

Date and Time: Friday, May 3, 2024 3:56:00PM EEST

Job Number: 223444406

Documents (59)

1. Extremism is not the way to assure safety

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

2. <u>Observer Magazine: Cover story: IN A LEAGUE OF HER OWN: Though best known as Sven's girlfriend, Nancy Dell'Olio also plays a beautiful game. From a corner of Claridge's tea room, she talks to Tim Adams about giving up law, sticking with her Swede and the car crash that almost killed her.</u>

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

3. THE CHANGING FACE OF IRAN

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

4. How Iraq 's Ghost of Death was cornered

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

5. In 1979, followers of Ayatollah Khomeini seized 66 Americans in Tehran and held them for 444 days. The crisis marked the start of a conflict that continues to this day. Here, for the first time, hostage takers explain their actions

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

6. <u>Age of terror, age of illusions: Part One: I remember the anger I felt watching the endlessly repeated images of the towers collapsing. But there's another kind of anger -- a more cerebral one toward the intellectuals of our time who contributed to all that destruction through their hostility toward the mores and traditions of western civilization.</u>

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

7. Pious people with lost souls

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

8. MIXED BLESSINGS - This Jewish child is alive and well today because of a kidney taken from an Arab boy killed by Israeli soldiers. So why has this extraordinary "gift of life" sparked such controversy? - HEARTS AND MINDS

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

9. A mixed blessing

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

10. The World According To China

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

11. Views of the world Who is the most influential commentator in China? Or the most powerful voice in Iran?

Or Britain? FT foreign correspondents gave us their picks, and came up with a revealing list that says as much about the world's political elites as the media that analyse them

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

12. Hamas passes plate around

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

13. Letter: Hamas and struggle against theocracy

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

14. LETTERS TO THE EDITOR Women under Hamas

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

15. Reply: Letter and emails: Hamas, Palestine and the prospects for peace

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

16. Bomber left Hamas before attack

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

17. ISRAELIS CELEBRATE.. .. AS HAMAS DIG IN

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

18. Letter: Obstacles to peace in the Middle East

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

19. ISRAEL TROOPS ON GAZA BLITZ STANDBY

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type

Narrowed by News

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

20. New union hopes to end sanctions

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to News

Sep 30, 2006

21. Palestinians protest loss of salaries

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

22. Gaza pullback is temporary, Israelis say

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

23. NEWS

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to News

Sep 30, 2006

24. NEWS

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

25. Reply: Letters and emails: Shelling beaches prospects for peace

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

26. Letter: Short ponts - IF blowing innocent

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

27. NEWSTRACKER | UPDATES ON CONTINUING STORIES

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

28. Exchange prisoners

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

29. PALESTINIANS FLATTENED

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

30. Israel shuns soldier deal



Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

31. Isn't retaliation justified?

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

32. Saudis are in no position to preach

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

33. Isn't retaliation justified?

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

34. Letter: Briefly ... - Different song

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

35. Israelis snub ultimatum

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

36. Militants issue new demands

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

37. Gaza strike is imminent warns Israel

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

38. LETTERS TO THE EDITOR Lebanon and Israel

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

39. Olmert promises 'broad' offensive after kidnapping

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

40. PICK OF THE DAY

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

41. Israeli forces renew attacks in Gaza Strip

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

42. Reply: Letters and emails: Little space left for Israels critical friends

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

43. Begin freeing Palestinians prisoners

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

44. Letter: YourSay - Karren's views so naive

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

45. No Headline In Original

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

46. Börsebericht Warten auf die Zinsentscheidung

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

47. No Headline In Original

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

48. No Headline In Original

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

49. No Headline In Original

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

50. Meldungen

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

51. No Headline In Original



Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

52. No Headline In Original

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

53. No Headline In Original

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

54. No Headline In Original

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

55. Humus - gèèn homo's! 'Arab-Americans' spotten met vooroordelen op festival

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

56. DEBAT: FANGER: PALAESTINENSISKE KVINDER OG BOERN I ISRAELSKE FAENGSLER

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

57. No Headline In Original

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

58. <u>UMFRAGE Mehr als zwei Drittel gegen Gesamtschule</u>

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2006 to

Sep 30, 2006

59. No Headline In Original

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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Sep 30, 2006



St. Petersburg Times (Florida)

July 29, 2006 Saturday

1 Edition

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Section: NATIONAL; Pg. 15A

Length: 2954 words

Body

Re: Al-Arian associate gets prison, July 26.

