish Issues

End of Document

Israel pleases few with prisoner release

Christian Science Monitor (Boston, MA)

August 7, 2003, Thursday

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 07

Length: 1036 words

Byline: By Ilene R. Prusher Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

Dateline: TARQUMIYEH, WEST BANK

Highlight: While hundreds of Palestinians were let go Wednesday, thousands are still in jail.

Body

Their families waited for them for five hours in the beating sun, and when the freed Palestinian prisoners arrived, the men beat bongo drums and the women beat their tongues against the roofs of their mouths in joy.

But as families here welcomed more than 100 of the 339 prisoners released by Israel Wednesday, what resonated most strongly was the debate among Palestinians over how to receive the confidence-building measure aimed at trying to prepare a path back to the road map to Middle East peace.

As they waited at this crossing outside Hebron for brothers and sons and fathers to arrive, some Palestinians applauded the release as an encouraging step forward. Many others, however, dismissed it as an inadequate move that represented just another rotation in the revolving door of Palestinians going in and out of Israeli jails.

"I don't believe in peace or in the cease-fire," says Ibrahim Baradaye, an unemployed father of four with a wispy black beard, as he waited to receive one of his three brothers from an Israeli prison. "There is no peace between Muslims and nonbelievers. My brother was due to be released in 40 days anyway, and so they release him instead of the men who have been in prison for a long time. The release of prisoners is only for propaganda - it's just cosmetic."

A foot away, a man eavesdropping on Mr. Baradaye grows frustrated with his pessimism. "Why don't we accept what they offer?" snaps Bilal Ghenaidi, a Hebron shopkeeper the same age as Baradaye. Mr. Ghenaidi, a slim man with a freshly shaven face, was waiting for his younger brother, Islaam, a member of Yasser Arafat's Fatah faction. "If this step is followed by other steps, it's a good step!"

The release of Palestinian prisoners is a goodwill gesture by the Israeli government that comes amid a broader, U.S.-backed bid to take advantage of the "hudna," Arabic for temporary cease-fire, to lure Israelis and Palestinians back to peacemaking after the violent breakdown of talks in September 2000, the start of the second intifada. The hudna is due to expire at the end of September, and some here say it will be extended only if the scope and frequency of confidence-building measures on both sides continue and the relative lull in violence holds.

Leading Palestinian officials have rejected Israel's prisoner release as insufficient both in numbers and in terms of the type of prisoners. On Monday Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat dismissed the prisoner release as worthless and a "deception," telling reporters at his Ramallah compound: "They say they are going to release 400, and then they turn around and arrest 800."

Israel pleases few with prisoner release

A middle-aged mother with two sons in jail - one of them to be released Wednesday and the other serving five life sentences - echoed Mr. Arafat's gripe. "When they release some, they just arrest some more," says Sara Ahmed Ighnimat. "But the rain starts with just one drop."

Still, whether Wednesday's shower could spill over into greater change in the Middle East remains far from certain.

Palestinians say that Israel must release much greater numbers of the approximately 6,000 detainees in its jails. Of them, about 785 Palestinians are held in administrative detention, meaning they are held without charges or a trial, says B'Tselem, one of Israel's leading human rights organizations. Among those held in administrative detention, which B'Tselem says is illegal, 161 were to be released Wednesday.

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, for his part, is taking on the risk of alienating some of his own right-wing constituents by letting Palestinian prisoners go before their sentences are served. Many Israelis who have lost family members in terrorist attacks are vehemently opposed to releasing prisoners who might go out and resume anti-Israel violence.

Lack of agreement over the scope of the prisoner withdrawal led Palestinian Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas to pull out of talks which had been set to be held Wednesday with Mr. Sharon. The meeting was to focus on ways to resume discussion of the road map, introduced by President Bush, which proposes to end the violence against Israel and create a Palestinian state by 2005.

All of the prisoners being released had to sign a document promising not to be involved in any further anti-Israel activities. Anyone refusing to sign would not be released, an Israeli army spokesman said. Some of the Palestinians waiting here said some of their incarcerated relatives refused to sign the document, and were therefore turned down for release.

"My brother refused to sign, and for sure, he shouldn't have," said Zeinab Khakhour, who came to receive another relative. "The resistance should continue."

Many of the Palestinians being released expressed ambivalence over their decisions to sign. As Abdel Mageed al-Amer descended from the bus, a group of Arabic television reporters circled around him. He is a spokesman for Hamas, which does not recognize Israel and has vowed to resume operations against Israel in the future. "I feel humiliated that I signed this paper," Mr. Amer says. "I'm still under occupation. For sure, we respect our signatures, but our goals are bigger than all these pledges."

Israeli officials say they cannot understand why the release of prisoners, not specifically outlined in the road map, has raised more ire than enthusiasm. "This is not part of the road map. This is a Israeli gesture and we didn't have to do this," says Daniel Seaman, the director of Israel's Government Press Office.

"We do expect the Palestinians to improve the atmosphere and the general situation. It's a shame that they have to use this moment to raise the level of disappointment, and that they're using this as another way to dampen the spirit and the excitement of moving forward."

The incremental easing of Israeli restrictions on Palestinian territory are just beginning to be felt. Ghenaidi, the Hebron shopkeeper, is willing to give it a chance. "There is a little improvement after the hudna. Instead of six checkpoints between Ramallah and Hebron, now we have three. But "if conditions are not eased further," including the release of more prisoners, "there is a fear the hudna will collapse."

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Load-Date: August 6, 2003

Skepticism Lives on Scarred Jerusalem Street

The New York Times
July 2, 2003 Wednesday
Late Edition - Final

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Section: Section A; Column 3; Foreign Desk; Pg. 8

Length: 949 words

Byline: By GREG MYRE

Dateline: JERUSALEM, July 1

Body

Walk along Jaffa Road, the badly scarred commercial artery that runs through downtown Jerusalem, and you can scarcely travel a block without passing the scene of a previous Palestinian bombing.

Ask Israelis who work, shop and ride the buses along this strip if they have any faith in a Palestinian truce declaration, and they express a knee-jerk pessimism that seems somewhat at odds with the glimmer of hope that has been generated in recent days.

"Everyone is talking about the truce, but it's a bunch of bull," said Yona Assaf, a special-education teacher and former New Yorker who moved to Israel a decade ago. Despite her belief that Palestinian attacks will persist, Ms. Assaf refuses to change her routine. She had just emerged from lunch at the Sbarro pizzeria, site of a suicide bombing two years ago that killed 15 people.

"I can understand that people who are far away think the Israelis and Palestinians should just sit down and make peace," she said. "But if you're here, you can't run away from the truth. And I think the truth is that there isn't going to be peace."

Israeli and Palestinian leaders have endorsed the Middle East peace initiative, and by all indications a majority on both sides want it to work. But it is soft support, based more, it seems, on eternal hope and sheer exhaustion than a genuine conviction that the two sides have found the magic formula to end generations of feuding.

An opinion poll released this week found that 61 percent of Israelis and 56 percent of Palestinians supported the Mideast peace plan, known as the road map. However, only 40 percent on each side believed that it would lead to a political settlement, and just 18 percent of Palestinians and 6 percent of Israelis believed that all violence would stop.

The poll, sponsored by the Konrad Adenauer Foundation in Israel, surveyed more than 1,300 Palestinians, with a sampling error of 3 percentage points, and asked the same questions of 1,000 Israelis, with a margin of error of 4.5 percentage points.

Skepticism Lives on Scarred Jerusalem Street

The most active stretch of Jaffa Road has endured more major attacks than any other place in Israel in 33 months of fighting. Palestinian assailants have carried out nine suicide bombings, a suicidal shooting attack and several car bombings on Jaffa and neighboring streets. The grid is less than a mile long and only a few hundred yards wide.

The most recent suicide bombing on the street killed 17 civilians on a packed bus on June 11. Withered roses and melted candles mark an informal sidewalk memorial, squeezed between two bus stops that are again full of waiting passengers.

The packed buses and the nonstop pedestrian traffic make Jaffa an obvious target, along with its proximity to the Arab neighborhoods of east Jerusalem, only a few blocks away. If the truce brings a reprieve from attacks, Jaffa Road will be a leading beneficiary, yet every conversation is filled with skepticism.

The family-owned bookstore where Rina Daniel works has been at the same spot on Jaffa since 1959. Business is down 40 percent since the current round of violence ignited in September 2000. Ask her what she expects now, and she hits on two common themes: more violence and the maintenance of her habits.

"The truce hasn't changed anything," she said, citing the Palestinian leader Yasir Arafat and Hamas, the Islamic group that has carried out the most suicide bombings. "The problems are still the same."

"We are staying here," Ms. Daniel said. "This is our city, our country. Why should I move?" Unlike many other stores, hers has no guard at the door. Her one concession to security is a careful visual scrutiny of Arab customers for possible weapons, though she acknowledges this is unlikely to prevent an attack.

In Israel at large, the mood appears slightly more optimistic.

"The chance to come out of the bomb shelters, to breathe fresh air and to rest a bit from the fear of terror attacks and assassinations will be a refreshing change on both sides," wrote Hemi Shalev, a columnist for Maariv. "The economy will start to recover, some of the tourists will come back and who knows, maybe life will start having its way instead of death."

Since three leading Palestinian factions declared a suspension of attacks, Palestinian gunmen in the West Bank have carried out two shootings. Assailants killed a Bulgarian worker driving a truck Monday near the town of Jenin, and a Palestinian man was killed by Israeli troops today after he opened fire at a military checkpoint near the town of Tulkarm.

A senior Israeli military official sketched a scenario in which suicide bombings and other major attacks inside Israeli cities could stop, at least for a while. The Gaza Strip, where Israeli forces pulled out of Palestinian areas on Sunday night, could also remain relatively calm.

But in the West Bank, Palestinian gunmen are likely to stage ambushes against the more than 200,000 Israeli settlers who must often travel isolated stretches of road, the military official said. Israeli troops plan to withdraw from Bethlehem on Wednesday, and the peace plan calls for them to leave other Palestinian towns in the West Bank, possibly in coming weeks, possibly leaving the settlers even more exposed. "There's no doubt the military's hands are going to be tied," said Ezra Rosenfeld, a spokesman for the Settlers Council, which represents the Israelis living in the West Bank and Gaza. "The country may be gaining something politically, but we will be paying a very heavy price."

He predicted that shootings on West Bank roads would produce discussions between Israeli and Palestinian security forces, but not tough action. "Each shooting will raise the threshold of what will be tolerated," he said.

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Graphic

Chart: "Along a Deadly Road in Jerusalem" The busiest stretch of Jaffa Road has had more major attacks than any other place during the recent fighting. 2001 AUG. 9 -- Bomber at Sbarro pizzeria. SEPT. 4 -- Bomber kills self on HaNavim Street. DEC. 1 -- Two bombers nearly simultaneously. 2002 JAN. 22 -- Suicidal shooting attack. JAN. 27 -- The first suicide bombing by a woman. MARCH 21 -- Bomber on King George Street. APRIL 12 -- A **female** bomber on a bus. JULY 30 -- Bomber kills self at a falafel stand. 2003 JUNE 11 -- Bomber on a bus at evening rush hour. (Chart also tracks the number of Israelis killed if any in each attack) Map of Israel highlighting Jerusalem and the sites of the attacks. (Source: Associated Press)

Load-Date: July 2, 2003

End of Document

NEWS SUMMARY

The New York Times
June 25, 2003 Wednesday
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Section: Section A; Column 3; Metropolitan Desk; Pg. 2

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Body

INTERNATIONAL A3-10

6 British Soldiers Killed By Iraqi Gunmen in South

Iraqi gunmen killed six British soldiers in southern Iraq as violence and unrest spread to areas of the country that had been largely quiet since the war ended almost two months ago. A1

The United States military has cordoned off part of an Iraqi village near the Syrian border that was hit in a deadly aerial assault last week and evicted five families whose houses were bombed in the attack. A1

A top State Department expert on chemical and biological weapons told Congress in closed-door hearings last week that he had been pressured to tailor his analysis on Iraq and other matters to conform to the Bush administration's agenda, several congressional officials said. A11

The senior lieutenant to Saddam Hussein who was detained in Iraq last week had obtained Belarussian passports for himself and others, possibly including Mr. Hussein's sons, United States government officials said. A12

Aid Package for Pakistan

President Bush offered Pakistan a tightly conditioned package of \$3 billion in aid that seemed intended to bolster an unsteady ally that only two years ago was still under strict American sanctions. A10

Beijing Has SARS Under Control

The World Health Organization said that Beijing had effectively conquered SARS, signaling victory over the disease in the country where it originated and took the most lives. A8

China and India in Border Talks

India emphasized that Tibet is part of China and China agreed to begin trading with India's northeastern state of Sikkim, as the world's two most populous countries tiptoed toward a settlement of their politically explosive border disputes. A6

Israeli Arabs Charged

Five Israeli Arabs were charged with funneling an estimated \$10 million to the Islamic group **Hamas**. A8

NEWS SUMMARY

Tough Medicine for Argentina

Argentina and the International Monetary Fund agreed to begin negotiating a multiyear agreement that will force the new government to make politically unpopular decisions the country has been avoiding for nearly two years. A10

NATIONAL A16-23

California Is Struggling To Resolve Budget Deficit

California's legislative leaders are nowhere near agreement on how to address the state's \$38 billion two-year deficit. The constitutional deadline for passage of a state budget is less than a week away. A1

Child Tax Credit Delayed

Republican Senate leaders said that because of the press of Medicare legislation, there would be no agreement with the House this month to increase the child tax credit for 6.5 million low-income families. A18

Senate Moves to Alter Rules

Senate Republicans approved a proposal to make it easier to break filibusters that prevent votes on administration nominations. Federal judicial candidates and future Supreme Court nominees stand to gain. A22

Store Settles Employee Dispute

Abercrombie & Fitch, the retailer for the college set, has agreed to pay \$2.2 million to settle an investigation in which California accused it of illegally requiring employees to purchase and wear its apparel. A16

Chicago Has a Few Questions

Chicago is building and naming a park for Jean Baptiste Point DuSable. But it can't decide if he really is the city's sole founder. Or what he looked like. A16

SCIENCE/HEALTH

Hormone's Role in Cancer

New findings from a study that linked postmenopausal hormone therapy to an increased risk of breast cancer reveal that the combination of hormones used in a common type of therapy makes tumors harder to detect. A1

Mixed Findings for Drug

A drug that doctors had hoped might prevent prostate cancer has been found to be more effective than expected, but also potentially more dangerous. A17

World Emissions Agreement

An array of industrialized and developing countries agreed on the outline of a joint research program aimed at capturing and storing carbon dioxide, the main smokestack emission linked to global warming. A8

NEW YORK/REGION B1-6

New Panel to Review Child Welfare Agency

New Jersey agreed to one of the most sweeping transfers of authority ever to a court-mandated overseer. The five-member panel will help state officials develop a detailed plan to change the state's embattled child welfare agency, setting concrete targets and time frames for improvements in at least 11 separate areas of child welfare. B1

Agreement Near on Budget

Mayor Bloomberg and the City Council neared a budget agreement in which the mayor agreed to cut fewer city services and the Council to scale back some demands. B1

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SPORTS D1-7

Conference Votes to Expand

The presidents of universities in the Atlantic Coast Conference voted 7-2 to invite the University of Miami and Virginia Tech to join the A.C.C., according to a person with intimate knowledge of the vote. They excluded Syracuse and Boston College in a surprising last-minute move. D1

OBITUARIES B8

EDUCATION B9

New York Math Scores Voided

New York State's education commissioner, Richard P. Mills, set aside the results of last week's Math A Regents exam for seniors and juniors. Many educators had described the test, which is required for graduation, as inordinately difficult. A1

Colleges Respond to Ruling

Universities across the country began grappling with the meaning of the Supreme Court rulings on affirmative action. A22

Reduced Fat in City Meals

The New York City Education Department is reducing the fat content in the 800,000 meals it serves daily and banning sugary snacks from school vending machines. B1

BUSINESS DAY C1-16

Verizon Approves Cell Plan

Verizon Wireless will drop its opposition to a federal plan to allow callers to keep their wireless phone numbers when they switch carriers. Other mobile phone operators will probably accept the arrangement. C1

Oracle Amends Offer

While persisting in its hostile bid to acquire PeopleSoft, Oracle dropped one condition of the offer: its objection to PeopleSoft's latest move to acquire J. D. Edwards, a rival business software maker. C1

Step Toward Asbestos Fund

Senators reached a compromise that would make it easier for asbestos victims to qualify for payments from a proposed trust fund. The fund would end asbestos lawsuits and pay according to a set schedule. C1

Polo Ralph Lauren Gets License

A feud over the Lauren/Ralph Lauren women's line ended when Jones Apparel threw the license back to Polo Ralph Lauren. C1

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Editorials: Doing it right in Congo; Internet filters and free speech; Fixing Albany: a broken Legislature.

Columns: Thomas L. Friedman and Maureen Dowd.

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Public Lives B2
Weather D8

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Real men want out of testosterone city

MAIL ON SUNDAY

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Byline: Suzanne Moore

Body

A POLITICIAN telling the truth is as unlikely as a grown man wanting to spend time listening to his kids practise the trumpet.

No political male really wants to spend more time with his family, or stops being ambitious, or is so soft as to bow to his partner's demands.

This has been the incredulous reaction to Alan Milburn's decision to resign.

Intrepid political reporters find themselves venturing the possibility that Milburn is telling the truth while seriously hoping he isn't.

Doesn't this tell us some rather unpleasant things about both the state of politics and of family life in Britain, not least about the relationship between the two?

What is demanded of modern politicians is simply incompatible with family life.

They must be good local MPs even if their constituencies are hundreds of miles from Westminster. They must master their brief within ten minutes of being in office. They must appear in a whirl of activity and be on call to the media to regurgitate information about those infernal 'targets' they have to set themselves.

At the same time, they must be fully rounded individuals with a hint of hinterland. Oh yes, and if at all possible have a photogenic partner and 2.4 children.

Blair, sent by a Higher Being to save the world, might be able to manage all this, but who expects it of other politicians?

Certainly not the great British public, more and more distrustful of these hyperactive antics.

The public just wants its elected representatives to be honest, slightly normal and have an inkling about life outside the sheltered accommodation that is the Westminster village from which everyone apart from political obsessives are squeezed out.

Inside Parliament, as the gulf with the public grows ever wider, it helps to have had no other career aside from the law.

Real men want out of testosterone city

All other professional experience is but nothing compared with that of having been an advocate for whoever paid your fees.

All of this is a long way off from the hazy days when we thought New Labour might change the way politics was done. More women, more work/ life balance, more recognisably human people in power, we imagined dreamily.

Instead the Cabinet is still testosterone city and power appears more and more centralised. Blair could go to war without consulting his Cabinet properly.

All that matters is the old Blair/Brown/Mandelson mHnage a trois and that bloody Tony/ Gordon pact in an Islington cafe.

But most of us wouldn't mind if they had ended up in front of the fire for a spot of naked wrestling, if our schools now had enough teachers and our hospitals enough nurses.

THE idea that only three or four delusional men are running the country turns everyone off politics.

How is it that, after all their efforts to win us over, we feel so disregarded by the political classes?

Perhaps it's because we can be taken to war against our wishes, denied a referendum on the EU constitution, bullied if we raise doubts about the MMR vaccine and 'listened' to over GM foods then totally ignored.

There is surely more to life than this and perhaps Milburn has realised it.

I simply feel sorry for his kids.

Having got used to an absent father they will now have to go through an intense period of overcompensation from a dad desperate to prove he has made the right decision.

Still we should all admire the fact that he is acknowledging the work involved in being a good parent. He may even find it more rewarding than antagonising Gordon Brown.

Women, we are told constantly, can't really have it all. Well most men can't either.

Milburn has shown up that sad pretence. So let's just wish him a very good Father's Day.

TheRoyal baggage...

POOR Fergie can't get a man because she has too much ' baggage'. That is a kind way of referring to Prince Andrew.

As she says: 'Any man would have to take on an awful lot.

There is the public scrutiny, a mad family the Fergusons I mean.'

Obviously. Who would have thought she meant anyone else?

Meanwhile, in the perfectly sane Royal Family, I felt sorry for Harry after seeing him at Eton. One couldn't help feeling that he would have been better off doing an apprenticeship at a technical college somewhere.

All that money, all that education, all that fancy dress bow ties and tails and he just sits two A-levels, one of them Art?

I love a grunter, girls...

OH GOD, not the annual row about grunting women! Every year there is a search to find a female tennis player who doesn't frighten the horses. She must be properly feminine i.e. blonde, not too muscled and quiet.

Real men want out of testosterone city

Thus we end up with someone like Kournikova who looks the part but can't win.

Just when a new leggy blonde Maria Sharapova, left comes along, it turns out she is another ferocious grunter.

What is all this 'seen but not heard' nonsense? I like a good screamer and am looking forward to hearing her.

Pinter's horror script

PLAYWRIGHT Harold Pinter compares the Bush administration to Nazi Germany and accuses our Prime Minister of 'mass-murdering'. It's typical Pinter, but I'm glad he continues to speak up.

His remarks will be dismissed, of course but what about his claim that Guantanamo Bay 'is actually a concentration camp'?

We learned last week that US military officials are making preparations for the trial and execution of prisoners held there. They are renovating a courtroom for military tribunals and constructing a 'death chamber'. Could it be that Pinter is right?

WHAT is the great shock about selling David Beckham? He may be a sweetie, but we all know he will flog us anything from sunglasses and mobile phones to computer games and engine oil. He is a brand and brands get bought and sold.

All this has little to do with football and everything to do with money.

Whoever said that capitalism was a game of two halves?

DESPITE the horrors, something is shifting in the Middle East our perceptions, at least. The Israeli rocket attack of a busy street with a helicopter missile was bad enough. When people ran to help the wounded, the Israelis fired four more missiles at them. Innocent civilians were killed just as they are in Hamas suicide attacks. It is not enough for America to tick off the Israelis, it has to stop arming them.

In Gaza, the distinction between statesponsored, targeted assassination that kills innocent women and children and terrorism surely no longer holds.

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Iraq: Why it was the wrong war on the wrong enemy for the wrong reasons

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Byline: Wesley Clark

Body

Wesley Clark, the former Nato commander in Europe, is a democrat frontrunner in the race for next year's US Presidential Election. In his new book he argues that the Afghan war was a wasted opportunity to destroy al-Qaeda, and the war on Iraq was a strategic blunder

The end of the Cold War and the break-up of the Soviet Union forced the West to think about the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. There was widespread discussion about the dangers of Soviet "loose nukes", as well as the possibility that skilled scientists, suddenly unemployed, would share their dangerous knowledge. Fissionable material or bioweapons might also find their way into the hands of terrorists, or so-called rogue states such as Iraq, Iran and North Korea.

The US Government allocated hundreds of millions of dollars to identify and secure Soviet nuclear weapons, destroy launching systems, seal nuclear test tunnels and hire scientists formerly employed in WMD programmes. But there were no guarantees of success. Scientists could be moved across borders, key scientific and technological breakthroughs shipped out on a single computer disk and lethal cargos concealed in the expanding flow of world commerce. The opportunities could be reduced and the rate could be slowed, but ultimately some proliferation seemed unavoidable.