I hope people read deeper than the headlines and they consider what it means that an American citizen, Hatem Fariz, is going to prison - even though in the plea agreement prosecutors conceded that he is innocent except for the following "crimes" described in reporter Meg Laughlin's story:

"He arranged a magazine interview in 2000 with PIJ (Palestinian Islamic Jihad) associate Abd Al Aziz Awda, when Awda lived in the occupied territories. In 1995, he sent tapes to (Ramadan) Shallah in Tampa, seven months before Shallah became PIJ leader in Syria. And, in 2001 and 2002, Fariz raised money for book bags and an ambulance for needy Palestinians in the occupied territories, arranging for their distribution through Elehssan, a charitable organization in Gaza which received financial support from the PIJ."

If that were not bad enough, federal prosecutor Terry Zitek added, "While Fariz had a minor role in this offense, his sentence offers some measure of protection for the public."

Thank goodness for federal prosecutor Zitek: keeping the American people safe from book bags, tapes, ambulances and magazine interviews. Boy, do I feel safer.

Currently it seems that the government thinks the only way to protect Americans is through wars of aggression on the people of the Middle East, witch hunts against activists and hypersurveillance of everyone. But these practices are breeding more terrorism and making us less free. There has to be a better way.

Sean Kinane, Tampa

Emboldening the terrorists

Ted Koppel's July 24 guest column One man, one vote, one giant mess explained that an unnamed Jordanian official he interviewed said the coming decade may witness a precipitous American withdrawal from Iraq that will appease Iran. He also interviewed Sheik Nabil Qaouk, the Hezbollah commander in southern Lebanon. Koppel went on to point out that <u>Hamas</u> was "spurned by the State Department as a terrorist organization," as was Hezbollah.

Did it ever occur to Koppel that he might have interviewed Steve Emerson, a U.S. terrorism expert, or perhaps a knowledgeable U.S. ambassador to a Middle Eastern country? Koppel's interviews are analogous to interviewing a Nazi leader prior to World War II.

It seems that journalists like Ted Koppel embolden terrorists by writing a column telling us that some anonymous Jordanian official is "reflecting gloomily on the failure of the Bush administration's various policies in the region."

Laurence Veras, Clearwater

We're not seeing progress in Iraq

Re: More U.S. troops patrol Baghdad, July 25.

After almost 3 1/2 years in Iraq, it seems to me we are "regressing," not "progressing" there.

When will the United States get to the point of admitting futility and cut our losses?

Dorothy E. Karkheck, Dunedin

U.N. focus is limited

I see a U.N. group has toured Beirut and has made the obligatory "Israel must stop the violence" statement.

I must have missed their inspection of the damage in Haifa.

Ernest Lane, Trinity

Contradictory activities

For the Bush administration to now send humanitarian aid to the people of Lebanon is a bit like Charles Manson sending a fruit basket to the Tate family.

Patrick Ruddy, St. Petersburg

Remember the challenges we face

As the global war on terror continues, I find it extremely disturbing that many Americans are ignoring the facts. Many Americans at home and abroad are living under the devastating threat of terrorism. Unfortunately, today, we have become so spoiled by freedom that many of us do not have the slightest inkling what it is like living under the thumb of barbaric dictators.

Additionally, the antiwar critics seem to forget that throughout the history of America's wars, the American soldier has always fought to liberate the oppressed people of the world. A shining example would be the thousands of Iraqi citizens who were liberated by our brave soldiers. The Iraqis displayed bravery when they risked their lives to come out and vote for their newfound democracy.

Also, let's remember the brave American soldiers who stood side by side with our Allies to liberate millions of Europeans. Let us all remind ourselves that it is the generals and the soldiers who are instrumental on the battlefields, with the support of our commander in chief, who win the wars. It is not the politicians or the media organizations.