Iraq was just one of several rogue states that might have sought to develop its nuclear potential. There was no evidence that it was connected to the more radical Islamists -indeed, though Saddam had tried to employ terrorism as a weapon during the Gulf War, he was a Baathist, a secular socialist considered an enemy by Islamic extremists. Even so, in 1998 Donald Rumsfeld and others wrote to President Clinton asking him to "aim, above all, at the removal of Saddam Hussein's regime from power". They continued: "In the near term, this means a willingness to undertake military action as diplomacy is clearly failing." Their case was based not on any specific Iraq-terrorist connections but rather on the fear that Saddam might acquire weapons of mass destruction and the means to deliver them, putting at risk "the safety of American troops in the region, of our friends and allies such as Israel and the moderate Arab states, and a significant portion of the world's supply of oil". Taking down Saddam became a hobbyhorse for many national security experts.

Thus, instead of focusing on the terrorist threat, the Clinton Administration felt the heat on US policy toward Iraq, which had become the litmus test of UN and US leadership. Bush continued the same way. From almost the first moments after the 9/11 attacks, dealing with international terrorism seemed to become intertwined with older ideas, particularly finishing off Saddam Hussein. Barely five hours after the attack on the Pentagon, Rumsfeld was telling his aides to "start thinking about striking Iraq".

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A Pentagon aide's notes from that day have Rumsfeld asking for the "best info fast" to "judge whether good enough hit SH (Saddam Hussein) at same time, not only OBL (Osama bin Laden)". The notes then quote Rumsfeld as demanding, ominously, that the Administration's response should be to "go massive...sweep it all up, things related and not". Although Saddam and the 9/11 attacks were linked by many in the Bush Administration, from the President down, no one has ever proved that Saddam had anything to do with one of the most costly security failures in US history. At the very outset of the war on terror, some within the Bush Administration sought to enlarge the problem and to use it as a means to address other issues. It was to become diversionary -searching for evidence to justify a campaign; and distracting -seeking to enlarge the problem rather than to focus on its essence.

Of course, the internal evidence pointed immediately to al-Qaeda, not Iraq, as the culprit. But attacking Iraq was in some ways a natural fit, consistent with or supportive of many of the foreign policy and political preferences of the Administration. Action against Iraq would provide focus against a visible, defined and widely disliked adversary. It followed the Cold War mindset of assigning terrorists a state sponsor, a "face", that could be attacked. It was almost certain to be successful. It emphasised US military strengths and built on a decade of preparation for a refight of the Gulf War. It tracked with earlier thoughts of some senior Administration members emphasising the window of opportunity for using US military power to clean up the Middle East. And attacking Saddam was politically feasible - opinion polls showed strong public belief that Saddam was somehow connected to terrorism. From this perspective 9/11 was, some might have thought, a gift-wrapped opportunity too good to pass up.

A few days after 9/11, I visited the Pentagon. The stress was intense. Not only was there high frustration and uncertainty about the future course of US military actions against al-Qaeda; beyond that, some key military leaders saw a misplaced emphasis in the discussions then under way. One officer told me the latest joke making the rounds: "If Saddam didn't do it, too bad, he should have, because we're going to get him anyway." And he continued: "We've never been very good at taking on terrorists, but one thing we can do is take down states, and there's a list of them they (ie, the civilian leaders) want to take out." We both knew that all this would distract us in the fight against al-Qaeda.

Wisely, the Bush Administration didn't begin by attacking Iraq -instead it found a "state sponsor" in the Taleban regime in Afghanistan. On October 9, 2001, the "different kind of war" began with Tomahawk cruise missiles and B2 Stealth bomber strikes.

There followed the advance to Kabul, and within a few weeks the elimination of the Taleban regime in its home city of Kandahar. It was a remarkably swift victory, brilliantly conceived and executed. But a slow, cautious advance into the mountainous terrain of Tora Bora failed to catch Osama bin Laden and his top associates. What had looked like a clean strategic win became a partial failure.

Like many missed chances and potential turning points, this one received only passing notice. The fact remains, the aim should have been to deliver a knockout blow against the terrorist network, not just against the supporting state. Instead al-Qaeda had been scattered, not destroyed. It might never again be so easily targetable.

From the early days after 9/11 some military leaders had argued that substantial numbers of US ground forces inside Afghanistan would be required to achieve success and that airpower alone, even with special forces backing up the local resistance, would ultimately be unsuccessful. As often happens, both sides in the discussions were half-right. Rumsfeld and his team were correct in assessing that airpower would be enormously effective, but the old army thinkers were also correct in emphasising the need for substantial forces -a division or two -to finish the work decisively. As it happened, the rapid collapse of the Taleban government found the United States unable to deploy the necessary forces in time.

It was a strategic opportunity lost -and an eerie prelude to the bias in Pentagon planning that would lead to problems in stabilising post-conflict Iraq in 2003.

But this wasn't the only opportunity lost, or even the first failure of the campaign. That came at the international diplomatic level. Despite the worldwide outpouring of sympathy for the United States in the aftermath of 9/11, we squandered the chance to create a strong international coalition that could address the problems of terrorism

Iraq : Why it was the wrong war on the wrong enemy for the wrong reasons

beyond the limits of sheer US military power, and also help to share some of the enormous political, diplomatic and economic burdens that the struggle would entail.

Nato was pushed aside, even though the United States is its leading member. As one high-ranking member of the Administration told me: "No one is going to tell us where we can and cannot bomb."

Instead of engaging the UN and Nato the United States sought to broaden its campaign beyond the purely military efforts in Afghanistan by working bilaterally with other nations. But the difficulties became apparent almost immediately.

Nations' laws differ, so definitions and elements of proof regarding the crimes varied across borders. Legal procedures dealt differently with electronic evidence, such as conversations overheard through wiretaps and radio intercepts.

Such difficulties were compounded by the old issue of intelligence sharing, where the information received had come from "sensitive sources and methods", sometimes involving intelligence collection that even a friendly host government would object to.

A consequence was that some of the most obvious al-Qaeda suspects were detained and then released, especially in Germany and Spain, which had the more defined legal systems. Yet these were the very states where US military action against al-Qaeda cells was not an option.

Here was a situation that cried out for work through a unified mechanism such as Nato, which converts international issues into domestic political issues by requiring governments to take positions and defend them in front of electorates at home. The Administration's resistance to fully engaging other states through Nato reflected a certain American "attitude", a lack of respect for the constitutional and political processes of other states, and an overestimation of American power.

The United States was left wrestling with a hundred governments bilaterally an enormously difficult endeavour in something so complicated and sensitive as the war on terror. So what sounded easy at the top -a "floating coalition" -proved far more difficult to enact at the bottom of the government, where much of the heavy burden was being undertaken. Consequently, despite the thousands of al Qaeda suspects detained worldwide, the network was (and remains) far from broken.

Meanwhile the Bush Administration was focused on a move against Iraq. War to unseat Saddam Hussein promised concrete, visible action. If any terrorists still thought that Americans were soft and reluctant to strike back, well, this would be the convincing blow. Success against an Iraq weakened by a decade of crippling economic sanctions seemed guaranteed. And with the use of force in Iraq would come other opportunities, such as breaking out of the decade-old dual-containment policy in the Gulf; pressuring other states in the region; and dealing with potential challenges to US regional dominance before any significant threat could arise.

In the Pentagon in November 2001, one of the senior staff officers told me we were still on track for going against Iraq. But there was more. This was being discussed as part of a five-year campaign plan, he said, and there was a total of seven countries, beginning with Iraq, then Syria, Lebanon, Libya, Iran, Somalia and Sudan. So, I thought, this is what they mean when they talk about "draining the swamp". It was further evidence of the Cold War approach: terrorism must have a state sponsor, and it would be much more effective to attack a state -with complete confidence that it can be taken down -than to chase after individuals, nebulous organisations and shadowy associations. What a mistake to assume that terrorism was simply coming from these states. It was true that Iran supported Hezbollah and that Syria was complicit in aiding Hamas and Hezbollah. But neither Hezbollah nor Hamas was targeting Americans. Why not build international power against al-Qaeda? But if we prioritised the threat against us from any state, surely Iran was at the top of the list, with chemical and biological warfare programmes, clear nuclear aspirations and an organised, global terrorist arm?

And what about the real sources of terrorists -US allies such as Egypt, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia? Was it not the repressive policies of the first and the corruption and poverty of the second that was generating many of the angry

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young men who became terrorists? And what of the radical ideology and direct funding spewing from Saudi Arabia, where most of the 9/11 hijackers came from? Wasn't that what was holding the radical Islamic movement together? What about our Nato allies, whose cities were being used as staging bases and planning headquarters? Why were we not putting greater effort into broader preventive measures? It seemed that we were being taken into a strategy more likely to make us the enemy - encouraging what could look like a "clash of civilisations" -not a good strategy for winning the war on terror. Taking down these seven states would do little to address directly the terrorists who attacked the United States, but it would probably make us the enemy of many governments in the region and much of the Islamic world.

The way to beat terrorists was to take away their popular support. Target their leaders individually, demonstrate their powerlessness, roll up the organisations from the bottom. I thought it would be better to drive them back into one or two states that had given them support, and then focus our efforts there. It would not be wise to go after a whole series of states first and risk dispersing terrorists among increasingly anti-American Islamic populations. Additionally there was the issue of military feasibility. We could probably handle most of the standing armed forces in those states without difficulty, though Iran would be challenging 70 million people, much larger than Iraq, really difficult terrain. But what would happen after we got in? And what about the postwar plan? What would happen after we overran these countries? How would we govern and develop them, and why did we think we could do a better job of preventing terrorists operating there than the Israelis had done in the West Bank or in South Lebanon? We had already grappled with Somalia and found that fighting women and children and irregular forces in cities was ugly and difficult.

If we wanted to go after states supporting terrorism, why not first go to the United Nations, present the evidence against al-Qaeda, set up a tribunal for prosecuting international terrorism? Why not develop resolutions that would give our counterterrorist efforts the greater force of international law and gain for us more powerful leverage against any state that might support terrorists, then use international law to rope in the always nuanced Europeans that still kept open trade with Iran and the others?

Military planning for Iraq began during the autumn of 2001, probably in accord with political direction coming from the highest levels of American government.

And after the President delivered his 2002 State of the Union address, the policy was locked in concrete. We were going against Iraq.

Winning Modern Wars: Iraq, Terrorism and the American Empire by General Wesley K.

Clark is published by Marston and is available at the Books Direct price of £15.19 (RRP £18.99) plus £1.95 p&p on 0870 160 8080; www.timesonline.co.uk/booksdirect

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War-torn nations have lost the will for peace; WEEKEND ESSAY

Australian Financial Review

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First Edition

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Byline: PETER RODGERS. Peter Rodgers is a former Australian ambassador to Israel. He is the author of Herzl's Nightmare: One Land, Two People.

Body

In 1974, wearing his trademark black-and-white headscarf carefully crafted in the shape of Palestine, Yasser Arafat declared before the United Nations General Assembly, "I am a rebel and freedom is my cause: I have come bearing an olive branch and a freedom-fighter's gun".

Arafat in fact had been required to check in his gun at the door and sported nothing more lethal than an empty holster. But that little exaggeration was of minor consequence. Much more serious was Arafat's claimed familiarity with the olive branch. For then, even more so than now, he embodied the incongruities that stain leading figures in the bloody feud between Jew and Palestinian over land they both call home.

At their heart lies the contradiction between freedom fighter and terrorist. There is little doubt that Arafat is both. In his quest for Palestinian statehood, he has employed, directly and indirectly, indiscriminate violence often against civilian Israelis. And he has, again with little doubt, been a better terrorist than freedom fighter. Thirty years after he first addressed the UN, the prospect of the 3 million-plus Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank leading lives of dignity and security is as remote as ever. Arafat may have delivered rebellion; freedom he has not.

Nowadays, the Israeli government, led by Ariel Sharon, and the US administration of George Bush won't deal with Arafat. They paint him as the major impediment to peace. That's a convenient deduction by people who should know better. For the major impediment is not Arafat; indeed it's not even Sharon, whose own record of bad behaviour is a close match for Arafat's. The major impediment is the fact that Israelis and Palestinians have grown so used to the conflict they appear to have lost the will, and the courage, to end it.

Both know what has to be done. Publicly they have to renounce their dreams the Jewish one of a homeland in all of Biblical Israel; the Palestinian dream of their own state supplanting the Jewish one.

Arafat and the Palestinian leadership have to say to the Israelis, clearly, unequivocally: "We accept that you have a deep attachment to this land. We accept the Jewish state as a natural, legitimate part of the region. We will deal harshly with those of us who attack you."

And Israelis have to say to the Palestinians: "You paid a great price for our self-determination. We dispossessed you from a land you also hold dear. We cannot undo that wrong. But we can, and we will, help you to achieve your own statehood."

War-torn nations have lost the will for peace WEEKEND ESSAY

Such a scenario seems unreal. For Israelis and Palestinians are so locked into their own myths, their own sense of victimhood, their absolutist take on good and evil, that they cannot move forward.

Almost daily they feed the worst fears of the other. The two critical elements in this are Palestinian terrorism and Israeli colonisation of the Palestinian territories of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

The Palestinians have no mortgage on violence. Bear in mind that in the past four years, about three-quarters of the more than 4000 people killed in the renewed blood-letting have been Palestinians. Not even the most hardline Israelis would dare to suggest that they were all terrorists. Many of the victims were civilian bystanders, including women and children.

Bear in mind also that in the struggle for Jewish self-determination, particularly in the 1930s and 1940s, future leaders of the Israeli state were directly involved in wanton acts of terrorism that took scores of lives.

But - and it is an important qualification - the Palestinian leadership, especially Arafat, often gives the impression of wanting to have it both ways. Of wanting to use terrorist violence to pressure Israel while at the same time deploring Israeli reaction (and overreaction) to it. Of claiming that to clamp down on extremist organisations like Hamas and Islamic Jihad would run a grave risk of triggering civil war.

Bluntly put, the Palestinian leadership lives in its own fantasy world. It seems to believe that Israel will do a deal while watching the steady succession of attacks that kill and maim scores of Israelis. In the telling words of Dennis Ross, who worked at the heart of US peace-making efforts for more than a decade, Arafat renounced terrorism but never discredited it. The conflict has defined Arafat. Tragically, he cannot move on.

But it is not just the dysfunctional Palestinian leadership that exists in a fantasy world. There is no better example of Israeli myopia than its settlement of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. This movement was launched soon after Israel's stunning victory over the Arab world in the 1967 Six-Day War. It was given an enormous fillip by then agriculture minister Sharon, who in 1977 unveiled his "vision for Israel at century's end", calling for 2 million settlers in the occupied territories by 2000.

Fortunately, that did not come to pass. But the extraordinary thing is that during the 1990s, when a peace deal seemed in prospect, Israelis could not resist the urge to occupy land that logically should have been earmarked for the Palestinian state. In the past decade, the number of Israeli settlers in the West Bank actually doubled, to about 230,000.

Decades of violence have rendered Israelis and Palestinians incapable of making peace. This week's Israeli offensive in Gaza and the resulting blood-letting epitomise the template of their relationship. With a few honourable exceptions, Israelis and Palestinians are incapable of looking the other in the eye and acknowledging that history has dealt each a raw deal.

Both claim the moral high ground and neither deserve it. Each is intent on demeaning the other's cause.

Both are the losers and, worse still, we all are. For the Israeli-Palestinian conflict feeds a wider extremism that makes the contemporary world such a dangerous place.

So should those within and beyond the region try to engineer a solution? The American record is one of occasionally energetic, sometimes imaginative, sometimes ill-conceived endeavour. Four years ago, the Clinton administration brought the parties tantalisingly close to a deal. But they could not pull it off. Partly because the process was rushed; partly because it was driven by American and Israeli domestic political purpose as much as any other factor; and partly because of flawed negotiations in which final Israeli positions proved ephemeral thereby hardening both Arafat's hopes and his obstinacy.

With the European Union, Russia and the UN, the Americans make up the quartet which in 2003 produced a road map for peace. This envisaged a final and comprehensive settlement by next year, involving a two-state solution.

War-torn nations have lost the will for peace WEEKEND ESSAY

For all its impact, the road map may as well be written in invisible ink. Israel remains deeply distrustful of Europe and the UN. Renewed Egyptian and Jordanian involvement, possibly as peacekeepers in Gaza and the West Bank respectively, could help a process of Israeli withdrawal. But it could also harden Palestinian suspicions that a genuinely free, viable state of their own is simply not on the agenda.

For peace to have a chance, Israelis and Palestinians must acknowledge the horror of what they are doing to the other, and to themselves. They are not ready for that mental shift. And no outsider can impose it.

Graphic

PHOTO: Peter Rodgers

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End of Document

Reform or die for Damascus

The Australian

October 25, 2004 Monday All-round Country Edition

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Section: WORLDTABLE; Pg. 14

Length: 1310 words

Byline: Nicolas Rothwell

Body

Syria is gambling on a change from the old ways and the stakes are high, writes Middle East correspondent Nicolas Rothwell

THE regime propaganda billboard on Syria's main northern highway is explicit: "Loyalty to the Government of President Bashar Al-Assad means loyalty to the program of Hafez Al-Assad."

But the precise opposite is true, as everyone in the country knows. Syria, long one of the most tightly controlled and doctrinaire of Arab nations, has been reinventing itself, and is now four years into a momentous project of social and economic reforms, brokered by its new, Western-educated president.

Assad's bid to create a modern Syria aims to jump-start the private sector, forge closer ties with Europe and even ease the grip of state security forces -- the all-seeing Mukhabarat.

His efforts may invoke the name of his late father Hafez, his predecessor as head of state, but they mark a dramatic departure from the old system. And this renovation is being pursued at a difficult time for Syria, which finds itself under intense diplomatic pressure on three fronts.

MATP

The US believes Damascus has been giving persistent support to the insurgency inside Iraq and has imposed tight economic sanctions in retaliation.

Israel, which is still formally at war with Syria, claims terror cells on the West Bank are being directed from Damascus. Israeli forces last year bombed a training camp on Syrian soil, and last month assassinated a key leader of the Palestinian **Hamas** movement on a suburban Damascus street.

Syria's long-term influence over its Lebanese neighbour has also come under sharp international scrutiny. In late August, Assad unceremoniously forced the Beirut political establishment to extend the term in office of the pro-Syrian head of state, President Emile Lahoud.

Syria maintains a strong, if discreet, military contingent of 14,000 troops inside Lebanon, and exercises close control over Lebanese foreign policy.

But the United Nations has now turned its eye on this continuing Syrian presence. Last week, under the guidance of the US and France, the UN Security Council issued a unanimous, sharply-worded call for Syrian troops to leave Lebanon.

Reform or die for Damascus

And in Beirut on Wednesday, Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri and his cabinet resigned, their precarious unity torn apart by disputes over the Syrian role in the recent presidential contest. Hariri was immediately replaced by a pro-Syrian veteran, Omar Karamneh.

Against this disquieting backdrop of outside pressure, Assad and his government's inner circle, neatly balanced between would-be reformers and ideological "old-guardists" of the ruling Baath Party, now face the dilemma that besets all liberalising regimes.

How to relax the command structures that have constrained Syrian society and shaped its economy for decades without triggering chaos? How to introduce free markets and yet maintain the party-state?

The signs are that the president is determined to press ahead. He has announced a comprehensive cabinet reshuffle, strengthening the position of his loyalists.

And in a wide-ranging national address this month, he spoke of matters close to the hearts of ordinary Syrians: the need to free up the ossified, state-run banking system (ATMs are almost non-existent) and the need to play to the country's strengths and release the energy of individuals.

On the street, Assad seems personally popular, even if the regime's track record is not so much admired.

"There have been real changes," insisted one of the many Syrians interviewed around the country for this article.

"It's not perfect democracy, but it's no longer a complete dictatorship. I've had some serious problems recently, and I took them to the security police.

"Well, you know what used to happen. People went into the offices of the Mukhabarat and never came back out. In my case, though, and in many others I know of, matters have been dealt with in a very correct fashion."

This does not mean Syria has been transformed into a paragon of Western transparency. It is very much a guided state, and anti-regime dissidents are watched and harassed. But the cities do not vibrate with the fear of arbitrary authority -- rather, they are alive with a kind of tough, enduring hope for change.

Younger people are among the new president's keenest backers, feeding rapturously on the abrupt influx of mobile phones and satellite TV. Half of Syria's 18million population are teenagers and they know the old-style, state-controlled economy had no hope of delivering enough jobs to guarantee them any future.

Economic and social revolutions, though, are best carried out in conditions of peace, with international support.

Assad and his government have been struggling to reach some accommodation with the forces arrayed against them. This week a long-delayed trade and political accord with the European Union, Syria's preferred Western partner, was signed. And Damascus has been trying to craft a diplomatic compromise over Lebanon. A much-publicised partial withdrawal of Syrian forces from some of their more visible positions around Beirut was staged last month. Significantly, Assad's key new appointment as Interior Minister, General Ghazi Kanaan, was the previous head of Syrian military intelligence in Lebanon.

Kanaan's new tasks may well include an attempt to reach some face-saving revision of the relationship between Syria and its neighbour.

Meanwhile, despite background sabre-rattling, the US has been holding high-level talks in Damascus over frontier co-operation to stop terrorist infiltration of Iraq. There have even been some moves towards liaison between US and Syrian local commanders on the ground at border posts.

This leaves Israel, Assad's permanent nightmare. For all the hostility between the two countries, their ceasefire lines are notably stable.

Reform or die for Damascus

Murky rumours of initial contacts between Syrian and Israeli officials surface from time to time. They have been so persistent in Damascus that Assad recently, and very pointedly, had to deny that there had been any peace negotiations.

The Syrian leader's present dilemma is as much ideological as economic. The regime's authority derives from its military-accented nationalism; its new path is welcoming in counter-influences.

Syrians can now see ever more clearly how poor their life conditions remain, by comparison with those of their neighbours. This raises the possibility of backlash, or violent discontent, a possibility much in the thoughts of prominent figures among the political elite.

An extraordinarily frank article by Assad's key intimate, Dr Sami Al-Kheimi, the new Syrian ambassador to London, warns explicitly against the danger of an uprising that would "drown the region in anarchy", and confesses to the regime's past economic failures. "Syria is marching towards reform of all kinds, from economic reform through administrative reform and including political reform," he writes.

"Those who gamble that its efforts will fail are deluded. They forget the hopes our people are pinning on the reform that is being carried out by our will -- and the fear of reform imposed upon it from the outside."

Al-Kheimi's views, now circulating in a Damascus online publication, may be taken as those of the young president. They bear the stamp of prolonged reflection on the lessons of Iraq, and they highlight the Syrian elite's determination to transform itself, while still keeping control.

The brusque Syrians, so often regarded by their Arab brethren as poor country cousins, may well have found a plausible way to gain admittance to the international community without losing their national identity in the process.

SYRIA SNAPSHOT

Area: 185,000sq km

Capital: Damascus

Population: 18 million

Main religion: 74 per cent Sunni Muslim.

Life expectancy: **Women** 69, men 66

GDP: \$US22 billion

GDP per capita: \$US1201

Inflation: 2.1 per cent

Unemployment: 5.1 per cent

Load-Date: October 24, 2004

Bush nominated as GOP unites; Schwarzenegger, first lady praise leadership

Bangor Daily News (Maine)

September 1, 2004 Wednesday

Coastal EditionFinal Edition

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Section: Pg. A1

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Byline: A.J. HIGGINS OF THE NEWS STAFF

Dateline: NEW YORK

Body

Delegates to the Republican National Convention were brought to their feet Tuesday night when Laura Bush and Arnold Schwarzenegger extolled President Bush as a pillar of confidence in times of great uncertainty.

"You can count on him, especially in a crisis," said the first lady.

"He's a man of perseverance. He's a man of inner strength. He is a leader who doesn't flinch, doesn't waiver, does not back down," the California governor added in prepared remarks that blended high praise for the president with assurances to immigrants that the party welcomes them. "We Republicans admire your ambition. We encourage your dreams. We believe in your future."