Joan Atkins, Palm Harbor

Dean is a demagogue

On Wednesday in South Florida before community business leaders, Howard Dean, chairman of the Democratic Party, accused Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki of being anti-Semitic because he did not condemn Hezbollah for attacking Israel.

I thought Maliki should have done that, but when you think about it (unfortunately Dean can't think), Maliki could not condemn Hezbollah without bringing more death and destruction to Iraq. Both Maliki and Hezbollah are Shiite. He

has more than enough problems trying to bring an end to the death the Sunnis are inflicting on the Shiites without getting the Shiites into a frenzy also.

The House passed a resolution (H.RES. 921) which condemns the recent attacks against Israel, holding terrorists and their state sponsors accountable for such attacks, supporting Israel's right to defend itself, and for other purposes. This resolution was passed by a vote of 410-8, with seven Democrats and one Republican voting against it.

Is Howard Dean prepared to condemn the seven Democrats voting no as being anti-Semitic? No, he won't, because Dean is a demagogue who has nothing to say except blaming the president for anything he perceives is wrong.

Salvatore Reale, Seminole

A threat to our tourism

On behalf of the employees/members of the Dollar Thrifty Automotive Group, I am writing to highlight a critical issue that could dramatically impact international tourism in the state of Florida. Congress passed a law in late 2004 that included a new requirement called the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative, or WHTI, for travelers entering the United States from the Western Hemisphere to carry a passport or other secure travel document. While no one in the travel industry argues with the need to have more secure borders, the question of "how" and "when" this rule is put in place is critical.

With more than 14-million overnight visitors coming to the United States from Canada annually, getting this rule done right is a major priority for the state of Florida. Our tourism economy will suffer if WHTI is enforced before effective technology is in place and proper notice is given to the traveling public.

The travel industry supports the homeland-security intent of the law, but it is imperative that in protecting our borders, we do not unintentionally deter Canadian visitors from traveling here or prevent travelers from going on a cruise ship to Alaska or the Caribbean.

Congress should support a reasonable extension of the deadline to give the government time to get it right, or else we are at risk of losing millions of dollars in travel-related spending, thousands of travel and tourism jobs, and the good will that we share with our neighbors across the northern border and in the Caribbean. Now, more than ever, we need more visitors and friends, not fewer.

Yves Boyer, executive vice president-international, Dollar Thrifty Automotive Group Inc., Tampa

Candidate seeks to level playing field

Re: Ballot box bunkum, editorial, July 25.

My name is Brian E. Roche, a candidate for the Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners, at large, District 2. I am legally qualified to run for this office, will actually and actively campaign for this office, and with any luck, will draw a few votes.

To anyone in Pinellas County that I may have offended by my (not my brother's) "ballot box bunkum," please accept my sincerest apologies.

With the state of politics today being almost laughable, in many regards, the level of vitriol aimed at my "cynical" candidacy would be equally laughable if it weren't so sad. For years, the members of the 500 Dollar Gang - those 100 to 150 fortunate (and unelected) souls who can afford to fund certain candidates at \$500 a clip - have hand-picked every member of the County Commission as well as many other candidates in Pinellas County. For what reasons and at what cost? These fortunate few are financially able to continue to select the leaders that we, the general public, have to rely on for leadership in a manner no less cynical than any attempt that I may make to "level the playing field."

I am running for this office in a "brazen" attempt to give something back to the citizens of this county as opposed to "taking back" the Pinellas County School Board as Republican Party chairman Tony DiMateo stated in your newspaper a few days ago. I'm sorry, but I never got the memo saying that it was his in the first place and, quite frankly, this is exactly why it is important to remember what's really happening here.

The Republican Party (not individual Republicans - a distinction I want to make very clear) and the members of the 500 Dollar Gang are upset because they cannot select the Democratic Party's nominee in a Democratic Party primary.

I fully expected the members of the St. Petersburg Times editorial board to get their shorts twisted on this, and with all due respect, to the best of my knowledge, I have actually shut no one out of the primary. If any of the 328,000 Republican voters are truly interested in having Commissioner Calvin Harris remain in his position, there is still time for them to get down to the Supervisor of Elections Office and register as a Democrat. Otherwise they will have every opportunity to send me a message; they will just have to wait until November.