Schwarzenegger and the first lady had their turns at the Madison Square Garden podium as 2,508 delegates formally bestowed their nomination on the president for a second term in office. "Four more years," they chanted in unison. The sound system blared the song "Knock on Wood."

Maine's delegates and alternates were thrilled by the double-bill presentations, if not a tad star-struck. Jerry Hudson, an alternate from Brewer, said Laura Bush was "a class act" and a "first-class lady." Hudson said Schwarzenegger "epitomized the American dream."

"He has proven that anyone who's willing to work hard and believe can achieve the American dream," he said.

Schwarzenegger's story has become nearly legendary in America. An enthusiastic body-builder turned action movie star turned politician, Schwarzenegger - born in Austria - quickly gained the admiration of the delegation.

"To stand here and speak in behalf of the president of the United States, that is an immigrant's dream," he said.

The California governor recounted his early years in Europe and living in constant fear "of the Soviet boot." The delegates went wild when he told them a real Republican believed that the United States is the "best hope for democracy and not the United Nations."

The crowd went off the charts as Schwarzenegger reminded them that anyone can prosper as long as they're willing to work hard and take a chance on success.

Bush nominated as GOP unites Schwarzenegger, first lady praise leadership

"To those critics who are so pessimistic about our economy, I say: Don't be economic girlie men," Schwarzenegger said as the crowd roared, "AH-nie AH-nie" approvingly.

He encountered sharp criticism in his home state earlier this year when he ridiculed Democratic legislators who opposed his budget as "girlie men."

"He understands the issues that face the American people and he knows President Bush is the man that solve them," said Dwayne Bickford, executive director of the Maine Republican Party. "He's incredible."

Other delegates were clearly caught up in the hype, brandishing blue-and-white "Arnold" signs and chanting "four more years."

"This is great," said Philip Roy, a delegate from Fairfield. "Let's terminate those Democrats. Isn't this amazing."

Bush, locked in a tight re-election race, campaigned across three battleground states during the day and worked to extinguish a convention-week controversy of his own making.

"In this different kind of war, we may never sit down at a peace table. But make no mistake about it, we are winning, and we will win" the war on terror, he told an American Legion convention in Tennessee, one day after saying he didn't think victory would be possible.

"I probably needed to be more articulate" in his earlier comments, he conceded in a radio interview with conservative talk show host Rush Limbaugh.

Bush's Democratic rival, Sen. John Kerry, spent the day at home in Nantucket, Mass., as his campaign settled on a plan to place \$45 million in television advertising in 20 battleground states through Election Day.

The commercials will run on broadcast stations and cable, and include appeals to minority voters whom Democrats need to turn out in large numbers on Nov. 2 if they are to deny Bush a second term.

A poll by The Washington Post showed the race to be a dead heat, 48 percent apiece, but found that the president is moving ahead of his rival on national security issues and pulling into a virtual tie on handling of the economy.

Bush arrives in New York on Wednesday, a day ahead of his nomination acceptance speech that is expected to sketch out a second-term agenda. Vice President Dick Cheney addresses the convention tonight.

Both the first lady and Schwarzenegger praised Bush's leadership in terms that bordered on extravagant in speeches that did double political duty.

For the first lady, that meant what aides called a glimpse at the personal side of the commander in chief; for the governor, an attempt to appeal to new and unregistered voters who are not part of the president's conservative base.

"No American president wants to go to war," said Mrs. Bush, neither Lincoln nor Roosevelt nor her own husband.

But in a description of a commander in chief that most Americans never see, she said, "I remember some very quiet nights at the dinner table" after the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001.

"George was weighing grim scenarios and ominous intelligence and potentially even more devastating attacks. ... And I remember sitting in the window of the White House, watching as my husband walked on the lawn below. I knew he was wrestling with these agonizing decisions that would have such profound consequences for so many lives and the future of the world," she said.

In a contentious day in the streets around the convention hall, police made more than 270 arrests on a day of varied protests. Some activists donned pig snouts and rolled around in bogus \$100 bills bearing an unflattering likeness of Cheney.

Bush nominated as GOP unites Schwarzenegger, first lady praise leadership

Others demonstrated outside the offices of Fox News Channel, which they accused of a right-wing bias. Others protested near the site of the World Trade Center - Ground Zero in the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001.

Retired Army Gen. Tommy Franks, who guided U.S. forces in Iraq and Afghanistan, was a late addition to the speaking program as the campaign worked to strengthen Bush's claim as a steady commander in chief.

The script also called for something of a Bush family hour, with twins Jenna and Barbara introducing their father the president, who would in turn make remarks by remote hookup to present his wife for her speech.

In her prepared remarks, Mrs. Bush said that Bush's leadership has helped 50 million men, women and children win freedom over the past four years, a reference to wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

"I want to talk about the issue that I believe is most important for my own daughters, for all our families, and for our future: George's work to protect our country and defeat terror so that all children can grow up in a more peaceful world," she added.

Schwarzenegger's praise of Bush echoed his Terminator character mantra of "I'll be back."

"America is back. Back from the attack on our homeland - back from the attack on our economy, back from the attack on our way of life," he said in a reference to the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11.

The world outside the convention delivered jarring news in the global war on terror.

A suicide bomber was blamed for an explosion near a busy subway station in Moscow. Hamas took responsibility for blowing up two buses in Israel.

And a Web site offered a link to a video purporting to show the methodical, grisly killings of 12 Nepalese construction workers kidnapped in Iraq.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

Load-Date: September 1, 2004

Comment & Analysis: Look past the hijab: Muslims in Britain are trying to establish their own institutions and identity. They need allies

The Guardian (London) - Final Edition

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Byline: Madeleine Bunting

Body

Sheikh Maksud Kangat, the youthful director of education at Tooting's mosque in south London, has around 500 children in four educational establishments under his jurisdiction. But on this particular Friday, Kangat has more on his mind than Ofsted, the national curriculum and devising the new school uniform. His daughter is begging for her lunch box, but he sends her out of the office before he will answer my question about the photographs of Iraqi prisoners being abused in Abu Ghraib by their American captors. "This kind of humiliation . . . from an Islamic perspective, covering is so important." He lowers his voice, he doesn't complete his sentences. "These are things we can't even talk about. I feel so embarrassed."

The subject also comes up next door in the mosque's office, where Sheikh Suleman Gani and the mosque secretary, Farouk Valimahomed, have laid out tea and biscuits for me. "One Muslim brother came up to me in the station. He was very angry about what has happened to our Muslim brothers, and I had to calm him down. I told him that this is a time of testing," said Valimahomed. "In every community, you find a small group who commit crimes. And in the Koran it says don't make the whole people responsible for a crime which one individual has committed."

The strain on community leaders like Valimahomed is evident. "People who had never identified with Osama bin Laden are now thinking again as the news comes - Bush's agreement with Sharon, the Israeli assassinations of Hamas leaders, now the photographs. You begin to think there is more to it; I never used to consider there was any justification for Osama bin Laden, but now I'm not so sure. A lot of people feel the US is out for revenge for 9/11."

"There's a pattern of abuse in Guantanamo, Belmarsh. There's more to come out in Afghanistan and Iraq. At first we were doubtful, but it's all coming together," said Gani. In their eyes, the "pattern of abuse" has come all the way to the quiet terraced streets of Tooting. Last December, four youngsters were arrested. In the close-knit Muslim community, the details of the police operation, with helicopters and dozens of police in the night, spread like wildfire. There was considerable publicity surrounding the arrests, but none around their subsequent discharges, and the damage was done - Muslims felt threatened, and they also felt their standing in the neighbourhood was irreparably harmed.

"At a meeting for youngsters of the mosque last winter, I said to them, 'Don't be vociferous, don't talk on the pavement outside the mosque, don't hold extremist views, don't say too much on your mobile phones, because something could happen in this area'," said Valimahomed. But they didn't like what they were being told. "One said, 'It sounds like you are restricting our freedom.'"

Comment & Analysis: Look past the hijab: Muslims in Britain are trying to establish their own institutions and identity. They need allies

Iqbal Sacranie, secretary of the Muslim Council of Britain, has invested over 30 years of his life building up Tooting and its parent mosque in nearby Balham. In that time, Muslims have achieved something not far short of miraculous: self-financing mosques that serve as community centres for thousands of families, running women's health groups, offering advice, education and police drop-in sessions. But now Sacranie and other community leaders find themselves in an increasingly precarious position, having to assure the police and Home Office of their cooperation, on the one hand, and reassure their own community, on the other.

"We have to convince two sets of people. If the government doesn't listen to our points about how and why they make these arrests, then our community asks us, 'What are we getting out of the relationship with the authorities?' They want to see results," says Sacranie. "During the arrests last December, one grandmother of a suspect, in her 80s, was very worried. She asked me, 'Are we all targets now?' I assured her, no, that wasn't the case and I would help."

The issue for Sacranie, Valimahomed and others like them, is how long will they manage to keep the community's trust? The pressure is enormous; there have been 562 arrests since 9/11 under anti-terrorism legislation and only 97 charged. Plus, there has been a huge increase in the use of stop and search under terrorist legislation. In jeopardy are the achievements of a quarter of a century of dogged work to establish a strong, peaceful British Muslim community. In Tooting, the mosque's schools integrate Muslims from every part of the globe - from Nigeria to Turkey and Afghanistan - and make them British. The little five-year-olds in their veils, caps and turbans, their faces beaming, recite English nursery rhymes, while their 15-year-old counterparts upstairs are poring over the Merchant of Venice.

For the past decade, the classrooms have been shoehorned into an old cinema and double up as the mosque at prayer time. Yet their Sats and GCSE results have been spectacular. Most of the children have English as a second language, yet by age 11 they achieved 100% at the government required reading level in 2003. They have finally been granted state funding, and the £7m purpose-built primary school is to open its doors - to Muslims and non-Muslims alike - in September. Kangat dreams of a Muslim sixth-form college, Muslim teacher training and a Muslim university - an entire Muslim educational system. Valimahomed talks of the sports academy they are developing on a 38-acre site for Muslims and non-Muslims.

The struggle by Muslims to establish their own institutions and identity in this country, in the face of hostility and suspicion, is comparable to that of the Catholics at the time of the Irish independence movement in the late 19th century. But the stakes are higher, and the international context and its global repercussions more insistent. So, where are their allies? Who's helping? In the US, interfaith groups have mushroomed in a bid to build understanding between Christianity and Islam, and there have been comparable initiatives here, but they are less significant in a secularised Britain. The allies one might expect on the liberal left hold back. They find the religiosity alienating, they can't get beyond the hijab issue, and in many quarters they're no longer prepared to take up the cudgels on human rights - accepting the government line that such is the threat of terrorism that some rights have to be curtailed.

What the Muslims in Tooting most want is understanding of their faith - of its principles of community, peace and its abhorrence of violence. The same message was evident at an event in central London last week, addressed by the American Muslim convert Hamza Yousef. Over a thousand young Muslims turned up to discuss "Islam, citizenship and the west". There's a battle going on as to what kind of a religion Islam is; schools, public debates and clinics rarely make headlines, while bombs always do. Too many non-Muslims have listened only to the terrorists and have already closed their eyes and ears.

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Comment & Analysis: Look past the hijab: Muslims in Britain are trying to establish their own institutions and identity. They need allies

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By Sharon's standards: It was right to hold Israel to account over Jenin. But why are the US and Britain not in the dock over Falluja?

The Guardian (London) - Final Edition

May 5, 2004

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Byline: Jonathon Freedland

Body

I'm not used to feeling sympathy for Ariel Sharon, but I confess to a twinge this week. For Sharon is the latest victim of the Israeli far right. That sounds funny, I know: for decades, Sharon has been the spiritual leader of the Israeli far right. But those years of dedicated service counted for nought on Sunday, when members of his own Likud party rejected him in a referendum, rebuffing him as too much of a peacenik for their tastes.

His crime was to propose that Israel withdraw fully from the Gaza strip, pulling out its troops and, crucially, its illegal settlements. In return, he told his party, he had won a great prize: American permission for Israel to retain its hold over large chunks of the West Bank. But that was not good enough for the fire-breathers of the settler movement, who regard every inch of what they call Greater Israel as divinely promised turf, too holy to give up. They persuaded the Likud to reject their own leader by 60% to 40%.

So I almost felt for Sharon on Sunday night. Of course his plan was flawed: unilaterally imposed, it would have entrenched occupation here even as it ended it there. But now the old bulldozer has had a taste of what Israel's peace camp has swallowed for more than three decades - defeat at the hands of extremists too blind to see that by holding out for a big Israel, they are putting a safe, secure Israel ever further out of reach.

My sympathy deepened when I came across this little gem from the "Middle East analyst" Emanuel A Winston, circulating on the internet and by no means the most extreme example of its kind. "Is Sharon a court Jew?" it asked, wondering if the ultra-hawk had become one of the medieval grovellers of old, desperate to curry favour with his masters. "History," Mr Winston went on, "will likely decide that he has become a quisling to his own people and I would say to his G-d - except he seems to believe in neither."

This is the treatment that has been meted out to Sharon's Jewish and Israeli critics for years now, so one cannot but feel a sense of solidarity with the Israeli PM now that he is in the same, vilified little boat as the rest of us. Truth is, I find it heartening: if these fanatics consider even hard-man Sharon to be a self-hating traitor then we should scarcely lose sleep when they hurl the same charge at the rest of us.

Armed with this new perspective on Sharon, I find myself thinking afresh about one of the Sharon camp's most tireless arguments: that the countries of the world apply a higher standard to Israel than they do to anybody else, including themselves.

So now I notice that when Thai security forces killed 107 Muslim youths - most of them armed only with knives - in a single session last week, it did not make the front pages nor boil up the phone-in programmes with outrage. If

By Sharon's standards: It was right to hold Israel to account over Jenin. But why are the US and Britain not in the dock over Falluja ?

Israel had killed 107 Palestinians, most without firearms, in a single day I have a feeling it would have sneaked its way towards the top of the news agenda. Nor was there a flood of op-ed pieces asking how long the mainly Buddhist country could continue to defy international norms. Strangely, not a single voice called on Buddhists around the world to denounce and distance themselves from Thailand.

I find myself thinking again about Jack Straw's condemnation of Israel's consecutive assassinations of the **Hamas** leaders, Sheikh Ahmed Yassin and Abdul Aziz Rantissi. "The British government has made it repeatedly clear that so-called 'targeted assassinations' of this kind are unlawful, unjustified and counter-productive," Straw said after Rantissi's killing. Yet one now learns in intimate detail from Bob Woodward's Plan of Attack that the start of the 2003 war on Iraq was brought forward so that the US could attempt a "targeted assassination" of its own against Saddam Hussein. Once woken to hear of the news, Tony Blair did not read the riot act to Bush, condemning his "unlawful, unjustified" act, but was rather in "expansive mood". One does not instantly recall Straw's scathing criticism of the American move either. Perhaps the UK position is that extra-judicial killings are not wrong in principle - it just depends who's doing the killing.

But the key example is the one that has been playing out these last, bloody few weeks. On March 31, four American security contractors were killed in Falluja and their bodies mutilated. The US response was to lock down the entire city of 300,000 and mount a protracted, military campaign against it. Estimates vary from 300 to 750, but no one doubts that hundreds of Iraqis have died in the subsequent siege. One UN figure says that 90% of the dead are civilians, perhaps half of them **women** and children.

That is not hard to believe when one contemplates the firepower the US trained on Falluja: airforce F-15E and F-16 warplanes, F-14 and F-18 fighter-bombers - between them dropping three dozen 500-pound laser-guided bombs in the space of 48 hours - Super Cobra helicopters unloading Hellfire missiles, AC-130 gunships pounding trucks and cars with howitzers, snipers at every turn, and all of it watched by Britain's own Tornado jets, patrolling the skies overhead.

It was two years ago that every news outlet in the world focused its gaze on the Palestinian refugee camp in Jenin where Israel sought to root out what it called a "nest of terror". The press was kept away and rumours spread of a terrible massacre; there were calls for an immediate UN inquiry. In the end, it turned out that the Palestinians had engaged the Israelis in battle; many were proud of their steadfastness and defiance. A later UN report put the confirmed death toll at 52, suggesting that as many as half that number had been fighters rather than civilians.

During the siege, Jenin stirred global outrage. MPs could not keep away from the television cameras, so determined were they to condemn this heinous act. One British newspaper said that of all the recent atrocities - Bosnia, Rwanda, Chechnya, Kosovo - none was worse than Jenin. Yet now in Falluja, when the death toll is in the hundreds rather than the dozens, these voices are silent.

The Sharon crowd would say that the explanation is simple - people are unfair to Israel - and the solution equally straightforward: the world should get off Israel's back. But I draw a different conclusion. It is right to hold Israel to a high standard, right to expose the daily brutalities of occupation. But that standard must be applied equally. If the battle of Jenin merited a UN inquiry, then surely the shooting-gallery of Falluja requires one too. If the more than 2,880 Palestinian deaths of the intifada since September 2000 are to be properly mourned, then so, surely, are the 30,000-60,000 Iraqi casualties the US military reckons it inflicted in the opening weeks of the war, according to Woodward. As George Bush tells the author: "We had just been mowing them down."

If we condemn Israel, then let's also condemn America and Britain. For now we are occupiers, too.

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Load-Date: May 5, 2004

By Sharon's standards: It was right to hold Israel to account over Jenin. But why are the US and Britain not in the dock over Falluja ?

End of Document

Rich legacy;
IN FOCUS : JOHN CORCORAN gives us the lowdown on this year's Writers'
Week Listowel.

Morning Star

May 19, 2004

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Byline: JOHN CORCORAN

Body

IF THE term "punching above its weight" can be ascribed to a town, then the small Irish country town of Listowel in County Kerry richly deserves the epithet.

Set in a wooded valley on the banks of the salmon rich River Feale, with a population of little more than 3,500, Listowel has produced more writers than seems feasible for such a small place.

Maurice Walsh, who wrote the novel that became the famous Hollywood film *The Quiet Man* starring John Wayne and Maureen O'Hara, came from here.

John B Keane, one of Ireland's most celebrated playwrights, continued to run his small bar in Listowel while writing a string of plays and novels such as *Sive*, *Sharon's Grave*, *The Man From Clare*, *The Year Of The Hiker* and *The Field*.

Before his death in May 2002, Keane was to see his play *The Field* became an international film hit, with Richard Harris playing the land-obsessed small farmer Bull McCabe.

One of Ireland's best loved modern playwrights and novelists, Keane's passing was an occasion of genuine sadness for the Irish people and the vast turnout for his funeral was a testament to the universal respect and affection felt for him and his writing.

The celebrated poet and Trinity College literary scholar Brendan Kennelly originates from just up the road in Ballylongford.

Kennelly's poetry is internationally acclaimed and his collections include *My Dark Fathers*, *Good Souls to Survive*, *Island Man*, *The House that Jack Didn't Build*, *The Boats Are Home*, *Cromwell*, *Judas*, *The Man Made of Rain* and *The Singing Tree*.

A number of other prominent Irish writers, such as the novelist Bryan MacMahon, whose work reveals a warm engagement with all aspects of rural life, spent their lives in this attractive, colourful and lively town.

With such strong literary associations, a writers week event was started in the 1970s, primarily driven by the energy, zeal and enthusiasm of MacMahon and Keane.

Rich legacy; IN FOCUS : JOHN CORCORAN gives us the lowdown on this year's Writers' Week Listowel.

The purpose of the annual festival is to encourage new and aspiring writers, through the provision of workshops and discussions with other writers, both established and aspirant.

Since those early days, it has grown and, now, Writers' Week Listowel is firmly established as Ireland's leading literary festival.

It prides itself on the fact that many of the current galaxy of bestselling Irish authors began their first tentative steps at developing their writing skills at the workshops in Listowel.

This year's literary festival promises to be the biggest yet and will run from Wednesday June 2 to Sunday June 6.

During the festival, the town assumes a carnival atmosphere with poetry, singing, dancing and drama resounding through the streets and pubs.

Listowel's buildings are painted brightly in numerous but curiously matching hues and their decorative early 20th century pro-independence plasterwork is distinctive and welcoming.

The town, in a country renowned for hospitality, is feted for its particularly warm feeling and sense of fun.

Every September, it becomes the venue for one of Ireland's most festive of race meetings and the atmosphere of good humour sparked off by the Writers' Week pervades the town throughout the summer months.

The celebratory flames have been stoked further in recent years when the town has been the venue for the huge annual festival of traditional Irish music, the Fleadh Ceol.

One local writer who values the writers' week experience is local poet Mike Gallagher, a member of a writers group in the town which came together from one of the workshops at the festival.

Gallagher is an engineer who spends a lot of time driving and, in recent times, has found himself reacting to the pro-war bias in the media by composing short pithy political poems in the Japanese haiku style.

In common with many Irish workers, Gallagher spent years working in London. "I enjoyed reading the Morning Star when I was living in Elephant and Castle, " he says. "I also read the Daily Telegraph because it's always good to know what your enemy is thinking."

The Iraq war and its aftermath provoked Gallagher into writing some verses that he hopes that Morning Star readers will enjoy. In response to a recent announcement of US casualties in the Iraq war he wrote:

" Numbers/US-five-five-eight/Iraqis.

Who counts? /Who cares? /It does not add up."

The recent bombing in Madrid prompted Gallagher to question the apparent inevitability of terror begetting terror. "Inevitable? /Madrid: Two hundred/When leaders understand why/Then they will know how."

The killing by Israel of the Hamas spiritual leader provoked this sardonic observation of the differing standards applied by the media to killings.

"Gaza/States do not murder/They execute/Victims miss the nicety."

The election of the Spanish socialists prompted this humorous response.

"Bushwhacked/Dang you for voting /Our puppet out. He was our/Democratic choice."

Gallagher believes that art and politics inevitably mix, a view, he points out, that is not shared by some of the town's other writers. "For me, all writing is political. Verse can be powerful, pithy and thought-provoking, " he says.

Rich legacy; IN FOCUS : JOHN CORCORAN gives us the lowdown on this year's Writers' Week Listowel.

He is just one of the many Irish writers looking forward to the stimulation and encouragement provided by the festival.

Novelist John McGahern, author of the Booker Prize shortlisted novel Amongst Women (1990) and the recent bestseller That They May Face The Rising Sun (2001) will open the festival this year.

Festival chairwoman Joanna Keane O'Flynn, daughter of the late writer, points out that the highlights of this year's event includes writers' workshops, dramatic productions, seminars, art exhibitions and films. She speaks enthusiastically of the eclectic mix of art and "craic" that make the week such a unique event in the Irish literary calendar.

Stars of this year 's week will be prominent Irish writers such as Michael Dibdin, Douglas Kennedy, Maire Cruise O'Brien, Patrick McGrath, Paul Durcan, Hugo Hamilton and Christine Dwyer Hickey.

"There will be a diverse range of workshops available for the would-be, emerging and established writer, the literary festival caters for simply everyone" said writers'week president David Marcus.

Also in attendance will be the shortlisted authors for the Kerry Group Irish Fiction award. These are The Eskimo In The Net by Gerard Beirne, Schopenhauer's Telescope by Gerard Donovan, Skin of Dreams by Evelyn Conlon, All Summer by Claire Kilroy and An Evening of Long Goodbyes by Paul Murray.

Perhaps the most notable aspect of writers'week in Listowel is the fact that hundreds of ordinary people with a desire to write feel that this event is for them. The atmosphere is friendly and not elitist and each year sees a larger contingent of aspirant writers from Britain arriving, many taking advantage of the direct flights now available between London Stansted and Kerry .

Wherever they come from, the festival seems to attract participants back year after year, many saying that this is one of the few literary festivals that is still more about the needs of writers than the interests of the publishing industry.

Graphic

CELEBRATED: The small Irish town of Listowel in County Kerry . THROUGH THE AGES: William Trevor, last year's winner of the Kerry Group Irish Fiction award, with a local schoolgirl in Listowel. JOHN B KEANE

Load-Date: May 25, 2004

A new party steps up

University Wire

April 14, 2004 Wednesday

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Section: COLUMN

Length: 1178 words

Byline: By Joe Licandro, The Observer; **SOURCE:** U. Notre Dame

Dateline: SOUTH BEND, Ind.

Body

Fed up with both the Republicans and Democrats? Feel as if the 2004 election is another case of choosing between the lesser of two evils? Well, help is on the way. I, Joe Licandro, am officially declaring my candidacy for the 2004 presidential election as the first-ever nominee for the Common Sense Party, aka Get Your Head Out of Your Butt Party.

Because of space restrictions, there is not enough room for me to provide detailed specifics, so, for brevity's sake, I will instead elaborate on a few key political issues certain to weigh heavily on the minds of voters this fall. This is the first article of a two-part series. Today's will outline the CSP's foreign policy goals in the Middle East, while the next will outline my domestic agenda and social platform.

First and foremost, the United States should take the fight to terrorists everywhere around the world. This means working more closely with Europe to bring down Islamic terrorist cells operating there. This means staying in Afghanistan until al Qaeda is destroyed. This also means bombing terrorist camps in countries like Iran, Saudi Arabia and Syria that are not only unwilling to stop them but actively encouraging them. And if we have to do it alone, so be it. When it comes to this nation's security, we should not have to consult the United Nations or ask France for permission before taking pre-emptive action to protect ourselves. To describe our foreign policy platform in one statement, the CSP advocates proactive foreign policy as opposed to reactive.

Moving along. Believe it or not, the United States is less dependent upon Middle Eastern oil than ever before, which is a step in the right direction. But let's take the ultimate step: Let's not buy a single drop of oil from the Middle East. OPEC has far too much influence on the U.S. economy, constantly manipulating output levels to disadvantage the American consumer. The Middle East has been a source of constant trouble for the United States No matter what we do to try and improve our image there, it will remain this way as long as dictatorial regimes remain in power, television stations like Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya rule the airwaves and radical Islamic clerics maintain a death grip on the populations of these countries. By buying oil from places like Saudi Arabia, we in effect are our own worst enemy, keeping in power the "human-rights-abusing, treat-women-like-dogs" royal family, who sits back living in incomparable luxury while the rest of their population suffers in abject poverty. To stay in power and deflect blame, the royal family allows their country's religious leaders to promote a vicious hatred of the United States and the very freedoms we espouse. It's little wonder that 15 of the 19 9-11 hijackers were Saudi Arabian citizens. To accomplish this goal, we need to pursue two courses of action.

A new party steps up

First, we need to develop environmentally friendly alternative forms of energy so that gas-powered cars become extinct, like dinosaurs. In the meantime, we can stop buying gas-guzzling SUVs and start buying more hybrids. Secondly, until we move away from gas-powered cars, we should start buying oil from other places in the world, like South America and Africa, where deposits of the "black gold" are just now being discovered. Will my plan hurt the U.S. economy in the short run? Possibly, but we'll survive. Consider this, though. Not buying oil from the Middle East will hurt them a lot more than it will hurt us. Here's why: Saudi Arabia and the rest rely on single-export economies.

As for Iraq, it's easy to play Monday Morning Quarterback, criticizing the current administration for miscalculating and underestimating the time and toll of post-war redevelopment and recovery, but it's also a monumental waste of time, just like the 9-11 Commission hearings. What's done is done. Undoubtedly, the United States will continue to experience pockets of hostility while we remain there. But we cannot cut and run. We must remain firm, working as quickly as possible to transfer power over to the Iraqis. Then if they fail to make democracy work, it's their fault, not ours. Provided security is restored following the July 30 scheduled date of power transference, the CSP will set a target date of pulling troops out of Iraq by January of 2008. Each year, the number of troops will decrease. 2008 will not mark a full-scale withdrawal, as the United States should maintain a military base in Iraq similar to ones currently held in Germany, Japan and other parts around the world.

This will serve as a fresh reminder to anti-American neighbors not to interfere with Iraqi affairs, or risk facing devastating consequences. Israel has always been a headache for the U.S. foreign policy makers.

But I'd rather have a headache than the permanent migraine that would result if we were to completely abandon the only democracy in the Middle East. The United States should pressure Israel to abandon its new settlements on the West Bank, as it has pledged to. The United States will support a Palestinian state, but only if it is democratic in nature and does not support violence against Israel. But the United States, unlike the Europeans, will not publicly condemn Israel for building a wall sealing its borders off from Palestinian suicide bombers. Along these same lines, the United States will not publicly or legally challenge Israel for carrying out targeted killings against known terrorist leaders of Hamas and Hezbollah like the recent one against Shiekh Ahmed Yassin. Surrounded by Arab neighbors who would love nothing more to wipe Jews off the face of the earth, Israel is left with no choice but to defend itself aggressively and decisively. Their very livelihood is at stake.

While the United States will remain committed to Israel's security, the United States will not continue to provide it with such high levels of economic aid. Israel is the only first-world nation in the Middle East, yet it receives more monetary aid than any other country in the world. Even in rough economic times, it is capable of supporting itself. On this note, the United States will completely stop giving monetary assistance to Egypt -- the second largest benefactor of American aid. Egypt receives roughly a billion in aid per year from the United States only because it has not undertaken any military action against Israel since it signed the Camp David Accords in 1980. On principle alone, we should not have to pay a country not to attack another. But for the following reason above any other, we should not provide aid to a country led by "Dictator-Elect" Hosni Mubarak, who refuses to stop the Egyptian press from printing hate-filled lies about the United States in their national newspapers equivalent to The New York Times.

The Middle East is only one area of the foreign policy, but it's the most prescient. Unfortunately, I don't have the space to touch on other regions of the world. But in case you have questions, remember -- it's all about practicing a little common sense.

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DEMOCRACY IS NOW A CLOAK FOR OPPRESSION

The Independent (London)

April 19, 2004, Monday

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Section: First Edition; COMMENT; Pg. 33

Length: 1206 words

Byline: YASMIN ALIBHAI-BROWN

Body

As hostage taking in Iraq becomes the next deadly tactic in this war without end, and increasing panic rises in the coalition countries, we are sure to get evermore self righteous pronouncements from the leaders who planned this illegal occupation. We are daily instructed to express our outrage against the evil hostage takers and other insurgents who, we are told, are motivated only by a hatred of liberty and democracy.

Oh democracy, how they debauch your reputation. Were you ever this callously used as a cloak for those who want to own the earth at any cost?

Democracy can never be perfect, but it is the best chance we humans have for decent governance and progressive politics. Until I was 23 I was only aware in abstract that in some parts of the world people could choose who they would be governed by. It seemed so far away from my own life.

I had absorbed keenly the history of the French and Russian revolutions, the American war of independence, other anti-colonial struggles and slogans such as "No Taxation without Representation". I was an avid reader of books on the suffragette movement, the plight of untouchables in India, later Apartheid and the civil rights movement in the United States. But I had never seen a ballot paper until I came to Britain in 1972.

British rule over us was absolute and undemocratic and the first election when Uganda became independent was the last such event in that blighted country. I was too young to vote. It is still a tremulous moment when I go into the portakabin to declare my choice. And it drives me to distraction to hear that so many people in this country are uninterested in voting, except for Pop Idol. The next few months will bring on feverish voting excitement in many countries. George Bush is already on his campaign for re-election, to add glory to his last dodgy victory. This month, the world's largest democracy, India, goes to the polls. I have just come back from that great country which today is buzzing with optimism and energetic political debates. The South African elections too are a reminder of the transformative powers of the democratic model.

And yet in all the above, and recently in Russia, we can see politicians brutalising the very thing they claim to represent. The ruling party in India attacks Sonia Gandhi, leader of the Congress Party, not for being an unproven politician, or for the many failures of her party, but for being "foreign born". They want to amend the constitution to prevent such "outsiders" getting into positions of power. (By this logic, our Parliament should never have allowed MPs Keith Vaz, or Mohammad Sarwar, or Lord Parekh to take up their seats because they are all foreign born.)

The ruling BJP is also embarked on a mission to elevate Hinduism and relegate the practitioners of other faiths. An Indian friend of mine, who does street theatre with the poor of all backgrounds, has had his hand broken, his skull

DEMOCRACY IS NOW A CLOAK FOR OPPRESSION

slashed by Hindu warriors who support these fundamentalist politicians. Corruption, intimidation, lies, deceit, the misuse of power and money distort the will of the people around the globe and will, in the end, destroy the democratic process itself, unless we wake up.

Many years ago, the American writer Norman Mailer wrote: "A modern democracy is a tyranny whose borders are undefined; one discovers how far one can go only by travelling in a straight line until one is stopped." How prescient those words, how even more frighteningly relevant today.

In volatile international politics, blatant injustices are now committed invoking the good name of democracy. Al-Qa'ida, Hamas, Hizbollah, Catholic and Protestant paramilitary fighters in Northern Ireland use religion to justify their terrible crimes against humanity. The US, Britain, Australia, Russia and others today use democracy to cover their tyrannical actions and policies. Israel terrorises and murders Palestinians in response to suicide bombers who terrorise and murder Jews. Vladimir Putin's troops crush Chechen communities but there is no condemnation from our leaders. Mugabe's crimes are nothing in comparison to what the Russian leader is getting away with. In all these cases, both sides ignore human rights, fair rules of engagement, various conventions and international law.

You may think it offensive that I suggest there is an equivalence between those we describe as "terrorists" and the actions of civilised democrats. But to be scrupulously fair in this world, one does have an obligation to ask these uncomfortable questions. And we must expect better from those who say they are legitimate rulers who live in an ordered universe.

Passions understandably flare when blameless Italians, Japanese, Chinese, American and other hostages are snatched and held, sometimes cruelly slaughtered by the hidden enemies of the coalition in Iraq. We hear from ex-hostages from previous times how desperate they felt, how they went mad within days of being held. And we denounce these brutes resoundingly.

But these infringements of human rights and laws are simply a replication of what we have been doing in Afghanistan and Iraq, and the US in Guantanamo Bay. Men have been snatched and held without due process, sometimes tortured and killed, by our side. As Baroness Helena Kennedy QC points out in her new book, *Just Law*: "For over two years hundreds of men have been detained in a legal limbo with no access to the writ of habeas corpus to determine whether their detention is legally justified. Links with al-Qa'ida have been made in very few cases. It is believed the majority were men in the wrong place at the wrong time."

Some of these prisoners will undoubtedly have gone mad. Others are "rendered" to countries where they can be tortured more rigorously and may have died. Useful outsourcing you may call this. Hundreds of people, including women and children have been blown up in Fallujah in the past few days. We still don't know how many innocent Iraqis have died or are dying as a result of sanctions and this war.

Do we really believe that such carnage and ruthlessness are OK, understandable, even admirable if perpetrated by democratic nations? Tony Blair and George Bush and Ariel Sharon and Vladimir Putin and others clearly do. They propagandise democracy to suit their own purposes.

Meanwhile dictators, autocrats and various kinds of Stalinists carry on their campaign against the system which could empower their cowed and controlled people.

Thank God for real democrats who refuse to be fooled by the first lot or scared by the second. They will keep the flame alive even in these blasted times, people who remain truly and uncompromisingly committed to genuine political choice, to essential freedoms, to human rights and international laws and conventions, to common standards for all. Tony Blair was once among these spirits. In a book published by the Foreign Policy Centre in 2002, he wrote compellingly about internationalising democracy: "We need to be clear what we mean by justice and community, the values of liberty, the rule of law, human rights and a pluralist society are universal and worthy of respect in every culture." How hollow his words sound today.

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DEMOCRACY IS NOW A CLOAK FOR OPPRESSION

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LETTERS

The Tampa Tribune (Florida)

March 30, 2004 Tuesday

FINAL EDITION

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Section: NATION/WORLD; Pg. 8

Length: 1242 words

Body

Use Original Wording

Regarding "Physician Asks Justices To Drop 'God' From Pledge" (Nation/World, March 25):

By changing the Pledge of Allegiance back to the way it was originally written, we will better state our pledge to our country — "With liberty and justice for all" — regardless of religious beliefs. Not everyone believes in God. If a person refuses to recite the pledge because of the reference to God, he is ostracized. Adults can handle this; children can't.

In this day and age of being politically correct, the pledge must be changed back to its original wording. We are supposed to be a nation united. How can we be united if our pledge to our country separates people because of their belief or unbelief in God?

SUE SLINGBAUM

Tampa

Let Voters Decide

From the first grade on, we were told that the United States was a government "of, by and for the people." This being the case, how is it that a few Supreme Court justices can make the decision to remove "under God" from our Pledge of Allegiance? Why can't we let the American people decide by putting it on the ballot in November? If this change is allowed, what will be next? What will we do about the song "God Bless America" or the words in "America The Beautiful": "God shed his grace on thee"?

Maybe the Constitution needs to be changed. I don't think the writers of our Constitution intended to exclude God from everything.

DANIEL J. WARD

Zephyrhills

Judges' Social Agenda

LETTERS

Judicial supremacy is nowhere to be found in the ideology of the Framers or in the text of our Constitution. Power of the courts was limited, as were the powers of the other two branches of government. Even so, the travesty of the courts continues to grow. If Supreme Court judges continue to have their way, amending the Constitution will be futile. These activist judges are determined to advance their own social agenda by judicial fiat and continue to trample the basic law. Those who are appointed should be impeached. Those who are elected should be voted out.

JANET ROCKEY

Tampa

Fund Guardian Services

Public guardianship offices provide a much-needed service to vulnerable Floridians. When someone becomes incapacitated — whether because of the aging process, an accident or a disability — he or she may require a guardian. If that person is also indigent and has no willing family or friend to act as guardian, then a public guardian may be appointed to advocate on his or her behalf.

Last year Gov. Bush signed Senate Bill 2568, which transferred the Statewide Public Guardianship Office to the Department of Elder Affairs. Continuing his commitment to helping Florida's most vulnerable, the governor included \$5 million in his budget recommendations to create the "Joining Forces" matching grant program to fund, protect and expand Florida's public guardianship programs.

Earlier this month both the Florida House and Senate released their appropriations bills without funding for the "Joining Forces" program. This oversight jeopardizes public guardianship services and protection for some of Florida's most vulnerable residents.

I urge Floridians interested in defending the rights and interests of vulnerable Floridians to call their legislators toll-free within Florida at 1-800-342-

1827. Let your voice be heard and request they amend their appropriation bills to include matching grant funds for public guardianship.

MICHELLE R. HOLLISTER

Tallahassee

The writer is executive director of the Statewide Public Guardianship Office.

Set Same Standards

Regarding "Prisoner Bemoans Medical Care In Jail" (Metro, March 24):

I think this substandard medical attention that these inmates are receiving is shameful. As far as the death of that newborn on March 5 (Nation/World), the jail officials who made the decision to delay his mother's medical treatment and kept giving her Tylenol should be arrested for manslaughter. It does not matter what kind of criminal history these inmates have: Denying them medical treatment and causing death, or worsening the situation to the point of emergency treatment that would not have been necessary had the problem been addressed in a timely and appropriate fashion, makes the overseeing official just as much a criminal. Hospitals and doctors are sued every day for misdiagnosing a medical problem or for negligence in medical matters, so why is the prison system not held to the same standard?

BARBARA L. DELAYE

Lutz

A "Free' Service

LETTERS

Regarding "Prisoner Bemoans Medical Care in Jail" (Metro, March 24):

What happened to the women's baby notwithstanding, why on earth is she there in the first place? Because she is a criminal. Some people are working and cannot afford medical care because of the exorbitant costs associated. This woman had the nerve to complain about the quality of her medical care while in jail. Am I the only one who went through the roof when reading this article?

I need good health care, so in order for me to obtain it, I suppose I'll have to "knock off" the corner bank or gas station. I am incensed at the audacity of the person complaining about a free service, albeit at the taxpayers' expense.

DON BISCHOFF

Tampa

Gas Is A Bargain

Gas companies are not gouging the consumer. This information from the Department of Energy shows gas prices adjusted for inflation:

1975: \$1.80

1980: \$2.59

1985: \$1.90

1990: \$1.51

1995: \$1.28

2001: \$1.66

Gas is a bargain. I don't hear people complaining that bread isn't a nickel a loaf, as it was in 1925! The median price of a new car is \$30,000; adjusted for inflation and taxes, gas is the cheapest part of your transportation expense.

C.J. MOFFITT

Odessa

Prices Aren't Justified

Last week a lead story on News Channel 8 was in reference to the prices of gasoline. It reflected how much the price of regular gasoline has risen and how much more it was expected to rise and that it was not expected to go down any time soon.

The MoneySense section of The Tampa Tribune had an article regarding the ranking of corporations on the Fortune 500 listing (March 23); in terms of profits, the top-ranking corporation was Exxon Mobil, posting profits of \$21.3 billion. Two other major oil conglomerates, Chevron Texaco and Conoco Phillips, were also listed in the top 10.

Let me see if I have this straight: Three of the top 10 corporations in the world are oil companies with multibillion-dollar profit margins, and they feel justified in raising the price of gasoline to record levels?

I seem to remember the government of the state of Florida taking gasoline distributors before the law just shortly after the 9/11 disaster, promising large fines and/or other criminal/civil sanctions for gouging the citizens for more expensive gasoline. Isn't there something anyone at the legislative level can do to bring gasoline prices down to more acceptable levels again? Or are our politicians back in bed with the petroleum industry again because it's an election year?

LETTERS

PAUL G. MILLER

New Port Richey

Blame Our Enemies

Your headline "Inaction Blamed For Sept. 11" (Nation/World, March 24) is misleading. The "blame" is on al-Qaida, Osama bin Laden, **Hamas** and the entire fatalistic fanatic group in the Middle East. Whether you agree or disagree with the administration's policy, we should not lose sight of the fact that the use of passenger jets as missiles was incomprehensible prior to 9/11. Focus the blame on our enemies!

L.S. FRIEDMAN

Land O' Lakes

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Notes

LETTERS

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Summit Collapse Leaves Arab Leaders in Disarray

The New York Times

March 29, 2004 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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Section: Section A; Column 2; Foreign Desk; Pg. 1

Length: 1267 words

Byline: By NEIL MacFARQUHAR

Dateline: TUNIS, March 28

Body

Arab governments were in disarray on Sunday after the Arab League summit meeting, set to grapple with vital regional issues like democratic reform, Arab-Israeli bloodshed and the American occupation of Iraq, was abruptly called off just before it was to open Monday.

The exact reason is a matter of some dispute, but all sides viewed the meeting's collapse -- even as some heads of state were on their way -- as an embarrassment. It was a stark public admission that the commitment to change voiced by Arab leaders risks becoming just more words.

The Arab League is infamous for its fractious gatherings, but even its most experienced bureaucrats described the cancellation as extraordinary. Some commentators thought the collapse inevitable from the start. The very idea of reform remains too divisive, and many nations' governments have yet to decide how to deal themselves with issues like elections.

"Every Arab country has its own deep problems, so I don't believe you can find a general answer," said Khairallah Khairallah, a political commentator and former editor in chief of Al Hayat, a London-based Arabic newspaper.

There were still attempts on Sunday to salvage the collective effort, however. The office of Egypt's president, Hosni Mubarak, issued a statement expressing his "surprise and regret" over the cancellation. President Mubarak offered to have the gathering in Egypt, arguing that differences of opinion were hardly sufficient cause to abort the meeting.

Foreign ministers said they were exploring possible dates in April. Tunisia still objected, however, saying the problem was the issues, not the setting.

Given the the American invasion of Iraq, and spiral of violence in the region, including terrorist bomb attacks from Casablanca to Riyadh, there had been some expectation that Arab leaders might commit themselves to change.

Certainly the Bush administration had hoped for some kind of broad endorsement of reform that might demonstrate that its decision to overthrow Saddam Hussein was having a positive echo.

Senior officials and analysts here said events in Tunis, while not without precedent, represented in stark colors the Arab world's inability to cope with American efforts to redraw the region's political map.

Summit Collapse Leaves Arab Leaders in Disarray

"You feel they are completely lost," said Mr. Khairallah, the political commentator. "The Arab League is finally feeling the impact of the fall of Baghdad. It took them a whole year."

A reluctance to take the first step toward reform was evident in the two days of preparatory talks about the agenda, which bogged down in details like how to present Arab culture at the Frankfurt book fair next fall, said several foreign ministers who took part.

Meanwhile, crucial issues like a joint statement of principles on political change and the league's reformulated position toward peace with Israel had barely been discussed and remained unresolved, they said.

Late Saturday night, as the 22 foreign ministers were reaching a strained if amicable consensus on those major points, Tunisia pulled the plug, announcing that it would not preside over a gathering willing to make what it called only a tepid commitment to reform.

"There was real horror on their faces," said Nabil Shaath, the Palestinian foreign minister, describing the mood as Tunisia announced its decision. "They felt that despite all their disagreements, this summit was important."

Another foreign minister described the rush to grab cellphones to call home and tell the various kings, presidents and princes due to start arriving Sunday to stay home. Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi, the Libyan leader, was reportedly on his way to Tunis, while the Iraqi delegation, led by a Shiite Muslim cleric in a remarkable break from the past, had journeyed along Iraq's treacherous roads as far as Kuwait.

On the crucial issue of political reform, the general consensus had divided into two broad groups, participants said. One group was made up of those who wanted to resist what was seen as a fiat from the Bush administration for the Arab League to push for sweeping changes. The other group included those who said the call for change was not a Washington monopoly and that a wider demand for greater democracy had to be addressed.

Saudi Arabia, Syria and Egypt, the leaders of the former group, had hammered out a joint call for political reform, insisting it was not being foisted on them by outsiders and emphasizing that each country would develop according to its own cultural norms.

But smaller states, including Tunisia, resented being dictated to by their larger neighbors, several foreign ministers said. The smaller states proposed making the general principles more specific.

Tunisia, angry that its proposal was being shunted aside and worried that more and more leaders, including Crown Prince Abdullah, Saudi Arabia's de facto ruler, and most of his Persian Gulf neighbors were not coming, decided to call off the summit meeting, they said.

Tunisian officials denied acting in pique, saying they merely wanted the summit meeting's final communique to be something of substance. Three hundred fifty million Arabs want a sense that the repression that scars their region is ending, the Tunisians maintained.

"The Arab world will not advance unless it faces to this reality," said an Arab diplomat familiar with the Tunisian assessment. "It's not just the paper you field; it's the attitude."

Many Arab observers considered that stance to be remarkable, as Tunisia's president, Zine el-Abidine ben Ali, suppresses dissent and shows every sign of remaining president for life. On the other hand, Tunisia does have some of the region's most advanced laws for women's equality and has been making changes to modernize its schools for a decade.

The differences were not just over reform, however. The Jordanians and the Palestinians presented a joint proposal to try to reinvigorate the Arab-Israeli peace negotiations despite Israel's killing last week of Sheik Ahmed Yassin, the spiritual leader of Hamas. Syria and Lebanon objected, arguing that Arab public opinion would not abide such an overture to Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel at a time when he seemed bent on more violence.

Summit Collapse Leaves Arab Leaders in Disarray

In addition, some of the tension stemmed from the perception of many Arab foreign ministers that Amr Moussa, the league's Egyptian secretary general, was being overly aggressive in pushing changes in the organization itself, and specifically in enhancing his role.