Brian E. Roche, Clearwater

A moral compass needs restoring

Black Americans lost our moral compass after the death of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. No other black leaders have the moral compass to lead our race to the promised land. We gained a little freedom and out of the box, we came into the light. Now we can get an education, have better job opportunities and live in better communities. The door has a crack in it, and then we forgot that God was always our leader.

Through Dr. King, doors have been opened for us. Then our moral compass started to go wrong. Respecting ourselves and others was something that was not done anymore. We became loveless, selfish and forgot about the ones who did not get a piece of the pie. The attitude is like, "We have ours, so damn the others."

Through all the suffering and injustice that held us in check, we never forgot our trust in God. This gave us a moral compass through all the inhuman treatment we faced for hundreds of years. We are now doing the same thing to ourselves, and it is called extinction.

Black males are losing the fight to become men. This is evident by the number of males selling drugs, dropping out of school and standing on corners with their underwear showing. They think it is cool and hip, running from the police, shooting and killing each other. Listen, brothers, there is no easy money, especially for brothers. Stop making babies and leaving them for society to raise. Stop spreading HIV to beautiful black <u>women</u>, cutting their lives short. Start today being a real man. It will take strength, courage and God, and then the moral compass will return. Take care of your children, work for what you want and stay in school.

Black <u>women</u> have lost their moral compass as well. Stop letting your underage daughters have babies and dating at a young age. Stop disrespecting yourselves and forgetting that you are queens who deserve the very best. Teach your daughters to love themselves and take pride in their beautiful black bodies. Let no man treat you like his trash disposal. Stop being the breadwinner while he is sitting at home or riding around all day while you work. Don't accept men running around or running games on you. <u>Women</u>, we have always been the strength in our race. We held it together during slavery, so why are you being the man's footstool now? Get your education and let no one destroy your love and self-respect. Allow God to determine your future, and your moral compass will be restored.

Black people, stop the madness. Our men need to be men! We have stood the test of time, so why are we going back? Go to school and get an education, and take care of your people. Stand tall and be a guide to the future. No more weakness. Love yourself so you can love others, and let no man be deceived again.

G. Jackson, Tampa

Analyzing a dog encounter

Re: Guide dog may be put to death for dogfight, July 27.

While I may not have been a witness to the "fight" between a guide dog and "Buddy," I feel fairly confident that I can guess what happened. "Buddy" was off leash and charged - yipping and yapping - at the guide dog.

The guide dog did what any good dog would do and attempted to protect its owner. I feel confident in my prediction because I encounter this type of irresponsible behavior on the part of dog owners on a daily basis.

People need to either leash their dogs or fence their yards (and keep their dogs behind the fence).

It is amazing to me that in a state where we sanction a person to use lethal force to stop a perceived threat (a ridiculous law) a dog is not allowed to react the same way.

David Miller, Temple Terrace

Health care realities are skewed

Re: Drug plans' complaint rate at healthy level, July 20.

This piece presented complaint statistics as published by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). Our concern is that the results can easily be misconstrued, and the article omitted the principal reason that affected the results for Universal Health Care. The primary Medicare Advantage plan offered by Universal Health Care includes a unique benefit design that provides for enrolled members of the plan to receive a monthly credit equal to almost all of their Medicare Part B monthly premium. This is a tremendous benefit that has been very well received by seniors in the bay area.

As has been widely reported, due to computer interface issues within the government's interagency reporting (in this case, the link between CMS and the Social Security Administration), a small proportion of members experience delays in receiving this monthly credit. This is not within the power of our health plan to correct. However, members understandably contact us when the issue arises. We then work to assist these members until they receive the full credit they are due.

It is quite clear that the "complaint" statistics in this situation are reflective not so much of any issue with Universal, but are rather a function of Universal being an intermediary between its members and government.

It should also be understood that these numbers are distorted in the case of a rapidly growing health plan. The point here is not that growth is "an excuse for poor service" but rather the simple fact that individuals enrolling in a health plan for the first time are far more likely to have questions regarding how the plan functions and to call for clarification and explanation of benefits. Universal has been so well received and has grown so effectively that, again, the statistics can present a distorted view.

By publishing "complaint" statistics without an appropriate classification or explanation, we are done a disservice. Universal Health Care is totally committed to service excellence. The vast majority of those enrolled in our "Medicare Masterpiece" and "Any Any Medicare Advantage plans are well pleased with our service and appreciate the benefits these plans provide.

J. Philip Sheesley, chief operating officer, Universal Health Care, St. Petersburg

Lio is vile and offensive

I couldn't believe my eyes Tuesday morning when I looked at the comics pages and saw Lio. How could you run such a revolting and disgusting strip, especially in light of the fact that just recently a child's body was dug up and has disappeared? How insensitive can you get?

Almost as revolting and disgusting was the strip the other day about buying a puppy as a gift to a huge snake. Not once has this so-called comic strip been even the slightest bit humorous. It is instead vile, disgusting and offensive. The St. Petersburg Times should be ashamed to run such trash in what I have always thought was a decent family paper.

Patricia A. A'Hern, Treasure Island

Not reading it is an option

Re: 'Lio' crosses the line, letter, July 27.

I find Lio immensely refreshing, as I have a somewhat twisted sense of humor. Sure it may cross the line, but then I find many of Pat Oliphant's caricatures of our president to be insulting and in poor taste.

But the best thing is: I have a choice not to read those cartoons. And so do you. If you think a comic, radio or TV program is in bad taste, don't read, listen or watch it. No one is forcing anyone else to read certain strips. Keep Lio. He makes me laugh.

Justin McKenzie, Port Richey

Comic is disgusting

Re: 'Lio' crosses the line, letter.

I totally agree with the letter writer. The comic strip Lio is disgusting. I have thought so since it was first printed. I'm glad she took the time to share her opinion with you. If that was one of the comics that was voted on, I am ashamed to say I live in the Times distribution area.

Darla Wilkinson, Pinellas Park

Lio has a lot to offer

Okay, I can already tell we're going to need an organization to fight the rose-colored-glasses crowd, those who think little boys are made from puppy dog tails and want to make all comics politically correct.

Lio is great, a fantastic exploration into the mind of a young boy - and one whose thoughts and fantasies are not that uncommon. Lio has far more to offer us than, say, the inane whiny children of the Family Circus. Lio is a real kid, with intelligence!

Load-Date: July 29, 2006

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Observer Magazine: Cover story: IN A LEAGUE OF HER OWN: Though best known as Sven's girlfriend, Nancy Dell'Olio also plays a beautiful game.

From a corner of Claridge's tea room, she talks to Tim Adams about giving up law, sticking with her Swede and the car crash that almost killed her.

The Observer (London)
February 26, 2006

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The Observer

Section: OBSERVER MAGAZINE PAGES; Pg. 14

Length: 2788 words **Byline:** Tim Adams

Body

I suggested to Nancy Dell'Olio that we met where she felt most at ease. She chose Claridge's for high tea. She always sits in the same straight-backed chair in one corner, from which she can survey the room. She does most of her business here, she says. Sharon Osbourne usually bags the corner opposite when she is in town. If Hogarth were around he might have been moved to capture the scene. The queen of reality TV holding court with the patron saint of footballers' wives, both made famous by the hapless men they've collared, while around them moneyed London eats cake.

On my way to meet Nancy (she has just about acquired a stand-alone Christian name in the manner of Colleen and Chantelle), I attempt to bring to mind the partner of any other England football manager. Try as I might I have no recollection whatsoever of Mrs Keegan, Mrs Venables or Mrs Turnip, let alone Lady Robson or Lady Ramsey. I have a vague memory of a couple of Mrs Hoddles, but can't quite imagine interviewing either. Still, I suppose, you get what you pay for.

It is exactly five years since the Football Association, with its stated mission to invest in the grass roots of the game across the country, hired Sven-Goran Eriksson and decided to pay him a salary 45 times that of the prime minister to negotiate nine or 10 matches a year. In doing so they acknowledged the place that the national game had assumed in public life: it was, we were told, straight-faced, among the biggest jobs in the world. One of the main attributes of the incumbent, of course, was the ability to keep the front and back pages filled with distracting stories. At first sight, Sven did not appear to offer rich dramatic possibilities in that role, but the blazers in Soho Square had obviously done their homework. Looking back, it could hardly have worked out better.