Consensus was reached fairly easily on Iraq, participants said. The foreign ministers had decided to endorse evolving self-rule there and to condemn attacks against civilians. The Iraqi delegation was disappointed at the summit meeting's cancellation; its members had hoped to return home with a clear Arab endorsement for the political steps it is taking.

Arab foreign ministers lined up Sunday to criticize Tunisia, and there were broad hints from analysts that its president must have come back from a visit to Washington earlier this year with specific instructions to wreck the summit meeting.

But other officials suggested that the problem lay elsewhere, that in failing to address the larger aspirations of the Arab world, the area's governments were giving yet another opening to extremists.

"To fail to even hold a meeting is a disaster, taking into consideration all the challenges of the region," said Hoshar Zubairy, the Iraqi foreign minister. "This encourages extremism, when people see that even the formal Arab system is not functioning, not operating. The sense of frustration will only deepen."

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Graphic

Photos: Amr Moussa, secretary general of the Arab League, has been pushing for organizational changes. (Photo by European Pressphoto Agency)

After the Arab League summit meeting was canceled yesterday, delegates quickly left the meeting site in the Tunisian capital. (Photo by Associated Press)(pg. A14)

Load-Date: March 29, 2004

WORLD REPORT

Windsor Star (Ontario)

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Body

Man gets 3 months for killing swan near crowd

London

A man who killed a swan by beating it and smashing it against a concrete path in front of a crowd of people was jailed Wednesday for three months.

Michael Barnett, 41, pleaded guilty to killing the bird on Dec. 15 in Exeter, southwest England.

"We consider the offence was so serious only a custodial sentence can be justified," said chairman of the bench Geoffrey Harrison at Exeter Magistrates Court. He called the killing "a most horrendous act."

Compiled from Star News Services

Police spokesman Roy Adams said after the case that there were as many as 100 people watching when the incident happened.

Prosecutor Ann Hampshire said Barnett was "substantially in drink" when he killed the swan.

Arafat's wife accused of money laundering

Paris

The Palestinian Authority called accusations of money laundering by Yasser Arafat's wife, Suha, "scandalous" Wednesday after French prosecutors confirmed they are investigating the origin of \$15 million allegedly deposited in Suha's bank accounts in Paris.

The Bank of France alerted prosecutors last September to regular alleged deposits of up to \$1.6 million between July 2002 and July 2003 from Switzerland into Suha's accounts at Arab Bank and the French bank BNP.

Suha, 40, spends most of her time in Paris with the couple's eight-year-old daughter, rarely visiting the Middle East.

Restrictions passed on fertility treatments

Rome

Under pressure from the Roman Catholic church Italy's parliament has passed draconian restrictions on fertility treatments.

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The legislation transforms Italy from a country where a 62-year-old can give birth to one where using donor sperm or eggs is banned, forcing sperm banks to close down and 24,000 embryos to be "put up for adoption."

It was passed amid fierce opposition inside and outside parliament, especially by feminists and gay groups.

As parliamentarians --- including some on the opposition benches with strong Catholic convictions -- voted in favour, some women MPs donned white masks to symbolize the way they said the law attacked women's rights.

Website shows trend of British regional accents

London

Britain is changing its toon.

Recordings of voices from the 1950s, the 1980s and 1990s on a new website show that older pronunciations like "toon" for town and "coo" for cow are fading, replaced with more standard forms, officials say.

But Jonathan Robinson, curator of English Accents and Dialects at the British Library Sound Archive, which runs the Collect Britain site, said regional accents are still strong. He said fans of the Newcastle United soccer team still refer to their club as "the Toon."

The use of "toon" -- which once spread as far south as Yorkshire -- does survive in some of the broader Newcastle accents and in some Scottish pronunciations, he said.

Among other major changes has been the "virtual disappearance" of the Northumbrian burr, the way some residents of northeast England have of pronouncing an initial "r" sound at back of the throat, as in French, rather than the front.

Bardot wants ritual slaughter painless

Paris

Brigitte Bardot, the French film legend turned animal rights campaigner, paid a visit to a Paris mosque Wednesday to ask the Muslim community to make ritual slaughter less traumatic for the animals.

Bardot proposed that the sheep traditionally slaughtered during the Muslim festival of Eid al-Adha be rendered unconscious before their throats are cut.

She met the rector of the mosque, Dalil Boubakeur, who suggested that some sort of anesthetization might be possible -- as long as the animal to be sacrificed could still be killed in the traditional manner.

"This is wonderful, you are giving me the biggest present of my life," Bardot said.

However, Boubakeur told the former actress that the issue must be debated with the French Council for the Muslim Religion, which he heads. The council is an umbrella group representing the main Islamic organizations in France.

Still, he said, "The position of Islam toward animals and nature is one of respect," Boubakeur said.

15 Palestinians killed during Israeli crackdown

Gaza City, Gaza Strip

An Israeli crackdown on Palestinian militants Wednesday erupted into the bloodiest day of fighting in the Gaza Strip in 16 months, killing 15 Palestinians and wounding more than 50.

The violent Islamic Hamas responded with a vow of retaliation, urging all of its cells throughout Gaza and the West Bank to attack. Similar calls in the past have been followed within days -- sometimes hours -- by suicide bombings in Israel.

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Some observers linked the stepped-up violence to Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's proposals for a unilateral pullout from most of Gaza.

Cops focus on rat poison in deaths of zoo animals

Sao Paulo, Brazil

Police are investigating a spate of unusual cases of apparent death by poisoning at the Sao Paulo Zoo, one of the world's largest, where 10 animals including an elephant have dropped dead in a two-week period.

"We can't explain what's happening," said biologist Fatima Roberti, a spokeswoman for the zoo. "We are letting the police sift through the clues."

What police know so far, according to Antonio Silveira of the Sao Paulo Civil Police Laboratory, is that three chimpanzees, three tapirs, three camels and an elephant were found dead between Jan. 24 and Feb. 6.

"These were apparently unnatural deaths," said Silveira. "These animals just dropped dead suddenly."

Death toll hits 46; Aristide won't quit

Gonaives, Haiti

Rebels set ablaze an accused government hitman and shot another person Wednesday, raising the death toll to 46 in a popular uprising that began in this hotbed of revolutionary fervour that has led to the downfall of more than one Haitian leader.

South of Gonaives, police attacked rebels holed up in a slum in the port city of St. Marc and witnesses said gunmen loyal to President Jean-Bertrand Aristide torched homes, killing two people, as looting and reprisals raged.

In northern Cap-Haitien, attackers looted a food warehouse and Aristide militants set up blazing barricades to protect Haiti's second city from a possible rebel incursion.

At his first news conference since the uprising, Aristide on Wednesday refused to resign and said the "terrorists" were allied with the political opposition.

Next hearing for Jackson likely to be more sedate

Los Angeles

Don't expect any dancing at Michael Jackson's next court date. The self-styled King of Pop is staying home.

Friday's hearing is expected to be a sedate affair. Lawyers will discuss a date for a preliminary hearing where the first evidence will be presented, then will take up the issue of whether to open court records to the public.

"We don't anticipate many fans coming," Santa Maria police Lieut. Chris Vaughan said. "There'll really be nothing for them to see."

Hundreds of fans packed the street after Jackson's arraignment on Jan. 16, when he climbed atop his black SUV and danced. The pop star's absence from the hearing might mean fewer fireworks inside the courtroom.

Graphic

Suha Arafat; Brigitte Bardot

WORLD REPORT

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The Forward

February 6, 2004

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Byline: E.J. Kessler

Body

Looking past Saturday's presidential caucuses in Michigan, Democratic strategists were predicting this week that the results in the Wolverine State would point the way for the party's strategy in the general election.

What the Michigan campaign showed, pundits said, was that voters in the center - "white, Catholic men who are disproportionately members of labor unions," in the words of Democratic consultant Hank Sheinkopf - will determine who wins the White House in November. The campaign also showed, in searching for those voters, that candidates were eager to avoid stepping into ethnic or other squabbles that diverted them from the main goal.

In particular, Democrats tried hard to avoid antagonizing either Jewish or Arab American voters, both of which are heavily represented in Michigan and play active roles on the national stage. As a result, the Israeli-Arab conflict appeared unlikely to figure as a major issue in the fall campaign.

"Michigan is going to decide [the 2004] election," said Sheinkopf. "It's a dress rehearsal for fall."

The state's 100,000 Jews constitute 2% of the population and can make up from "5 % to 10% or more of the Democratic caucus electorate," according to Michigan Democratic Party chairman Mark Brewer. (Since voters have the option of voting by mail or on the Internet before Saturday's caucus date, Sabbath observance should not dampen Jewish turnout. Brewer said 120,000 people had requested ballots by mail or Internet.)

Meanwhile, the Arab American community, which the 2000 census puts at 115,284 souls but communal officials estimate to be at least twice that figure, was seen as a smaller part of the caucus electorate - 2% to 3%, Brewer estimated - but an even more important factor than the Jews in Michigan's general election vote.

Given these demographics, and considering how the Arab-Israeli conflict has burned Democrats already, the candidates apparently concluded they had nothing to gain by foregrounding Middle East issues and avoided them.

Kerry and his longtime chief rival, former Vermont governor Howard Dean, have sparred since September over Arab-Israeli issues, when Kerry ripped into Dean for his famous comments, since retracted, that America "ought not to take sides" in Middle East negotiations and calling Hamas terrorists "soldiers." The remarks damaged Dean's standing among Jews.

Then, in what rival campaigns considered a counter-pander, Kerry gave a speech at an Arab American Institute summit in October in which he called Israel's security fence "provocative and counterproductive" and "a barrier to peace," cheering Arabs and perplexing some Jews. Finally, Kerry antagonized Jewish communal leaders by naming former president Jimmy Carter and former secretary of state James Baker in a list of possible Middle East envoys in

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a December speech at the Council on Foreign Relations; both men are disliked for what many consider their pro-Arab views.

But Kerry's counter-pander, if it was that, hasn't generated a backlash among Jews, because the senator benefited from the Bush campaign's backchannel assaults on the pro-Israel bonafides of Dean, according to some observers.

"The biggest favor the Bush team could have done for John Kerry is setting up Howard Dean as the bogeyman, so that Kerry is now the savior," said David Luchins, a former aide to the late Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan.

Days before Michigan's February 7 Democratic caucus, the Jewish community appeared to be throwing most of its support to Kerry, with a smaller chunk going to retired general Wesley Clark, local Democrats said. Kerry's moves didn't gain him much with the state's Arab American community. Observers said that community was sticking with Dean, with Clark in second place, despite Dean's over all freefall locally; a Detroit News poll released Tuesday showed Kerry with 56% to Dean's 13% among likely caucus voters, a stark reversal from a month ago.

In a January 16 Zogby poll, Dean drew 36% of the Arab American vote nationally while Kerry drew 6%. That hadn't changed much, according to the Michigan regional director of the Arab American Anti-Discrimination Committee, Imad Hamad, who told the Forward that Kerry hurt himself with Arab Americans by attacking Dean for his remarks. Kerry "seems to be giving rhetoric," Hamad said, while Dean's anti-Washington message resonates.

In Michigan, as elsewhere, Kerry's strategy was to appeal to as wide a cross-section of the electorate as possible, according to his advisers, while sending out emissaries to make personal appeals to both communities. In earlier contests, "we won every demographic group: young/old, women/men, rich/poor," said a Kerry strategist, speaking on condition of anonymity. "We're not looking at [Michigan] as a niche play."

With Arab American support for President Bush falling drastically because of objections to the Iraq war and some of the homeland security measures he instituted after the September 11 attacks, Democrats don't have to worry much about the Arab vote, observers said.

"If you're a Democratic nominee, and you're strategizing, this is a slam-dunk," said Adam Scheingate, a political scientist at University of California Berkeley. "To get the Arab vote, all you have to do is talk about the Patriot Act."

Kerry's campaign sent the candidate's brother Cameron Kerry, who is a convert to Judaism, to Michigan the week before the vote to do outreach to the Jewish community, while sending Bill Shaheen, his New Hampshire chairman, who is an Arab American, to Dearborn to meet with Arab American leaders.

Cameron Kerry, whose wife comes from Detroit's Jewish suburbs, told the Forward that he would be campaigning in the Jewish community with the help of his in-laws, Anne and Joe Weinman. His father-in-law, winningly, is active in the Jewish War Veterans of America.

Dean was looking for a strong showing in delegate-rich Michigan to revive his faltering campaign, but he was not seeking to appeal to Arab American voters on Middle East issues, Dean advisers said. Dean's national campaign co-chairman, Steve Grossman, told the Forward that in Michigan Dean was portraying himself as "the candidate of political empowerment," especially for "disenfranchised people."

"Jewish voters are just as concerned about health care and fairness as any other voter," Grossman said.

Dean was likely to gain the most support among African Americans, on college campuses and in ultraliberal bastions such as Ann Arbor, local Democrats said. Dean had some support among Jews, but the "dustup" over his Middle East remarks hurt him. "Dean makes people nervous," said one pro-Israel Democrat, speaking on condition of anonymity. But the one Dean supporter anyone could identify among Jewish elected officials, State Rep. Andy Meisner, said that while Dean "caught a lot of guff in the Jewish community, it's important to note he retracted that statement, and when he had the opportunity to repeat it at an Arab American Chamber of Commerce meeting, he didn't."

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As for Clark, according to one of his top Jewish supporters, State Senator Gilda Jacobs, "I don't think he'll be embarrassed. I think he'll see stronger numbers than everyone expects."

Another trend seen around the country also is evident in Michigan: The pro-Israel Democrat said he has been raising a lot of political money - for President Bush. He said that unless Democrats start formulating their foreign policy positions in strong language, they stand to lose more supporters.

Graphic

IMAGE

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LETTERS

The Tampa Tribune (Florida)

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FINAL EDITION

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Section: NATION/WORLD,

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Body

Stop "Blaming Jews"

Regarding "Need New Leadership" by Saleh Mubarak and "Israel's WMD" by Charlie Crook (Letters, Oct. 15):

Saleh Mubarak is right on target. New leadership is indeed needed to resolve the current Middle East violence. Mubarak's problem is that he blames the wrong leadership for causing the problem.

Mubarak alleges that Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon is the cause of the problem. The fact is that Sharon's positions are no different from those of our own President Bush. Sharon, like Bush, has no choice but to do what it takes to protect his country from the obscene terrorists who intentionally target infants, children and innocent civilians. Both the United States and Israel take every precaution to avoid civilian casualties; nevertheless, they happen, especially when civilians are intentionally put in harm's way.

It is time for Palestinians to look in the mirror. The fact is that their corrupt leadership has manipulated and failed them. According to Forbes Magazine, Arafat has salted away untold sums in Swiss banks; the moneys were intended to improve the status of his people.

As for the plight of Palestinians in refugee camps, they are there because their Arab brothers refuse to allow them citizenship. In fact, Arabs have killed many more Palestinians than has Israel in defense of its citizens.

Charlie Crook's condemnation of Israel for having a nuclear deterrent is equally ludicrous. It is obvious that without such an equalizer, tiny Israel would cease to exist. Crook should take note that it was our erstwhile ally, France, that was the culprit that sold Saddam Hussein the Osirak nuclear reactor that the Israeli air force destroyed in 1981, thus giving us respite from Saddam until now.

Finally, we should all focus our attention on hatred's kingdom, Saudi Arabia, which is skillfully exporting an Islamic fundamentalism that threatens the entire world. Wahhabism calls for jihad against Christians and Jews. It is being exported to the former Soviet republics, the Philippines, Indonesia, Pakistan and elsewhere. The Saudis pay the families of suicide bombers for the terror of their so-called martyrs. They buy chairs in our leading American universities to influence our young people. They support the hate taught in Arab countries.

"Blame the Jews" may have worked in the past. In this day and age, it distracts us from the real enemy, and it will lead to our demise.

NORMAN N. GROSS

Palm Harbor

LETTERS

The writer is president of Promoting Responsibility in Middle East Reporting and chair of the Anti-Hate Committee, Greater Florida B'nai B'rith.

Dismantle Terror Groups

The Palestinian terrorist attack on a U.S. diplomatic convoy in the Gaza Strip that killed at least three Americans (Nation/World, Oct. 16) is deplorable.

With this fatal bombing, the Palestinian terrorist groups have made it clear that the United States, not just Israel, is their mortal enemy. The Palestinian Authority's condemnation and call for an investigation fall short.

There is only one way to end the terrorism, and that is for the Palestinian government, as well as the Arab nations that continue to lend support to Hamas and Islamic Jihad, to act firmly and decisively in dismantling the terror groups that, as President Bush has often stated, are the chief obstacles to a lasting Israeli-Palestinian peace.

RUTH F. YOUNG

Sarasota

The writer is executive director of The American Jewish Committee, West Coast Florida Chapter.

Investigating Now?

Please allow me to register my pure disgust at the reaction of the Palestinian Authority and the European Union to the murder of three American security guards in the Gaza Strip on Wednesday (Nation/World, Oct. 16).

In the last three years, Palestinian terrorists have murdered more than 800 people and wounded nearly 6,000. Many of the casualties have been women and children. At least 60 American citizens have been killed, more than a dozen of them children like 14-year-old Abigail Litle and 13-year-old Kobi Mandell. Now, for some reason, the Palestinian Authority is "investigating" and making "arrests." Now, for some equally unfathomable reason, the European Union is demanding that the terrorism that it financially supports be stopped. And what made the lives of the other 800-plus people less important?

JONATHAN REICH

Lakeland

"Miracle" On Schedule

Ted Jackovics' Oct. 8 MoneySense article on the cruise business in Tampa and the height restrictions imposed by the Sunshine Skyway bridge correctly conveyed that Carnival's largest vessels are too tall to pass under the bridge. The article also stated that the new Carnival Miracle will begin service from Tampa in November 2004.

Based on continued inquiries, however, it is clear that the subject has confused many consumers and travel agents who have incorrectly interpreted that the Carnival Miracle's deployment to Tampa may now be in question.

We wish to assure members of the community that the Carnival Miracle will fit under the bridge, and there are no changes to the plan for that ship to begin operations from Tampa next fall.

JENNIFER DE LA CRUZ

Miami

The writer is director of public relations for Carnival Cruise Lines.

Frog Listening Network

The article "A Hoppin' CD" (BayLife, Oct. 14) about Terry Johnson and his compact disc recording of Georgia frogs and toads says that Johnson is not aware of any state other than New Jersey that has such a recording. Your

LETTERS

readers ought to be aware that there is just such a recording of the frogs and toads of West Central Florida available right here in Tampa.

The Hillsborough River Greenways Task Force has a citizen-science, grass-roots, conservation education program named the Frog Listening Network. The program has successfully trained nearly 2,000 volunteers since 1998. It has increased public awareness of the importance of amphibians and of the vitality of a healthy Hillsborough River watershed.

Our next training will be on Tuesday, Oct. 28, at 6 p.m. at Busch Gardens. We will have plenty of frog call recordings available. For more information, please contact us at (813) 495-5285.

GINA MILLER

Tampa

The writer is associate director of the Hillsborough River Greenways Task Force.

Historical Revisionism

Regarding "He's Less A Darling But Still Has Day" (Nation/ World, Oct. 13):

Has our education been reduced to cheap sideshow tricks and vain attempts to capture the attention of our students? It must be understood that historical revisionism is an important process that all cultures engage in, providing the said culture and society with a framework to justify the present. The problem with historical revisionism is not its existence (despite W's pseudo-intellectual criticism of it), but rather its implementation.

As a high school history teacher, I have watched most of my students walk away with a greater appreciation and understanding of the past. Yet their enthusiasm and interest evolved not from warm fuzzies or touchy-feelies; their excitement arose from actively engaging the historical sources and narratives. The "History Alive!" curriculum is not the end of Western civilization (and it can be used in small doses to cure the common class), but new interpretations of the past should not be reduced to the lowest common denominator.

CHRISTOPHER DEAN LEE

Tampa

Notes

LETTERS

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Far from victory

South China Morning Post

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Byline: Suicide bomb attacks last Tuesday in Iraq and Israel are shocking reminders that terrorism is alive and well, despite significant setbacks. Nearly two years after President Bush's pledge to defeat every terrorist group of global reach, Peter Kammerer looks at progress in the war

Body

President George W. Bush was shaking with anger when he fronted Congress nine days after the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington. With the twisted ruins of New York's World Trade Centre still billowing smoke, his mission, amid a tide of patriotism, was simple: revenge.

Almost two years later, the desire for retribution is undiminished. Indeed, it is being seen as increasingly necessary as terrorist groups rise to the challenge. Two high-profile suicide-bomb attacks last Tuesday - at the United Nations headquarters in Iraq and in Israel - indicate that the war is far from over.

The plan Mr Bush mapped out to the nation on September 20, 2001, was less straightforward than it seemed.

"Our war on terror begins with al-Qaeda, but it does not end there," he said. "It will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped and defeated."

They were words Americans wanted to hear, even if the specifics of how the terrorists were to be defeated were not clear.

The perpetrators were known. They had a leader, Osama bin Laden, and they were known to operate from Afghanistan. With United Nations blessing, a coalition military force was assembled and within two weeks, war had been declared on Afghanistan's Taleban regime, al-Qaeda's protectors.

The Taleban were quickly overthrown and their fighters, along with al-Qaeda's, killed, arrested and scattered. But al-Qaeda and the Taleban are not a spent force; the conflict continues as a guerilla war in Afghanistan's remotest regions. Dozens of people have been killed in recent weeks in suicide bombings and gunfights.

The United States has failed to capture bin Laden or Taleban leader Mullah Mohammad Omar. They are among dozens of terrorists sought across the Arab and Muslim worlds. A series of attacks that have claimed the lives of hundreds of civilians prove that terrorism is alive and well, despite Mr Bush's pledge. From the Bali bombings last October to suicide attacks in Saudi Arabia, Morocco and Iraq, terrorism experts agree the fight will be long and difficult.

But there have also been important gains, they say.

Far from victory

Paul Wilkinson, of the Centre for the Study of Terrorism and Political Violence at St Andrew's University, in Scotland, said important results included the Taleban's removal and the capture or killing of key al-Qaeda figures.

"That's positive, because it means they've had to adapt to the new situation in which a much more serious effort has been made at international co-operation against terrorism," Dr Wilkinson said last week. "But they have also managed to adapt and organise attacks."

He said one way this had been achieved was through penetrating and influencing like-minded Muslim groups, such as the Southeast Asian network Jemaah Islamiah, believed to be behind the Bali bombings and an attack earlier this month on the JW Marriott hotel in Jakarta.

Such operations gave al-Qaeda more flexibility. It was giving money and advice to affiliated networks, with the ultimate aim being the creation of a pan-Islamic state.

"This way, they've managed to overcome the considerable blows they've suffered, particularly in the removal of the Taleban," he said. "They've had to go to Pakistan and much further afield to escape capture."

Bin Laden's whereabouts are unknown, although he is widely believed to be in Pakistan. While the charismatic, hero figure remains at the top of the US list of most-wanted terrorists, his ideological strategist, Ayman al-Zawahiri, is also keenly sought.

Both are among 21 Muslims charged by the US Justice Department with terrorism and wanted dead or alive.

The deputy director of the Centre for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, Thomas Sanderson, cautioned that the "war on terror" had achieved significant gains, but it was far from over.

"The arrests in recent months of Jemaah Islamiah's Riduan Isamuddin, al-Qaeda's Khalid Shaikh Mohammed and a cell in Saudi Arabia are all significant wounds to terrorist groups, but by no means are they mortal blows," Dr Sanderson said.

"Not even killing or capturing Osama bin Laden would be."