The main clue to Sven's tabloid-friendliness came originally in the form of Ms Dell'Olio. Clutching at scraps of colour in the silvery Swede, his first profile writers dwelt on his relationship with the Italian, 'La Donna Nera', who had footsied with him under a table in Rome on the night they first met, and famously made him confront her much older husband, a lawyer, over lunch, with the news that he was a cuckold. This, it was generally agreed, proved that the Swede, contrary to appearances, had balls.

The rest is history. Rarely can a man have fulfilled his lucrative contract to entertain the public with his private life quite so spectacularly, and Nancy has been with him every step of the way, now wearing an un-upstageable redspangled catsuit to meet the Blairs, now being photographed fetched up to the nines on a bike, the wronged woman giving her would-be husband public support and private grief post-Ulrika and Faria Alam. As the FA contemplates Sven's successor you can only hope that they are weighing up the full package. Mrs Allardyce, > < you can't help feeling, or Mrs Curbishley, may find it a hard act to follow.

One of the things Nancy plots from her corner of Claridge's is the steady advance of world peace. She has a charity - or not a charity, she corrects me, a project - whereby she tries to bring football to children who grow up in refugee camps and war zones. The ultimate aim of the project is to create a World Peace Day. So far Britain, and Blair, have signed up for the idea, but Nancy lives in hope it will spread (think Yoko Ono with 5in heels). The project is called The Truce, and draws its emotional inspiration from the legendary Christmas game at the Somme. It was 'my idea and is my baby,' she says. 'I'm the engine.' But Sven chips in from time to time along with a tragi-comic clutch of former England bosses. Anyhow, the week after we meet Nancy is off to Gaza to open a football pitch for children from across the divide.

I wondered if she had been fazed by the election victory of <u>Hamas</u>. She agrees it has made things a bit more complicated, in that she has heard Palestinian parents have been threatened to keep their kids away from The Truce, but on the whole, she says, she 'refuses to see any barriers or any prejudice' and she clearly has no fears. She is half-Jewish, but was raised as a Catholic. She loves Jerusalem. She thinks it is remarkable what Sharon and Peres have achieved, and feels compelled to do something to help. 'I believe them when they say people are now ready to pay the price for peace,' she says. Her previous visit to Ramallah was a shocking, life-changing experience, and she can't wait to see the football academy The Truce has helped to create and see the kids playing in mixed teams. All the players have to learn to co-operate with each other and to speak the opposition language. They become fluent, by the by, in 'the universal language of football'.

Nancy's English is heavily accented with a hybrid of her mother's New York roots and her Italian childhood. It's rather melodic and shifts quickly from one thought to another. I find myself leaning further and further across the table, trying to avoid the scones, to get her gist, sometimes catching just one word out of two '...celebrity... Sven... amazing... Afghanistan... experiences... positive... fantastic... energy...'

I bet she can't believe she's been here five years.

'No, it has been so intense. So many things have happened!' she says, not quite wistfully. She considers her whole life a privilege. 'My life is like reading three or four books a day. I always learn so much. . . '

I'm not sure which particular books she has in mind. She keeps by her bed the Italian translation of The Iliad at all times. I wonder, given her partner's adventures with sirens of one sort or another, and her steadfast support, if she might be better off with The Odyssey

Her life is full of myths, she says, by which she means that much of what is known about her is not true. 'I tell people things and they write something else,' she says (or at least I think she says). She has plans to write an autobiography after the World Cup, to set all of this straight. She has been keeping a diary to this end, always writing when she feels most emotional, which, I imagine, means it is quite a hefty volume.

One of the myths about her is that she was raised in some poverty. On the contrary, her family was among the 'really very wealthiest' in the town of Bisceglie, in the heel of Italy, where she did most of her growing up. Her father met her mother in New York and made a small fortune setting up a number of restaurants selling Italian food 'like Mamma used to make'. When the children came along - Nancy is the eldest of four - they moved back to Italy, but kept business interests in New York and a house in Manhattan. Family holidays were invariably spent there, or outside Rome, where they also had a place. 'I was never settled, always travelling.' That is how she likes it.

She still speaks to her parents almost every day, though she does not see them as often as she likes. She has a sister who is an academic at Cambridge and has just had a baby, so that helps, but she suggests she would like to

be closer to home. Even in her Nash-built house in Regent's Park, London winters can seem a bit bleak. Does that mean she is pressing Sven for a return to Serie A after his World Cup campaign?

'Who knows where!' she says, then insists they have been made so welcome here that they will keep a house on in London wherever they end up. I cannot imagine she shares her man's secret desire to move to Birmingham and manage Aston Villa. She has no comment.

Nancy has always groomed herself to be part of what Alan Whicker used to call the jet set. She had her education partly at international schools and she pursued the traditional Euro-glamour courses of study: law and languages at Rome, then international relations in New York. She was approached, she can't remember now by whom, to do some modelling as a teenager, and she was briefly the face of Coca-Cola in Italy. Then there was an event, she says, that changed her life for ever. Getting into a car one Saturday night outside her parents' villa when she was 21, she was hit by a car and seriously injured.

Reports vary as to how long she was in a coma, from days to weeks, and she doesn't seem to want to shed much light on it now - 'It was a long time, but I don't remember it' - but when she came round she was unable to walk and badly scarred. The doctors, she suggests, would not let her look at her face for three months, and the process of learning to walk took even longer.

Even the crash, though, was 'a privilege'. 'I always have - how you say? - the half-full view of life.' She gestures to an untouched glass of champagne in front of her. 'Those experiences pushed me to go faster. I tried to get as much as possible advantages out of that situation.' She read about the Thirty Years War. Anna Karenina . Tolstoy. 'It was all very positive,' she says.

Did she worry she might have lost her looks?

'It was funny,' she says, 'because everyone says I was even sexier with my scars and my crutches. I was never worried that I would not find another man, certainly.'

One thing that her brush with mortality left her with is a profound fear of the dark. She has flashbacks to the out-of-body moment of coming to after her coma and says she fears sleep a little. If she is in bed alone now, she says, > < straight-faced, when Sven is not around, she always has to have the TV and lights on.

Once she had recovered physically from her accident she put her life in fast forward. 'Mr Bernard Shaw said to be young is wasted on the young people,' she says, 'and it was that way with me. I wanted to prove to everyone, to myself, I could do clever things.'

She worked hard in a legal practice, concentrating on commercial law. She consulted as a political lobbyist and even fostered parliamentary ambitions, helping to organise some of the first Roman campaigns in the early days of the Berlusconi empire; she was greatly inspired by Silvio's passion for politics, by his 'charisma when he entered a room', but less so, at the time, by his attitude that <u>women</u> were most useful in the home. All the while she cultivated her somewhat brittle glamour.

I wonder who her style heroines were, thinking Sophia Loren. She opts instead for Ava Gardner 'of course', and Rita Hayworth. 'Real glamour comes from the body,' she says. 'It comes when you combine the strength with the femininity. You either have it or you don't.'

Nancy has never been in much doubt that she has it, you guess. She talks a bit about the trials of being recognised in the street - 'I wish I was still transparent!' she claims, not quite convincingly - though, in a way, I'm surprised she is easily spotted. She is much smaller than you think, though her hair creates an illusion of scale. It would be hard to guess her age: she claimed 38 for a long while, but now accepts somewhere in her mid-forties. Partly because I find myself trying to lip read, I'm fascinated by the way her mouth moves. One side, she suggests, still has a tiny bit of paralysis from her accident. On the other a smile is always threatened, as if nothing she says is exactly in earnest, or she is enjoying watching herself perform.

Some of this performance has become her life's work. 'There came a point,' she says, of her time working with Berlusconi, when she was considering running as a candidate for Forza Italia, 'when I was working with so much pressure I realised that it was very difficult to have a public life as well as a high level of relationship'. She decided that she should concentrate on her private life instead. 'I put all my energy into that.'

Does she miss the intrigue of politics and law?

'Well,' she says, the half-smile hovering, 'in my life there are many other intrigues.'