Isamuddin, better known as Hambali, was captured earlier this month in central Thailand in a joint operation by the US Central Intelligence Agency and Thai security forces. A founder of Jemaah Islamiah, he was considered al-Qaeda's link in Southeast Asia.

Mohammed, described as "the kingpin of al-Qaeda", was arrested on March 1 by Pakistani intelligence officers in the city of Rawalpindi and handed to US officials. Both arrests were hailed by Mr Bush as breakthroughs in the "war on terrorism".

"But that doesn't mean we pack up our bags and go home," Dr Sanderson said.

Al-Qaeda and its affiliates were not the only threats. Arab fundamentalist organisations seeking to destroy or marginalise Israel, including Hezbollah, **Hamas** and the al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigade, should not be forgotten - as the deaths of 20 people in Israel proved.

The American-led invasion of Iraq in March has added a worrying dimension to the terrorism fight. Unknown groups have attacked American and British soldiers and there have been well-organised bomb attacks on foreign civilians and infrastructure.

Muslim observers warned that Iraq could become another Afghanistan.

The inability of the US-led coalition to create stability and control borders with neighbouring countries had allowed dozens of Islamic groups to evolve. A Middle East expert with the Cairo-based Al-Ahram Centre for Political and Strategic Studies, Diaa Rashwan, said Muslim extremists were being drawn to Iraq from throughout the Middle East and Asia.

Far from victory

"They're coming from the Arab peninsula, Central Asia and the Indian sub -continent," he said.

"Even before the United States declared war on Iraq, there were perhaps 8,000 foreign militants there. Some of them probably left during the war, but others stayed and still more have arrived since."

The "war on terror" is approaching the end of its second year with no end in sight on the fronts opened in Afghanistan and Iraq. Experts warn the threat of attacks on western targets has not diminished, and their words have been strengthened by the bombing of the UN headquarters in Baghdad.

Mr Bush's pledge that every terrorist group would be found, stopped and defeated is looking increasingly more difficult to fulfil.

Graphic

(Photo: AP, Reuters); The attack on the World Trade Centre's twin towers triggered President Bush's war on terrorism. Two years on, Indonesian Muslim militant Amrozi savours another "victory" after receiving the death penalty for the Bali bombings.; A Canadian soldier walks past women wearing burqas in Kabul. There is no end in sight to the troubles on the Afghanistan front.

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Follow the road to Damascus

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Body

Safe and overwhelmingly friendly, Syria is a joy to behold, from souks and soaps to Aramaic prayer, writes Wilma Paterson

In the incense-laden church of Saints Sergius and Bacchus, a young girl repeats the Lord's prayer in the soft, guttural tones of Aramaic, the language spoken by Jesus himself.

"A-voon de vesh-ma-ya," she begins. I'm in the remote village of Maaloula, high up in the Syrian desert, about 30 miles north of Damascus. The 1,700-year-old church with its beautiful, gilded icons is one of the oldest to have been continuously celebrating mass. The village, with its pastel-blue houses hugging the steep, bare mountain face, is Syria's most enchanting, as well as being one of the last places on earth where Aramaic is still spoken. The girl cannot read or write in her mother tongue - Arabic has been Syria's national language for centuries - but she is proud of it, and, like most of the villagers, happy to recite poems for pilgrims and scholars.

"Aa-meen," the prayer ends. I find it very moving, being transported back 2,000 years in time, in this peaceful place. As we drive away from Maaloula in the sundown, giant neon crosses twinkle on the mountainsides, proclaiming the village's Christianity for miles around.

Contrary to popular misconceptions, Syria is a religiously tolerant country. While France bans the headscarf in schools and Italy imposes fines for wearing veils in public, Syrian Muslims and Christians live in harmony and dress as they please.

Most **women** wear headscarves, fewer wear veils, and many, especially in cities, are bareheaded and wear western clothes.

Syria, to the relief of our small group, is equally relaxed about alcohol, which is freely available everywhere. Local beers are excellent; there are good Syrian red wines (Nektar, St Simeon), some even better Lebanese ones, while the aniseed-flavoured grape spirit Arak makes an excellent aperitif with ice and water.

It was only a week since Izz el-Deen al-Sheikh Khalil, a **Hamas** activist, was killed by an Israeli bomb in Damascus. Friends told me I was crazy to venture into a country that borders Iraq but I have never felt safer, or indeed more welcome.

Everywhere we go -whether it's city, village or desert oasis -we are approached by friendly, curious Syrians, anxious to be hospitable.

Follow the road to Damascus

"Where do you come from?" they ask, adding courteously, "You are welcome in our country. Please, come to my house." School children tag along beside us, as we examine architectural jewels, eager to soak up our guide's pearls of wisdom. We are a novelty: Syrian tourism has suffered badly at the hands of the prejudiced and ill informed, and we have the entire country and its stunning archaeological sites almost to ourselves. Abdullah, our guide, regrets that in nine days, he can only show us just a few of his country's highlights.

I fell in love with his home town, Aleppo, as soon as we arrived, weary in the dusk of a balmy, jasmine-scented evening. Syria's second city -which claims, as does Damascus -to be the world's longest-inhabited settlement, is exotically eastern, with narrow cobbled alleys, inviting kebab and falafel stalls and handsome stone buildings. From our hotel, a beautifully restored old palazzo built around a cool, central courtyard, we have a breathtaking view of the vast and wonderful citadel that dominates the city.

Lawrence of Arabia stayed not far from here, at the famous Baron hotel, where tourists and expats congregate in the shabby-chic bar; so did Agatha Christie, while writing *Murder on the Orient Express*. Some of her archaeologist husband's finds can be seen in the museum, which is a must if you want to grasp the sophistication of Syrian art and civilisation of the two millennia before Christ.

We have been warned about Aleppo's honey-tongued vendors, but are unprepared for the wonders of the souks -a labyrinthine network of dark passageways, which form the world's biggest covered market. They stretch for miles and sell everything you can think of, from exotic scents and spices, dazzling silver and gold jewellery, to sheep's heads and assorted entrails.

An androgenous voice calls out: "Scarves for men, scarves for women, scarves for in-between." The young man beckons us into his tiny shop and spreads out some diaphanous silks for our inspection. After some obligatory haggling, we buy two scarves. There's an Arabic saying that an Aleppine can get you to buy a dried donkey skin, and it's true that I must buy another bag to accommodate my purchases -rugs from Afghanistan, chunky bars of olive oil soap perfumed with laurel and mint, Bedouin table cloths. But I've encountered little aggression, no dishonesty and less requests for a spare baksheesh than on Princes Street on a Saturday night.

Abdullah tears us away from the souks to visit Qalaat Semaan, the remains of St Simeon's Church, a short drive from Aleppo. These 5th-century ruins incorporating four fine basilicas commemorate St Simeon the Stylite, who spent nearly 40 years upright on the top of a pillar. However, the pillar has been chipped away by pilgrims and is now reduced to a stump.

Our trip collides with a national holiday, so there are lots of local people, Muslim and Christian, enjoying a day out and a picnic. Children -some fair haired with blue eyes reminding us that parts of Syria were occupied by the Crusaders - clamber over the ruins; a few French tourists drink mint tea. As the sun goes down the limestone ruins are bathed in gold.

Syria was ruled by France between the world wars and the language is still quite widely spoken: indeed the French are credited with preserving many of Syria's ancient monuments. Preservation included the eviction of thousands of Syrians from their makeshift homes built among the majestic ruins of Palmyra. Can you imagine a Roman metropolis bigger than Glasgow's west end, with colonnaded streets, vast temples, baths and theatres, in the middle of the desert? Well, that's Palmyra.

Built at the crossroads of an ancient Middle-Eastern trade route, it was ruled by the Syrian queen Zenobia, who dared to defy Rome, resulting in the sacking of the city in AD 273.

Palmyra is one of the most enthralling places on earth, but it is outdone in grandeur by Apamea with its double-fluted columns and Cardo Maximus (main street) of staggering breadth and length. Apamea is, in turn, eclipsed by the perfection of Bosra's huge 2nd-century Roman theatre, which has been preserved within an 8th-century citadel and is still used for performances. The French didn't get round to cleaning up Bosra, where children walk to school down Roman roads and satellite dishes rise above the black basalt remains of ancient gymnasiums.

Follow the road to Damascus

Our tour, which has taken in more than 1,100 miles, through bleak desert landscapes, olive groves and vineyards and the lush countryside of the Mediterranean coast, ends in sprawling, chaotic Damascus, a city of 4m inhabitants. We walk down The Street Called Straight, which is mentioned in the New Testament in connection with Paul's conversion, and admire the magnificent Umayyad mosque before paying a visit to the souk.

Damascene souks are grander in scale and less intimate than those of Aleppo, but equally alluring. Shafts of light filter in through holes in the glass ceilings.

In an elegant ice-cream shop a white-coated young man is pounding green pistachios in a massive mortar. He sprinkles them over our cones.

We stop to buy pomegranate juice. As usual the man asks us where we come from.

"Robbie Burns!" he shouts, when I tell him I'm Scottish.

"We hear about him in school. He liked women?" I'm amazed that a Syrian juice squeezer is familiar with the sexual predilections of our national bard. Back at the airport, our guide Abdullah gives us a big Syrian hug. "My heart is bleeding," he says, "I have only been able to show you the highlights."

Details: Wilma Paterson travelled to Syria with Voyages Jules Verne. Eight nights with half-board and sightseeing on the Apostles to the Crusades tour, from £595. bReservations: 0845 166 7118; www.vjv.co.uk

Graphic

Alive; Escape

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Egypt Confronts Double-edged Sword of Reform

The Forward

October 8, 2004

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Length: 1381 words

Byline: Oren Rawls

Dateline: CAIRO

Body

In a spartan office within sight of the Great Pyramids at Giza, the civic education clubs of the Taha Hussein Association are busy working to instill the values of citizenship in today's Egyptian schoolchildren. With a glossy 48-page booklet already in classrooms, director Kamal Mougheeth and his colleagues are trying to mold model citizens, one child at a time.

Such lofty goals were presumably what President Bush had in mind when he unveiled his Greater Middle East and North Africa Initiative in June. The benefits of democracy, so Washington reasoned, will dry up the well of discontent from which terrorism receives sustenance, stabilizing the region and perhaps even dampening Arab animosity toward Israel.

But here in Egypt, which is as close to an ally as Israel has in the Middle East, many citizens are wary of pinning their hopes on the future when the present offers so little promise. The average Egyptian is concerned about putting pita on the table, and a silent majority is putting its faith neither in America nor in its own government, but in the Muslim Brotherhood.

In this part of the world, democracy is a double-edged sword - one on which the Egyptian government, whether out of conviction or political necessity, is struggling to get a handle. Facing unprecedented pressure both at home and abroad for reform, Cairo is warning that shock therapy to the most populous Arab country may result in unwanted side effects.

"If we introduce lots of changes in a short period of time, the people cannot digest it," Osama el Baz, the chief political adviser to President Hosni Mubarak and perhaps Egypt's most respected political figure, told the Forward. "Suppose that somebody has a fever, and he has to take some antibiotics. He is told to take it every six or eight hours. Should he take 48 tablets at once to feel better?"

The long-ruling National Democratic Party offered up a full slate of reforms at its second annual conference, which was convened September 21 under the billing "New Thinking... Priorities for Reform." In an opening-day, nationally-broadcast speech to party delegates, Gamal Mubarak - secretary of the policies committee and the odds-on favorite to succeed his father as president - cited a host of measures the government has taken: the establishment of a National Council for Human Rights, the abolishment of the state security courts and of a number of long-standing military decrees, the curtailment of powers accorded to public prosecutors and the abrogation of hard-labor sentences.

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However, the policy changes did little to silence the rising cries in Egypt for reform. The demand topping most critics' agendas - rescinding the emergency laws by which Cairo has governed since the assassination of President Anwar Sadat in 1981 - was not met. Nor was the demand for an amendment to the 1971 constitution governing presidential selection and powers.

"We have not been able to establish with them a common vocabulary of what reform means, of what is needed," Saad Eddin Ibrahim, director of the Ibn Khaldun Center for Development Studies and Egypt's best-known democracy advocate, told the Forward.

One term heard often these days is multiparty elections. In a country governed since independence a half-century ago by what amounts to one-party rule, a growing chorus of critics is demanding the de-monopolization of the political establishment. Over the years, only a handful of small, ineffectual parties have received approval from the National Democratic Party-led committee that sanctions the formation of political parties.

Within the walls of government, the phrase of choice is separation of mosque and state. The staunch secularism of Egypt's ruling elite has long been a matter of ideology as much as of power, and draws from a centuries-old liberal tradition. From the government's perspective, the introduction of religion into the public arena is simply a nonstarter.

"When it comes to political parties, there should not be any restrictions except one: That political parties are not based upon religious orientation," el Baz said.

In practice, that sole restriction means the official exclusion from government of the Muslim Brotherhood, known in Arabic as Al-Ikhwān Al-Muslimūn. The Brotherhood, banned in 1954 by President Gamal Abdel Nasser, retains its place in many Western minds as the godfather of extremist Islamist groups, though it officially renounced violence a quarter-century ago. During the Mubarak presidency, the Brotherhood has earned widespread support among working-class Egyptians by bridging gaps in government services through its grass-roots network - a brand of social reformism that Hamas, the Brotherhood's Palestinian offshoot, has emulated in Gaza.

Along with providing assistance with jobs, health care and food, however, the Brotherhood dispenses an Islamist message. The group's ultimate aim is the adoption of Sharia, the code of Islamic law, as the law of the land. And therein lies the rub for political reform in Egypt: Given that the Brotherhood would likely carry the day in open elections, pushing for democracy effectively implies an Islamist government in Cairo.

It is not surprising, then, to hear calls from the Brotherhood to heed the word on the street.

"Give the people the right to change by giving them their freedom back to choose their representative, to choose their president, to build their political groups and parties, to be able to reform," said Issam al-Arian, a member of the body that formulates Brotherhood policy, the General Guidance Bureau.

Critics here and abroad are quick to write off the Shakespeare-quoting al-Arian as an unrepentant Islamist who happens to have mastered CNN-speak. Perhaps surprisingly, he and other Islamist moderates have a defender in Ibrahim, the decidedly secular democracy advocate. Ibrahim says it is mainly the government that whips up fears of radical Islamicization by the Brotherhood, using scare tactics to ward off pressure from the West for reform.

Cairo, Ibrahim said, is trying "to scare the West that if they allow reform and democracy as usual, the Muslim Brothers will come in hordes." It uses the same tactic to quiet restive secularists, women and minority Coptic Christians. "None of these fears, in my opinion, is warranted," he said.

And yet, the specter of another Algeria - where Islamists' success at the ballot box in 1991 set off a low-grade civil war that ended only a decade later after 100,000 deaths - lingers in the unfinished sentences heard off the record. Occasionally it surfaces in public conversation, even among those unlikely ever to raise a fist, let alone take up arms.

"I assure you," said Mougheeth, the history teacher turned civic educator, "there will be violence if the government does not allow change."

Egypt Confronts Double-edged Sword of Reform

As the government weighs long-term political reform, it is aiming to win back public opinion by what appears to be an effort to take - and turn back - a page from the Brotherhood handbook. The Islamist group garnered widespread support by using its social network to plug gaps in government services. Revitalizing those social programs figures prominently in the government's bid to restore public confidence, as evidenced by the slew of recent proposals for increased funding for education, health care and other public services.

"Our people have had enough of promises, of good wishes, of wishful thinking," Mahmoud Mohieldin, Egypt's minister of investment, told the Forward. "People are taking matters very seriously, and they are not satisfied. They cannot count by months and years anymore. They are counting things by days."

The fight for the hearts and minds of Egyptian citizens plays out against the backdrop of heightened American pressure on Cairo and other Arab capitals for democratization. But while Bush's initiative calls for reforms that in many respects mirror the demands of Cairo's domestic critics - increased political choice, transparent governance, economic opportunity and personal freedoms - it is opposition to Washington's impositions that may prove to be the one issue that can unite the country.

"Please," al-Arian said, insisting that he was speaking as an Egyptian and not as a Muslim Brother, "tell the American people that we need one thing from them: Respect our will."

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False Messiahs and Whirling Dervishes: A Scholar's Fresh Take on an Old Topic

The Forward

July 9, 2004

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Length: 1410 words

Byline: Allan Nadler

Allan Nadler is the director of the Jewish studies program at Drew University and senior academic adviser to the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research. He is currently completing a book on the influence of Spinoza in modern Jewish culture.

Body

The Sabbatean Prophets

By Matt Goldish

Harvard University Press, 240 pages, \$39.95.

The following dire, revolutionary proclamation issues forth from a charismatic provocateur in Gaza:

"None will be saved from these tribulations except those dwelling in this place. The [very] name of the place [connoting strength] expresses her nature. And with the advent of her redemption, strength will spread and the people of Gaza will act in this strength."

The response of the leader of the Gazans' enemy, both to this message and to those Jews residing in Gaza, is to remind them that Gaza is a place unworthy of triggering apocalyptic violence, since it is "technically outside the borders of the [biblical] Land of Israel."

At the same time, in a nearby Arab country, classified information, laden with potentially devastating secrets, is conveyed via a shady Middle Eastern businessman named Chelebi.

The latest news from Israel and Iraq? Hardly!

The proclamation from Gaza was issued not by a leader of ***Hamas***, but rather by the 17th-century Jewish kabbalist Nathan of Gaza, who in 1665 became the major prophet of the infamous false messiah from Izmir, Shabbetai Zevi. The proclamation's rebuke was not part of Ariel Sharon's argument for evacuating Jewish settlers from Gaza, but of a ruling by Rabbi Jacob Sasportas, the most outspoken and tireless opponent of the Sabbatean messianic outbreak. And the Chelebi in question was not the now-disgraced White House confidant, Ahmed Chalabi, but rather Raphael Chelebi, an Egyptian Jewish businessman who was the first outsider to whom Nathan of Gaza revealed the "secret" that the messiah had arrived.

False Messiahs and Whirling Dervishes: A Scholar's Fresh Take on an Old Topic

Matt Goldish traces these tidbits and many other riveting developments in his new book, "The Sabbatean Prophets," a fresh scholarly re-evaluation of the events that led to the wildfire-rapid spread across the Jewish world of belief in Shabbetai Zevi as the Jews' long-awaited king and savior.

It is natural to approach a new, rather thin, volume about Sabbateanism with a certain degree of skepticism. How much more can be revealed about a subject to which the great scholar of Kabbalah, Gershom Scholem, devoted a monumental 950-page study - a work that has itself spawned decades of critical commentary and re-evaluation on the part of Scholem's colleagues and disciples?

As it turns out, however, Goldish, who is the Melton associate professor of Jewish history at The Ohio State University, succeeds in going well beyond the foundational work of previous scholars. He achieves this not by uncovering hitherto unknown Sabbatean texts, but by significantly widening the lens through which the Sabbatean messianic phenomenon is viewed, taking his readers on a fascinating voyage through the turbulent worlds of 17th-century religious enthusiasm and prophetic millenarian thought - Christian, Muslim and Jewish. Goldish contends that it is in the broader context of religious thought in Christian Europe and the Muslim Ottoman Empire that the startling outbreak and rapid spread of Sabbateanism can be best appreciated. Moreover, pace Scholem, Goldish argues that it was not the dissemination of an esoteric Sabbatean version of Lurianic Kabbalah that best accounts for the extent of Shabbetai Zevi's popularity, but the parallel outbreak of widespread ecstatic prophecies on the part of simple Jews, young women in particular.

The intellectual and spiritual turbulence of the early modern period, particularly in Western Europe, gave rise to a dizzying array of novel religious ideas and mystical enthusiasm, most notably a variety of what Goldish broadly defines as new forms of "prophecy." There were many, widely divergent factors that led to this spiritual outbreak, all ably described by Goldish. The Reformation's challenge to the Roman Catholic Church's monopoly on religious truth in the 16th-century eventually led to the rise of a variety of charismatic sects whose leaders relied on direct personal access to the word of God in the 17th century.

Goldish pays particular attention to the probable impact on Jewish thought of the millenarian enthusiasm of Quaker missionaries, rapidly spreading from England to present-day Turkey at precisely the same time that Sabbateanism erupted. But he also notes a host of other small English millenarian religious sects that cropped up in the wake of the end of the Thirty Years War and the English Revolution. They were part of the larger continental atmosphere of millenarian thinking fostered by such groups as the Collegiants, French prophets, Spanish beatas and even the alchemists that pervaded Europe in the mid-17th century.

More surprisingly, Goldish makes the counter-intuitive argument that the scientific revolution - far from leading to estrangement from religion - was deeply and inextricably wound up with a particularly messianic form of spirituality. His discussions of the prophetic postures and messianic expectations of noted scientists such as Isaac Newton and Francis Bacon complicate accepted wisdom about the place of the scientific revolution in the trajectory of early modern intellectual history.

They also contribute richly to Goldish's portrayal of the degree to which 17th-century Christian Europe was rife with expectations of the Second Coming. Additionally, the daring voyages of the great 16th- and 17th-century European explorers led many to imagine that the fabled 10 Lost Tribes of Israel had been discovered, further fueling millenarian excitement and sparking a renewed Christian interest in the secret teachings of kabbalah. This often brought together in a weirdly shared apocalypticism rabbis and churchmen whose only real differences were their respective imaginings of precisely how the imminently expected scenario of salvation would end.

Critics of Goldish's approach almost certainly will argue that while he may have stumbled upon a coincidence of parallel messianic excitement during the same historical moment in both the Christian and Jewish worlds, he has not proved any direct connection between them. Goldish anticipates this problem by appealing to the theory, best articulated in the work of the French historian Jean-Michel Oughourlian, of "universal mimesis," or what nonscholars simply would call, "something in the air."

With the help of his copious translations of documents describing the prophetic experiences of Nathan of Gaza, the lay Sabbatean prophets as well as their Christian contemporaries, Goldish shows just how similar - at times almost

False Messiahs and Whirling Dervishes: A Scholar's Fresh Take on an Old Topic

identical - these bizarre phenomena were. The dramatic fainting, the convulsions, the losses of pulse, etc. - all inevitably followed by apocalyptic illuminations - were being experienced at precisely the same time by Jews, Christians and Muslims around the globe. Goldish insists that during this period of feverish worldwide travel, it is simply naive, even myopic, to rule out mutual influences:

In such merchant centers as Aleppo and Izmir, filled with Europeans, it is hardly credible that news of the Quakers, various Italian and French ecstasies and other European prophetic groups would not have reached the ears of the Jews. It is even more certain that Sepharadi exiles and escaped conversos, whose culture was Iberian through and through, knew a great deal about similar phenomena among beatas and nuns in Spain and Portugal. In their own environs, they had the models of the Sufis and dervishes. Even if they had not seen such possessions and visions in person, they could hardly have helped knowing about them. For this reason it is probable that the model of Nathan [of Gaza] struck a particular chord.

Aside from vividly describing, and explaining the widespread belief in, Sabbatean messianic prophecies, this book refines both the timeline of Sabbateanism's spread and the exact nature of its heresy. Scholem located that heresy in the convoluted kabbalistic rationalizations by his believers that followed Shabbetai Zevi's conversion to Islam in 1666. Goldish counters that the real heresy began earlier, exemplified by the very existence and growing influence of charismatic figures such as Nathan of Gaza and the lay Sabbatean prophets. It was the shifting of power from rabbis (whose authority was based on sound Talmudic scholarship) to charismatics (whose authority emerged from supernatural prophetic abilities) that represented the real heresy against traditional Judaism. In that sense, the "Sabbatean Prophets" were anti-establishment heretics.

Graphic

IMAGE

Load-Date: June 14, 2006

Lifting the veil on Muslim culture; Controversial leader of Hamilton-area Muslims says he is committed to bridging communities

Hamilton Spectator (Ontario, Canada)

May 7, 2004 Friday Final Edition

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Byline: Carmela Fragomeni

Body

A relatively unknown Javid Mirza catapulted into the public eye in the aftermath of 9/11.

Hamilton was tackling a racist backlash against its Muslim community. Mirza, president of the Muslim Association of Hamilton since 2000, jumped at the opportunity to help Hamiltonians get to know their Muslim neighbours.

He let them know the community was just as sickened as everyone else by the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City.

Mirza plunged into working with the newly formed Strengthening Hamilton Communities Initiative, (SHCI) in building bridges within the city's diverse populations aimed at eliminating hate crimes and racism in the city.

The Hamilton Spectator

Along the way, Mirza became the voice of the Muslim community and he continues to build bridges.

He also crashes into controversy now and then, most recently surviving a leadership challenge over what critics called politicization of the Hamilton Mosque.

Whatever his intentions, he is driven by what is best for the greater good, he says -- living in harmony.

"We need to know about each other's cultures so we don't offend someone."

Mirza, 44, is praised by civic leaders for opening up the city's once isolated and insular Muslim community and for fostering understanding throughout Hamilton.

More Hamiltonians and faith groups understand more about local Muslims than ever before, they say.

"It's a good thing," says Abdul-Rauf Sanni, the imam, or religious leader, of the Hamilton Mosque. People now know "we are normal people, normal citizens ... We are not terrorists. We are not violent."

The Muslim Association takes care of the day-to-day running of the Hamilton Mosque, the city's largest, and the attached Islamic elementary school. It is considered to represent all of Hamilton's 12,000 to 13,000 Muslims because all seven city mosques follow its lead.

Lifting the veil on Muslim culture; Controversial leader of Hamilton-area Muslims says he is committed to bridging communities

Members come from 40 nations, the largest group is from south Asia, including Pakistan and India. Others come from the Middle East, Africa and the Balkans.

Sept. 11 spurred Mirza to bring Muslims and non-Muslims together so they could better understand each other. He felt compelled to help because of his own success in life.

"If God has given you everything, you have to give something back to the community."

He's worked with the Hindu and Sikh communities, the school board on prayer, religious, and ethnic issues, with the United Church and many others.

He was particularly praised for building friendships with the city's Jewish community, eventually inviting its leaders last November to a gala dinner marking the end of Ramadan, Islam's holiest month.

"I made it a point to have dialogue with everyone," Mirza says.

"Discrimination is fear of the unknown."

It was that discrimination and fear, in the aftermath of 9/11, that led to hate crimes in Hamilton -- arsonists burned the Hindu Samaj temple they apparently mistook for a mosque, and vandalism at the Hamilton Mosque on Stone Church Road.

Mirza's philosophy is "Once people get to know you, they may still not like you, but they'll think twice about doing something to you."

Hamilton Spectator editor-in-chief Dana Robbins works with Mirza on the SHCI's media committee.

"I don't know if I ever met a more passionate advocate for his community. He has been remarkably effective in bringing Muslim concerns onto the radar in a way unlike others."

Robbins said a prime obstacle to eliminating racism is the ignorance of communities about each other. Mirza "has gone a long way to educate the broader Hamilton community about Muslims."

Mirza is a proud Canadian and Hamiltonian, very comfortable working both in and outside the Muslim community. He said he invites people and the media into the local Muslim world where others, fearful of criticism, try to keep them out.

Mirza was 13 when he came from Pakistan with his family in the early 1970s. There were only about 100 Muslim families in the city, he said.

He attended Hill Park Secondary School and later Mohawk College. He participated in Hamilton peace marches and candlelight vigils at Gage Park.

Mirza proudly calls himself a civil libertarian. As a young Liberal, he joined busloads of people on a trek to Montreal during the first referendum, to help encourage Quebec to stay in Canada.

He married a Catholic, Beatrice, although years later she converted to Islam, and their two young sons now attend the Islamic school at the mosque.

Mirza is also a successful businessman. He travels often, mostly to the United States, as president of Seven Star Sports, a sports equipment manufacturing company he and his six brothers started 15 years ago. Customers include Wal-Mart, Zellers and Toys "R" Us.

Mirza also has political aspirations.

Lifting the veil on Muslim culture; Controversial leader of Hamilton-area Muslims says he is committed to bridging communities

After years of strong Muslim support for Sheila Copps, he persuaded many to back Paul Martin and local MP and cabinet minister Tony Valeri.

Mirza also planned to seek the Hamilton Mountain Liberal nomination until the party cut off registration when incumbent MP Beth Phinney filed her papers.

Mirza's invitations to politicians to speak at the mosque don't sit well with some who say the mosque is for prayer. It was an issue in the recent Muslim association elections, but Mirza is sticking to his beliefs that political connections are important to the Muslim community and that the mosque is a centre for all civic, social and religious activities.

In regard to religion, Mirza says it's his job to stay centre of far left or right beliefs so he can keep people together on common ground.

He believes, for example, the decision to wear the hijab, the required head cover for Muslim women, is really between a woman and God.

Mirza readily admits Muslim society is male dominated, but says it is progressing and compares it to the old North American male dominated society before it changed.

"We're still going through that process."

Mirza believes Muslim women need more rights, and that Canadians of all religions and backgrounds can live harmoniously by interacting with each other.

"People came here to better their lives, not to make others uncomfortable."

Mirza is the oldest of 10 children, seven boys and three girls. All except two live in Hamilton, and there is no question those here form a powerhouse at the Mosque. His sister Yasmin Mirza heads the women's group, a brother is on the Islamic school council and mosque members say Mirza's brothers staunchly defend him if anyone questions him.

There are Muslims who say emphatically that Mirza does not speak for them.

They agree he does good work, but say he is using his prominence to build a political career.

Mirza admits he's "very outspoken," but says friction is part of life.

"You can't please everyone."

He certainly didn't please the city's Jewish community in the wake of Israel's assassination of Sheik Ahmed Yassin, the Palestinian founder and spiritual leader of the militant group Hamas.

Yassin was a hero to Palestinians and there was a massive outcry when he was slain in a rocket attack. Israel countered that he was behind waves of bloody suicide attacks on civilians.

Mirza called for economic sanctions against Israel to protest the killing. But he contends his comment hasn't strained relations with local Jewish leaders.

"It's a very passionate issue (the Israeli-Palestinian conflict). You can still be friends and you don't have to agree on everything and can still work things out.

"We have more in common than differences."

Members of Hamilton's Jewish community contacted by The Spectator wouldn't comment for this story.

Hamilton police Chief Brian Mullan says Mirza has helped police tremendously in race relations.

Lifting the veil on Muslim culture; Controversial leader of Hamilton-area Muslims says he is committed to bridging communities

"He's got a big-picture view. It's always about what will benefit Hamilton, what will reduce tensions, and how to make Hamilton a better place for all of our communities."

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Graphic

Photo: Ron Pozzer, the Hamilton Spectator; Javid Mirza, president of the Hamilton Muslim Association, attends morning prayer recently at the Hamilton Mosque.

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Our victory over terror starts with a strong, secure Israel

Sunday Times (London)

April 25, 2004, Sunday

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Section: Features; News; 21

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Byline: Michael Portillo

Body

Terrorism is the biggest threat we face and the war against it is being fought in cities around the world, in Iraq and on a third front, Israel. Outrages against Israeli civilians, innocent women and children, are not organised by Al-Qaeda, but the battle there is relevant to us because Israel may prove that terror can be defeated. It is hugely in all our interests that it should succeed.

Some people think the whole notion of a war against terrorism is absurd. Its critics argue that the threat is too diffuse to be grappled with. A vigorous response to violence merely breeds more violence, they claim, adding that terrorism has social and economic origins for which we must feel guilt.

On the contrary, while fighting this enemy is complicated, it is no more so than other wars we have won. When we show strength we make ourselves safer and when we are hesitant we increase our vulnerability. Terrorist leaders, who are themselves rich and who shelter in repressive regimes that impoverish their peoples, are using their peoples's sufferings as an excuse for their atrocities.

The Israelis have a grim advantage over the rest of us. Their enemies leave no doubt that their objective is to destroy Israel. Without that clarity it would be difficult for a democracy to take the measures needed to win. Similarly, Americans after September 11 believed that Al-Qaeda's mission was to harm the United States in every conceivable way. Popular revulsion enabled the administration to implement some unusual restrictions, such as the detention without trial of fighters captured in Afghanistan.

Europeans are not so convinced that the terrorist threat is mortal. Tony Blair's decision to deploy troops to Heathrow aroused cynicism. Many were writing before the Madrid bombings that he was exaggerating the danger.

But even Mr Blair sometimes seems not to understand how far we might have to go to combat terror. His government has condemned Israel's action in killing two leaders of Hamas. Jack Straw, the foreign secretary, has described the killings as unacceptable and counterproductive. Some Israelis might see that as Olympian detachment.

While in Northern Ireland it was not our policy to kill the organisers of violence, in the rougher world of the Middle East we are not normally so fastidious. Presumably Mr Blair does not believe that killing Saddam Hussein's two sons was unacceptable or counterproductive. They may have died in a firefight, but at the opening of the Iraq war the coalition flattened a restaurant because we thought Saddam was eating there.

Our victory over terror starts with a strong, secure Israel

Does anyone believe that we aim simply to detain Osama Bin Laden so he can help us with our inquiries? We would target him with a missile if we had a fix on his position.

Israel understands that its enemies respect only strength. To provide the best conditions for peace, Israel has to convince the Palestinian leadership that terrorism will not succeed and to eliminate all options except negotiation. In Israel's struggle to defeat terror or render it ineffective, it cannot fight by Queensberry rules. Killing those who send suicide bombers to commit mass murder disrupts the enemy. Terrorist leaders fear death more than the simple souls they bamboozle into dying on their orders.

The Western conscience, which revolted against the Iron Curtain, the Berlin Wall and apartheid in South Africa, is conditioned to abhor the forcible separation of human beings. We find the fence the Israelis are building to separate themselves from the Palestinians dreadful. It is an extreme step. But the situation is extreme and the barrier is effective. There has been only one case of a successful attack launched from Gaza since it was erected.

The fence disrupts Palestinian lives and certainly increases their anger. But it does not kill them, whereas the bombers claim many lives whenever they get through. The Israelis say that they will take it down when there is peace and that the line along which it runs has no significance for where new borders will lie. I believe them.

In the road map for peace between the Israelis and Palestinians it is not so much the destination as the route to it that is in doubt. It is agreed that the eventual settlement must produce two states, guarantees of Israeli security, special arrangements for Jerusalem and withdrawal from many Israeli settlements on land that was not Israel's before 1967. There are matters still in dispute, but what makes it so hard to reach the peace destination is the difficulty of synchronising the concessions that each side must make.

In the last meaningful negotiations in September 2000 Yasser Arafat's position was perhaps made difficult because he was offered too much too quickly by President Bill Clinton and the then Israeli prime minister, Ehud Barak, politicians in a hurry before elections. Arafat conversely needed a hard slog in to satisfy his people he had wrung difficult concessions from his enemies. Alas, soon afterwards he irresponsibly sanctioned a terrorist onslaught on Israel. That betrayal is the background to Sharon's statement on Friday that even Arafat's life might be claimed by an Israeli missile.

When the road map was last unfurled, by President George W Bush after the Iraq war, terrorists obliged both sides quickly to put it away again. That underlines the need to defeat the terrorists.

The European Union craves a role in settling the Middle East, but more for reasons of self-esteem than to be helpful. The French concept of a European common foreign policy is one defined by being different from America's. The EU, inasmuch as it speaks with one voice, therefore speaks to the PLO in a softer tone than America does (or Israel of course). That is unhelpful. The Palestinian leadership has to focus sharply on the need to engage in negotiation with Israel.

As European foreign ministers gathered in Ireland last weekend it seemed likely that anti-Americanism would as usual influence the outcome. Ministers arrived bravely denouncing the agreement between Sharon and Bush on Israel's plan for withdrawal from Gaza. The denunciation is perverse. That Israel should give up Gaza must be a vital part of any final settlement.

The wonder is that there is an Israeli prime minister willing to use his armed forces to drive Israeli voters out of their homes and send in the bulldozers.

Withdrawal from Gaza is a milepost on the road map. You would not have thought so from the general indignation.

The reason that Israel is proceeding without Palestinian agreement to bring about what everyone knows must happen anyway is that there is no Palestinian leader with whom to negotiate, no figure who both opposes terror and has his people's support for peace.

Our victory over terror starts with a strong, secure Israel

As the ministers' meeting proceeded, wiser counsels prevailed. There was an almost comical panic that the Israelis and Americans would go it alone, leaving no place for the quartet that supposedly links the US to Europe, Russia and the United Nations and is charged with supervising the road map.

The meeting closed with a notably politer tone towards the US because otherwise the Americans would not agree to reconvene the quartet and Europe would be left looking ineffectual. Typically, Mr Blair reached that conclusion well ahead of his dimmer European colleagues, which is why he supported Bush and Sharon during his visit to Washington.

Despite America's setbacks in Iraq, old Europe looks weaker than ever. Intriguing, too, that just as Europe has given another demonstration of its impotence, division and latent hostility to America, Mr Blair risks his career to endorse a new European constitution. The main effect of the new European treaty will be to give the EU a minister of foreign affairs. Mr Blair secretly wants that about as much as a migraine.

If things go badly in the fight against terror in Europe, we may need to take extreme measures to defend ourselves. In Britain we hope to defeat the enemy while keeping most of our civil liberties intact. In that case the fight against terror in Iraq and Israel must succeed, because victory there will weaken the terrorists plotting against our cities.

We should therefore be wary of criticising Israel's tactics in case we merely send a message that we lack resolve.

michael.portillo@sunday-times.co.uk

Graphic

Comment; Opinion

Load-Date: April 26, 2004

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**BY ENDORSING ARIEL SHARON'S PLAN GEORGE BUSH HAS LEGITIMISED
TERRORISM;
WHAT BETTER RECRUITING SERGEANT COULD BIN LADEN HAVE THAN
THE**

The Independent (London)

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Byline: ROBERT FISK

Body

So President George Bush tears up the Israeli-Palestinian peace plan and that's okay. Israeli settlements for Jews and Jews only on the West Bank. That's okay. Taking land from Palestinians who have owned that land for generations, that's okay. UN Security Council Resolution 242 says that land cannot be acquired by war. Forget it. That's okay.

Does President George Bush actually work for al-Qa'ida? What does this mean? That George Bush cares more about his re-election than he does about the Middle East? Or that George Bush is more frightened of the Israeli lobby than he is of his own electorate. Fear not, it is the latter.

His language, his narrative, his discourse on history, has been such a lie these past three weeks that I wonder why we bother to listen to his boring press conferences. Ariel Sharon, the perpetrator of the Sabra and Shatila massacre (1,700 Palestinian civilians dead) is a "man of peace" - even though the official 1993 Israeli report on the massacre said he was "personally responsible" for it. Now, Mr Bush is praising Mr Sharon's plan to steal yet more Palestinian land as a "historic and courageous act".

Heaven spare us all. Give up the puny illegal Jewish settlements in Gaza and everything's okay: the theft of land by colonial settlers, the denial of any right of return to Israel by those Palestinians who lived there, that's okay. Mr Bush, who claimed he changed the Middle East by invading Iraq, says he is now changing the world by invading Iraq! Okay! Is there no one to cry "Stop! Enough!"?

Two nights ago, this most dangerous man, George Bush, talked about "freedom in Iraq". Not "democracy" in Iraq. No, "democracy" was no longer mentioned. "Democracy" was simply left out of the equation. Now it was just "freedom" - freedom from Saddam rather than freedom to have elections. And what is this "freedom" supposed to involve? One group of American-appointed Iraqis will cede power to another group of American-appointed Iraqis. That will be the "historic handover" of Iraqi "sovereignty". Yes, I can well see why George Bush wants to witness a "handover" of sovereignty. "Our boys" must be out of the firing line - let the Iraqis be the sandbags.

Iraqi history is already being written. In revenge for the brutal killing of four American mercenaries - for that is what they were - US Marines carried out a massacre of hundreds of **women** and children and guerillas in the Sunni Muslim city of Fallujah. The US military says that the vast majority of the dead were militants. Untrue, say the

BY ENDORSING ARIEL SHARON'S PLAN GEORGE BUSH HAS LEGITIMISED TERRORISM; WHAT
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doctors. But the hundreds of dead, many of whom were indeed civilians, were a shameful reflection on the rabble of American soldiery who conducted these undisciplined attacks on Fallujah. Many Baghdadi Sunnis say that in the "New Iraq" - the Iraqi version, not the Paul Bremer version - Fallujah should be given the status of a new Iraqi capital.

Vast areas of the Palestinian West Bank will now become Israel, courtesy of President Bush. Land which belongs to people other than Israelis must now be stolen by Israelis because it is "unrealistic" to accept otherwise. Is Mr Bush a thief? Is he a criminal? Can he be charged with abetting a criminal act? Can Iraq now claim to Kuwait that it is "unrealistic" that the Ottoman borders can be changed? Palestinian land once included all of what is now Israel. It is not, apparently, "realistic" to change this, even to two per cent?

Is Saddam Hussein to be re-bottled and put back in charge of Iraq on the basis that his 1990 invasion of Kuwait was "realistic"? Or that his invasion of Iran - when we helped him try to destroy Ayatollah Khomeini's revolution - was "realistic" because he initially attacked only the Arabic-speaking (and thus "Iraqi") parts of Iran?

Or, since President Bush now seems to be a history buff, are the Germans to be given back Danzig or the Sudetenland? Or Austria? Or should we perhaps recreate the colonial possessions of the past 100 years? Is it not "realistic" that the French should retake Algeria - or part of Algeria - on the basis that the people all speak French, on the basis that this was once part of the French nation? Or should the British retake Cyprus? Or Aden? Or Egypt? Shouldn't the French be allowed to take back Lebanon and Syria? Why shouldn't the British re-take America and boot out those pesky "terrorists" who oppose the rule of King George's democracy well over 200 years ago?

Because this is what George Bush's lunacy and weakness can lead to. We all have lands that "God" gave us. Didn't Queen Mary die with "Calais" engraved on her heart? Doesn't Spain have a legitimate right to the Netherlands? Or Sweden the right to Norway and Denmark? Every colonial power, including Israel can put forward these preposterous demands.

What Bush has actually done is give way to the crazed world of Christian Zionism. The fundamentalist Christians who support Israel's theft of the West Bank on the grounds that the state of Israel must exist there according to God's law until the second coming, believe that Jesus will return to earth and the Israelis - for this is the Bush "Christian Sundie" belief - will then have to convert to Christianity or die in the battle of Armageddon.

I kid thee not. This is the Christian fundamentalist belief, which even the Israeli embassy in Washington go along with - without comment, of course - in their weekly Christian Zionist prayer meetings. Every claim by Osama bin Laden, every statement that the United States represents Zionism and supports the theft of Arab lands will now have been proved true to millions of Arabs, even those who had no time for Bin Laden. What better recruiting sergeant could Bin Laden have than George Bush. Doesn't he realise what this means for young American soldiers in Iraq or are Israelis more important than American lives in Mesopotamia?

Everything the US government has done to preserve its name as a "middle- man" in the Middle East has now been thrown away by this gutless, cowardly US President, George W Bush. That it will place his soldiers at greater risk doesn't worry him - anyway, he doesn't do funerals. That it goes against natural justice doesn't worry him. That his statements are against international law is of no consequence.

And still we have to cow-tow to this man. If we are struck by al-Qa'ida it is our fault. And if 90 per cent of the population of Spain point out that they opposed the war, then they are pro-terrorists to complain that 200 of their civilians were killed by al-Qa'ida. First the Spanish complain about the war, then they are made to suffer for it - and then they are condemned as "appeasers" by the Bush regime and its craven journalists when they complain that their husbands and wives and sons did not deserve to die.

If this is to be their fate, excuse me, but I would like to have a Spanish passport so that I can share the Spanish people's "cowardice"! If Mr Sharon is "historic" and "courageous", then the murderers of Hamas and Islamic Jihad will be able to claim the same. Mr Bush legitimised "terrorism" this week - and everyone who loses a limb or a life can thank him for his yellow streak. And, I fear, they can thank Mr Blair for his cowardice too.

BY ENDORSING ARIEL SHARON'S PLAN GEORGE BUSH HAS LEGITIMISED TERRORISM; WHAT
BETTER RECRUITING SERGEANT COULD BIN LADEN HAVE THAN THE

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For Saudis, jihad abroad is terror at home

The International Herald Tribune

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Dateline: RIYADH:

Body

Only hours before a suicide bomber demolished a Saudi police building in central Riyadh, the family of a young man was accepting congratulations for his death in the jihad across the border in Iraq, the one that enjoys no small support here.

"He went to Iraq seeking martyrdom because of the recent events there," Abdullah al-Enezi said of his younger brother Majid, who had been training to be a computer technician.

"America's unjust policy toward the Muslims is the main reason," Enezi said by telephone from the family home in Al-Kharj, a town just south of Riyadh. "Everyone feels this humiliation; he's not alone, there are so many young men who wish they could cross over into Iraq to join the jihad, but they can't. Thank God he was blessed with the ability to go."

The New York Times

In Saudi Arabia, a strategic ally of the United States, violence against the occupation in Iraq is seen by many as jihad, or a holy struggle. But virtually no one accepts violence as jihad when it occurs here at home, in what is supposed to be the most Muslim of countries.

In Iraq, attacks by U.S. troops serve as evidence to some that the U.S. occupation of a Muslim land must be reversed. Requests for God to avenge U.S. actions pour down from mosque minarets, and some women university students wear Osama bin Laden T-shirts under their enveloping robes to mark their approval for his calls to resist the United States.

But many Saudis consider the suicide attack here on Wednesday a shocking and unsettling crime, especially since the attackers chose for their first major government target an office building that virtually every adult male must visit to collect a license or license plates.

A group calling itself the Brigade of the Two Holy Mosques posted an unverifiable claim of responsibility on two Web sites on Thursday, bragging in language that closely echoed that of Al Qaeda that the attack rained devastation on the "criminal, apostate" Saudi government, and warning of further strikes. Some viewed the claim as dubious because it did not name the suicide bomber.

Five people, apart from the bomber, died in the attack, the Interior Ministry announced.

For Saudis, jihad abroad is terror at home

"May God curse you, you vermin, you people of filth and not jihad," said a posting on one of the same Web sites where the responsibility claim was posted, adding a picture of coffins draped in American flags over the caption, "This is jihad."

Experts on the topic believe that most Saudis do not view the violence at home and abroad as even remotely related.

"When people see Israeli operations in Palestine and the American cruelty in Iraq, they feel angry and frustrated," said Abdullah Bejad al-Oteibi, a former fundamentalist now working as a legal researcher. "They cannot control their anger and they admire bin Laden, so that is why many people volunteer for jihad," he added. "But when there are operations here, people feel angry and betrayed."

No officials or analysts have a firm command of how many operate in either sphere. Although it is likely they rely on similar theological underpinnings to justify their actions, anyone acting in Saudi Arabia would have to be far more radical to overcome the heavy sanctions against killing fellow Muslims.

"They might be the same group of people, from the same pool of jihadis," said Jamal Khashoggi, an expert on Islamic groups and adviser to Prince Turki al-Faisal, Saudi ambassador to Britain.

"But to recruit somebody to fight in Saudi Arabia is way more difficult than to fight in Iraq," he noted. "You have to be really militant to believe that a country where religion is practiced day and night is apostate."

The difficulty, some experts believe, refers back to a slightly different interpretation of the concept of jihad espoused by the Wahhabi teachings that hold sway in the kingdom. Whereas most sects in Islam view jihad as necessary only when attacked, the Wahhabis view it as a means to spread their religion.

"You should never initiate fighting without a reason; you undertake jihad when you are 'defending' an Islamic nation, like the situation in Iraq or Palestine," said Abdel Rahem al-Lahem, a lawyer and specialist in militant groups. "All religious scholars agree on this and there are many religious texts to prove it."

But the Wahhabi school believes in smiting your enemy first, he said, although senior clerics started preaching against the idea last year after attacks in Saudi Arabia killed Muslims.

Saudi Arabia has a troubled history with preaching jihad, which was officially sanctioned against the occupying Soviets in Afghanistan in the 1980s. The ruling Saud family thought it could rid itself of the radical fringe, but instead their sponsorship now haunts them. Afghanistan became the training camp for various elements now seeking to overthrow the royal family.

Hence there is no similar mobilization for going to Iraq.

"We do not believe in the American invasion of Iraq; it is illegal and illegitimate," said Soliman al-Oadah, an Islamic cleric once known for expressing hard-line views whose pronouncements have grown more moderate in recent years.

But, he said, "we see that allowing people to go to Iraq has many negative points. For example, when the war is over, they will be trained and shaped in a way that could go out of control. They might go back to their home countries and act in a bad way."

Fearing just such an outcome, Saudi officials say they are ensuring that the border with Iraq is sealed. They have installed heat sensors to detect movement, one official said, noting that events in Iraq are likely to inspire more problems at home.

"They can't do anything over there, and they think Arab governments are not doing anything," said Sayid al-Harathi, a senior adviser to Prince Nayif bin Abdel Aziz, the interior minister. "They are consumed with anger, which they transfer to their own government. If we let them, thousands would go, not just from Saudi Arabia, but from every Arab country."

For Saudis, jihad abroad is terror at home

Instead, the government has been trying to let off steam by, for example, allowing otherwise tightly controlled mosque sermons to inveigh heavily against the Americans.

"O God, avenge America; O God, avenge its allies," the prayer leader at Prince Sultan bin Abdel Aziz mosque in Riyadh said last Friday. "O God, order your soldiers to show them torture; O God, divide them; O God, avenge them for what they are corrupting in Iraq."

Enezi, whose 25-year-old brother was killed fighting the Americans in Iraq last Saturday, said he was unaware of any cleric swaying his brother's mind. He simply left one day about a month ago, entering Iraq from Syria. He called periodically, and then his friends called to say he had died in a firefight with U.S. marines.

Even among prosperous, upper-middle-class Saudis it is possible to hear support for such actions, especially after the killing of two **Hamas** leaders in Gaza and President George W. Bush's endorsement of Israeli plans to keep West Bank settlements and to prevent the long-sought return of Palestinian refugees to Israel. Often the anger takes the form of endorsing bin Laden's calls for fighting the Americans.

"Young people are wearing T-shirts with bin Laden's picture on it just the way people used to wear pictures of Che Guevara," said Tufful al-Oqbi, a student at King Saud University. "It's simply because he is the only one resisting. Even if we reject his methods, it's because there is no other way, because this is the only way."

Fowziyah Abukhalid, a sociology professor at the university, has noticed a parallel phenomenon among her students.

"Many young **women** are saying 'My God, bin Laden is so charming' or 'My God, bin Laden is so handsome,'" she said. "He is politically appealing; that is why they view him as handsome."

Such feelings are volatile, though, depending on whether those either directed or inspired by bin Laden carry out their attacks at home or abroad.

"People literally change their minds and feelings every day about bin Laden," said Oteibi, the former fundamentalist.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Body

Hopeful signs from Palestinian moderates

Your article "Palestinian intellectuals urge peaceful protest for statehood" (March 26) was a welcome relief from previous Arab rhetoric. Finally, a group of Palestinians, hopefully influential enough to make a difference, is backing a campaign of peaceful protest instead of a continuation of terrorist suicide attacks on ordinary Israeli men, women and children.

Had the Palestinians initiated this concept years ago instead of embracing terrorism, it is very likely that the entire weight of world public opinion would be on their side, including that of most Americans. Four basic commitments would go a long way toward resolving the disputes in the Middle East.

First and foremost, all Palestinians, specifically including Hamas and Hezbollah, must agree unconditionally to Israel's right to exist, and renounce terrorist attacks. Second, Israel must remove all settlements from Palestinian territory.

Third, any right of return by original Palestinian residents of Israel must either be given up or limited to those individuals who actually lived there. And finally, the United States must be willing to divert some of the billions of dollars that annually provide military assistance to Israel and Egypt to the development of infrastructure and jobs in Palestine.

Rick Lettau

Belleville

Sins of the parents

My thanks to Eric Mink ("Callous hearts rule the Legislature," March 24) for bringing the voting records of (Republican state representatives) Jodi Stefanick, Cynthia Davis and Carl Bearden to our attention. Imagine, legislators who actually expect parents to be responsible for their own children. How shocking.

Terry Deckert

Webster Groves

Reading the papers

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

I heard President George W. Bush state in a television interview that he "rarely" reads the newspapers. This brings to mind an incident involving my favorite president, Harry S Truman.

During the Korean War, Truman read in the paper that a soldier who had been killed in action was denied burial in Sioux City, Iowa, because he was an Indian and not a member of the Caucasian race. Outraged, Truman arranged for the man to be buried in Arlington National Cemetery with full military honors.

My point is, I wish President Bush would read the newspapers. He might find out what is going on.

Virgil Koechner

Tipton, Mo.

Aloha, Don

I see that Don Carty (former head of American Airlines) is trying to take over Hawaiian Airlines. I hope the employees of Hawaiian and the state of Hawaii don't get the same "fair and equitable" deal that the TWA employees and the state of Missouri got from Mr. Carty.

Dan Cooney

St. Charles

The wrong questions

With all the recent partisan bantering over the Sept. 11 commission's investigation, I fear that policy makers and investigators still are not asking the right questions. The failures of intelligence and military operations against al-Qaida are worth investigating. But what about the long history of U.S. policy failures that helped create the threats we face today?

When will an investigation ask questions about U.S. support for Osama bin Laden in the 1980s? Do our unsavory alliances with dictators and abusive regimes in the Middle East encourage desperate acts of violence? Do unilateral actions and our global military and economic dominance breed acts of terror?

How does our determination to maintain an unchallenged nuclear arsenal feed our fears of nuclear terror? Do U.S. vetoes at the United Nations and funding Israel's occupation of Palestinian territory make us more vulnerable and prolong the cycle of violence?

We need a deeper investigation into the causes of terrorism and a more complex understanding of our vulnerability before we can design policy to prevent future attacks. Dividing the world into good and evil, us and them, and a perpetual war on terror will only incite more terror.

Our children and children around the world deserve a more mature and smarter approach to the threats we all face. The right questions are a good place to start.

Bill Ramsey

St. Louis

Those testifying before the 9-11 commission, as well as the members of the commission demonstrating partisan positions, seem to be asking the wrong question. The question is not whether President George W. Bush or President Bill Clinton could have done more to prevent terrorism. Unless there had been zero such attacks, the answer to that question will always be "yes."

The question is: Did they do the best they could in the light of what they knew at the time?

Rev. William P. Clark

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Belleville

The Bible and the law

Shall the Bible be the basis for defining marriage? Then we have some real changing to do. The proposed marriage amendment would itself have to be amended to include the following:

1. Marriage shall consist of a union between one man and as many women as he would like. Genesis, chapter 28.
2. Marriage shall not impede a man's right to take concubines in addition to his wife or wives. II Samuel, chapter 5, and II Chronicles, chapter 11.
3. A marriage shall be considered valid only if the wife is a virgin. If the wife is not a virgin, she shall be executed. Deuteronomy, chapter 22.
4. If a married man dies, his brother has to marry the widow. Deuteronomy, chapter 25.

With thanks to U.S Rep. Jim McDermott, D-Wash., whose biblical notes appeared in the Congressional Record for Feb. 25. There is a reason for the separation of church and state.

Richard Haar

St. Louis

Concealed means secret

One of the stupider of the many stupid anti-gun editorials by the Post-Dispatch is "Secret guns" on March 21. You complain because the Missouri state records on who has a permit for concealed carry are secret. Of course they are secret. Look up the meaning of "concealed" in any dictionary!

To have a record identifying gun owners and-or carriers open to the public is absolutely inviting big trouble. It is almost an invitation to a home break-in by those who would steal to obtain a gun, especially a handgun.

All records of who owns any guns of any kind must be totally closed to all but government officials responsible for law enforcement, and they must have a precisely defined need to know. And all officials with knowledge of names of permit holders must be sworn and held to total secrecy, outside of essential internal government use, forever.

Robert A. Brandon

Creve Coeur

Carter a hero

I take exception to Phil Bolian's comments ("Enough of Carter," March 25). In his post-presidency years, Jimmy Carter has given more of himself to making this world a better place for all mankind than any past president I can think of.

Most just see how much they can sell themselves for on the speakers circuit, while making virtually no constructive impact on anything except their bank accounts.

Linda Reifschneider

Sappington

Reckless defense?

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Now that we have the full story concerning the Lemay "self-defense" shooter, does anyone really think it took seven shots at a teenager armed with a BB gun for this citizen to protect himself--especially since the shots were fired as the "gunman" was running away?

In the process of defending himself, he endangered the lives of everyone who lives in the condo complex, as evidenced by the stray bullet that went through a woman's window and lodged in her bed. She's extremely lucky she wasn't shot and killed.

St. Louis County Prosecuting Attorney Robert McCulloch should prosecute this guy for endangering the lives of the public and destruction of private property. What a shame that, to appease the gun obsession of the minority, the citizens of Missouri are no longer safe in their own bedrooms.

Michael Morfeld

St. Charles

Graphic

PHOTO; Photo - (former President Jimmy Carter)

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THE WEEK

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

July 17, 2004 Saturday

First Edition

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Body

WHAT TO SAY ABOUT: WARNEY

Ah, the ability of cricket to bring a nation together. In the week when the Sultan of Spin, The Sheik of Tweak, the Battler from Black Rock - Shane Warne - joined Sri Lanka's Muttiah Muralitharan as the greatest wicket-taker in Test history we find that Mark Latham and John Howard agree on one thing.

In an interview with Inside Sport Latham backed the PM's considered view that Murali was a chucker. "If I was an umpire at square leg I'd be no-balling him a fair bit," he said.

Thankfully Warney made no reference to his rival's action after he equalled the record of 527 wickets in Cairns on the last day of the Test match against Sri Lanka.

But he did tell Malcolm Conn, The Australian's chief cricket writer, about the hard road he has to hoe to keep up with the dastardly Sri Lankans: "The champion leg-spinner pointed out that Sri Lankan pitches were shamelessly doctored to suit Murali, that he bowled half the team's overs and more than 100 of his wickets were taken against Test weaklings Zimbabwe and Bangladesh."

Conn also wrote: "Warne did not say that Murali had been banned from bowling his doosra lest he suffer the fate of his vice-captain Adam Gilchrist and be punished by officialdom for telling the truth about Murali's dodgy action."

After this damning of Murali with faint praise Warney appeared surprised that people might think he and the Sri Lankan were feuding.

In The Age, Mathew Murphy reported: "Shane Warne arrived in Melbourne today playing down a feud with Muralitharan: '[The media] are saying there's a feud between us, [but] Murali and I get along fine. I've said what I've said and he's said what he's said, it doesn't mean we don't get along. We get along fine.'" Silly us.

Home-town paper the Herald-Sun maintained the rage: "The man they call Hollywood correctly points out that his wickets were taken on every type of pitch around the world and against first-class opposition.

"Murali, on the other hand, has taken many of his 527 wickets against teams such as Bangladesh and Zimbabwe and on home pitches that are a spinner's dream."

THE WEEK

The Herald-Sun omitted the fact that Australia played Bangladesh last year but Warney was a no-show because ... oh, that's right, he had been outed for a year after failing a drug test. Hardly Murali's fault.

The Age thought his remarks were "ungracious" but went on to congratulate Warney.

It was left to Frank Wilkinson, of The Entrance, to put the record into perspective. In a letter to the Herald he said : "Bill O'Reilly played 27 Tests from 1931-45 and took 144 wickets, an average of 5.33 wickets per match. If he had played the same number of Tests as Warne he would have 634 wickets.

"Clarrie Grimmett played 37 Tests and took 216 wickets. If he had played the same number of Tests as Warne he would have 693 wickets. I rest my case." And so do we.

Alan Kennedy

EDITORIALS

GIBRALTAR CHRONICLE

Deeply rooted ties

The entire range of commentary coming from Spain on the visit by the Princess Royal seems to have been contrived to create the impression of a last-minute move by Britain designed to poke Madrid in the eye. In reality plans for a royal visit were substantially advanced in 2003. That the event serves to highlight the failure of the Anglo-Spanish process over Gibraltar is undoubtedly true. But Spain needs to understand that the relationship between Gibraltarians and the British monarchy is deep rooted. Gibraltar, July 12

KATHIMERINI

Chain of errors

Yesterday's general blackout was not due to a lack of power but to mistaken calculations in the management of the system of high-tension wires. So we are talking about a chain of errors that meant available power did not reach the consumer on a day when demand was expected to be at its height: the first working day during a heatwave. The incident shows that in Greece we are capable of the best and the worst. It is perhaps positive that the blackout happened in the run-up to the Games, as long as it is a lesson in how things should be done. Athens, July 14

THE BOSTON GLOBE

Hands off the constitution

A majority of senators - including John Kerry and John Edwards, as well as several Republicans - [were] prepared to vote against amending the constitution to restrict individual rights for the first time. This is especially laudable considering the political tinge the Bush Administration has given the issue, with the President supporting the amendment [to ban gay marriage]. Even Americans who oppose gay marriage - a majority in most polls - don't think the constitution should be tampered with to ban it. Boston, July 14

AL AHRAM

Arab media's crime

Last week The New York Times published a series of articles in which the editors conceded that their support for the war on Iraq was a mistake. The Arab media should concede the crime they have committed against the Iraqi people: the long silence vis a vis the practices of the former Iraqi regime. The silence was a perpetual crime committed by the Arab media which tend to go out of their way to appease not only the regime under which they operate but every other Arab government as well. The overriding viewpoint in the Arab media is that an objective treatment of issues will undermine inter-Arab relations. Cairo, July 8-14

THE WEEK

THE FALLOUT

Culture wars: Vietnam's first Pop Idol-style competition, launched last weekend, has unsettled the authorities. The program's makers have been rebuked by the Ministry of Culture for selecting judges whose comments deviated from the ruling Communist Party's principles of "building and developing Vietnam's culture into an advanced culture imbued with national identities".

Roo on the run: An escaped kangaroo has been on the hop in Germany's Bavaria region for weeks. Heidi broke out of her enclosure near Eggenfelden, east of Munich, three weeks ago. She left behind a lovesick male kangaroo, Hermann the German, who has refused to eat properly since his Heidi escaped.

Free speech: Trespassing charges against two people who wore anti-Bush T-shirts to the President's July 4 rally at the West Virginia Capitol were dropped because a city law did not cover trespassing on state grounds. Nicole and Jeff Rank were removed after taking off an outer layer of clothes to reveal T-shirts that had Bush's name with a slash through it and "Love America, Hate Bush" on the back.

Keep your shirts off: ***Female*** German politicians have tabled a motion demanding footballers be allowed to show their bodies without getting a yellow card. Portuguese star Cristiano Ronaldo was booked for whipping off his shirt during Euro 2004. The referee said it was "unsportsmanlike conduct".

QUOTES

Only the British can manage inquiries like this that admit to errors that absolutely no one committed.

An editorial in Arab News commenting on the Butler Inquiry.

I have to accept, as the months have passed, it seems increasingly clear that at the time of invasion, Saddam did not have stockpiles of chemical or biological weapons ready to deploy.

British PM Tony Blair.

We owe it to our Australian friends, they have been with us through thick and thin, and this is our way of saying, "Thanks, mates."

Dana Rohrabacher, a Californian Republican, during the free trade agreement debate in the US Congress.

I don't believe the shark should be killed just for the sake of what happened. I don't think he can be revenged by killing the shark.

Stephen Smith, whose brother Bradley was killed by sharks in Western Australia last week, speaking out against the shark hunt that followed.

Law is a very gentle profession compared to politics.

Senator Helen Coonan on her elevation to the communications portfolio.

I feel like I could break another record. I'm not quitting any time soon. As long as I can get up in the morning I will run and walk.

Philip Rabinowitz of South Africa, who this week became the world's fastest 100-year-old when he broke the record for centenarian sprinting by clocking 30.86 seconds over 100 metres.

The career of David Kemp is somewhere between a plastic bag and a chainsaw.

Australian Greens leader Bob Brown on the performance of outgoing Environment Minister, David Kemp.

I have been trying to rebuild my life. I guess people don't realise that I am not trying to drag out my "15 minutes", but I did get interrupted for a while.

THE WEEK

Monica Lewinsky.

THE WALL WORLDS APART

Aaron Klein

Israel Insider, July 13

The United Nations has outdone itself again. In an almost unanimous decision, the International Court of Justice ruled that Israel's security fence, credited by even Hamas with keeping suicide bombers out, violates international law and must be dismantled. But to all the Israeli and American Jewish leaders throwing a hissy fit about the crazy court ruling, I say, calm down. The only thing The Hague accomplished was to affirm to the civilised world that its court, like the UN itself, cannot be taken seriously when it comes to Middle East issues.

Janine Zacharia

Jerusalem Post, July 15

The House of Representatives has passed a resolution 361-45 deploring the UN General Assembly's "misuse" of the International Court of Justice at The Hague, which last week advised Israel to tear down its security fence after the UN body referred the question of the barrier's legality to the court.

Editorial

Daily Star, Lebanon, July 14

The International Court of Justice's ruling that the West Bank separation wall is illegal was a landmark decision the Palestinians must now capitalise on. The Palestinians, however, seem to be dormant diplomatically. It is often overlooked that the 56-year-old conflict has been a diplomatic, albeit bloody, struggle and this is where efforts to resolve it should be made. If there was a time for Hamas, Islamic Jihad and the Palestinian Liberation Organisation to get involved in serious diplomacy, it is now.

Editorial

Mmegi Gaborone, Botswana, July 14

The response of Israel and its chief ally - the United States - to last week's ruling of the International Court of Justice was very predictable. True to form, Israel's hawkish Prime Minister, Ariel Sharon, boasted that his country would continue building the West Bank separation barrier despite the ruling that the wall must be brought down. With such powerful backers, is it any wonder that Israel continues to flout all the UN Security Council resolutions that call for the Jewish state's withdrawal from the Palestinian land? As usual, where American interest is concerned, there is a set of rules for America and its friends, and another set for the rest of the world.

HOUSING PRICE SETBACK

John Garnaut

The Sydney Morning Herald, July 16

The Reserve Bank has confirmed Sydney house and apartment prices fell over the first half of this year, paving the way for stable interest rates until the federal election. New preliminary data in the bank's monthly bulletin - its most authoritative analysis of the market to date - showed Sydney and Melbourne prices fell in the March quarter, and probably fell more in the three months to June. It rejected speculation that the market had regained steam after cooling during summer.

David Uren

THE WEEK

The Australian, July 16

House prices have not fallen as far, or as fast, as the Reserve Bank earlier suggested and may have recovered during the past three months. The Reserve's latest monthly bulletin, released yesterday, included heavily revised figures from the consulting firm it has contracted to provide information on house prices. Whereas its May monetary policy statement suggested house prices may have dropped by 8.4 per cent in the March quarter, yesterday's bulletin cited Australian Property Monitors figures of just 2.4 per cent.

Lisa Pryor

The Sydney Morning Herald, July 13

Tax breaks for property owners need to be slashed if the housing affordability problem is to be fixed, academics have warned. They say grants for first home buyers do not help enough. Perks for investors - such as negative gearing - were "excessively generous" and escalated the cost of housing rather than making it cheaper for renters, said Neil Warren, an associate director of the Australian Taxation Studies program at the University of NSW. "All this tax advantage gets capitalised. In other words it's built into the price of the owner-occupied home. It's built into property investments."

Editorial

The Age, July 12

Tax breaks have encouraged private investors to buy housing, which has contributed to the upward spiral in prices and to the difficulty of low-income earners making their own down payment on a property. But given that most people own their own home and have therefore benefited from the recent bonanza, the major parties have little to gain, politically, from changing the rules. On the other hand, continuing with the status quo is likely to entrench existing divisions. Last week, the Opposition Leader, Mark Latham, said a Labor government would provide \$400 million on public housing to ease the "housing crisis". While this investment is welcome, it does not tackle the underlying problem. According to the Reserve Bank, 40 cents in every dollar lent for housing goes to investors. Those who can have made profits, but the result is a less equal Australia.

THE NATION

QUEENSLAND

Backing for swim coach

The Attorney-General, Rod Welford, has said a NSW review of the child-sex abuse claims involving Scott Volkens had "cured" the controversy. Mr Welford said "whatever reservations one may have held about that process, it has, in effect, been cured by subsequent reviews, including the NSW assessment". The review by the NSW Director of Public Prosecutions, Nicholas Cowdery, QC, and one of his senior prosecutor, Margaret Cunneen, has been condemned by experts in sexual abuse, law, medicine and psychiatry for being basically wrong.

NORTHERN TERRITORY

Feral tenants

A Territory Housing worker says she has been threatened with a knife and a pitbull terrier by public housing tenants. The woman, who did not want to be named, said a tenant threatened to dismember her because she left a business card on the door. A CLP spokesman, Denis Burke, said that Territory Housing was a breeding ground for gangs.

NSW

Sober decision

THE WEEK

A product that promises to get people drunk 10 times faster without a hangover or calories has been banned by NSW. Billed as the "ultimate party toy", alcoholic vapour has been a hit in London. But the NSW Gaming Minister, Grant McBride, said AWOL - alcohol without liquid - sends an irresponsible message about alcohol consumption.

VICTORIA

Compensation claim

Construction giant Leighton Holdings is expected to seek millions of dollars in compensation from taxpayers over the troubled Spencer Street Station project, pictured. It says State Government inaction has led to delays and cost blow-outs. Leighton Holdings' chief executive, Wal King, said the Government had breached its guidelines by treating the partnership as a "master-slave relationship".

ACT

Students bypass the capital

Tertiary students are choosing not to study in Canberra because of a shortage of affordable housing, a working party set up to tackle the ACT's student accommodation crisis has learnt. The working party has identified difficulty in finding affordable housing as one of the major deterrents for interstate students coming to Canberra.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Let's hear it for science

Scientists will have a "catalyst" to voice their issues to the media, politicians, big business and educators, the Science Minister, Trish White, has said. Project Catalyst is based on a science media centre in London and the Government will hire a science communicator for the next 12 months to promote science and its issues to the community.

TASMANIA

Cable car plan up in the air

The architect of Mt Wellington's cable car plan says his revised project should not cause the furore that killed it almost 10 years ago. A Hobart engineer, Tim Burbury, says advances in cable car technology and the list of community concerns have resulted in a different project this time. However, a South Hobart resident, Ted Cutlan, who led the campaign that stopped the 1995 project, says he's prepared to do it again.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Brothers move out

The Christian Brothers order will pull out of all its WA schools after receiving a directive from its international head that it should no longer be involved in education in Australia. The West Australian reports that the Christian Brothers deputy province leader for WA, Brother Dean McGlaughlin, admitted that cases of sexual and physical abuse in Christian Brothers' orphanages in the 1950s and '60s might have influenced the decision.

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