Her decision to focus on personal matters coincided, I guess, with the moment she met Sven, who, among other things, probably looked like a safe passage into that heady European life she imagined, and which she now lives. She was married at the time and her husband had set her up in business. Another of the myths that dogs her cuttings file is that Giancarlo Mazza was a director of Lazio, where Eriksson was manager. Actually, he was just a supporter.

I wonder what it is about older men.

'I have always been a mature person in the sense that my friends and my boyfriends have been older than me,' she says. 'But it may be that my next one will be 20 years old! That's a joke, by the way.' She loved Sven's diplomatic courage in confronting her husband with their affair, which she says he decided himself to do, in his pragmatic way.

At Lazio, in their honeymoon period, he used to dedicate each goal to Nancy, gesturing up to her in the stands.

'Not just goals!' she says, 'but matches, and the Scudetto, the league championship!'

The Lazio fans wanted to erect a statue in her honour, as seduced as England supporters were in the early months of Sven's reign by his almost preternatural calm. I suggest I used to think he must have a great sense of humour when he got home, but he has kept up its absence for so long now I am not so sure.

'Oh, he does!' she says.

But he just chooses not to reveal it?

'You think not?' She looks a little surprised. 'I suppose you have to get to know him.'

I suppose.

She makes it clear that she does not want at all to go into the ins and outs of Sven's bedroom farces - she has always kept up a dogged 'no comment' - but vaguely suggests that some of that will be in the book. We talk, instead, oddly, in general terms about relationships, like correspondents to a problem page ('I have a friend whose boyfriend can't keep it in his pants. . .')

She has been very forgiving. Does it feel like that to her?

'Love is no easy matter,' she says. 'I know what is there. Love does not mean that every day is easy. Look at Shakespeare's sonnets. Just because something happened that is really nothing you don't throw away the thing that you have there. It is the most important investment of your life. I think <u>women</u> are much stronger. But you know when it is over. If a man wants to get out he will get out.'

Is Sven still the man she thought he was?

'Everyone evolves,' she says. 'I am not the same person as eight years ago and neither is he. There is always something better, something worse. All of us have completely different ideas of what love is. You need more than one idea if you want the full experience.'

She must at least feel she has lived the full experience with Sven. . .

'Yes,' she says. 'Definitely. I will tell you more in the book.'

Presumably, I say, the book will also include a chapter on the events in Dubai. Did she find it at all amusing that Sven, the psychologist, could be so undone by a fake sheikh?

The half-smile falls from her lips. 'No, it was something I found completely outrageous. It is only in this country that they think this kind of thing is OK. There has to be a limit in law. Everyone we meet tells us how disgusting they thought it was. Anyhow, it will be a legal case against the paper and we will see.'

It must have made her despair of Sven a little.

'The most unacceptable thing is that in three or four months we have a World Cup. For a newspaper to try to create something like this to jeopardise our chances. . . I can't believe it could happen. It won't work, of course. Sven and the players are better than that.'

In preparing for Germany, how will she help him relax?

She won't read the papers, she says, for one thing.

Do they lie awake discussing formations, the vexed question of Sol or Rio? She says she knows the difference between a 4-4-2 and a 3-5-1 but that's about it - 'and that's a bit more than I want to'.

She once described her relationship with Sven as a major undertaking. Did that mean it was for life?

'I hope,' she says.

There is a perception of Dell'Olio as a powerful woman who keeps her man just where she wants him; that it is the Swede who has been made to look foolish by their public private ordeals. I'm not sure she is quite convinced of that. She wears on her ring finger a big rock that is not quite an engagement ring. She has said a few times that she and Sven were getting married, that they were planning to have children, but as with all football managers, I suppose, at the end of the day you have to judge him primarily on results. I have a sense she has to approach their life as a tactician, wondering whether to deploy catenaccio, or just hit and hope. Does she enjoy the power struggle of being with the England manager?

'It is a challenge,' she says. 'There has to be that excitement. As I always say, it's not where you start, it's where you end up. It's all a game, really.' And she still clearly manages to just about convince herself it is a beautiful one.

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Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

August 19, 2006 Saturday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; News Review; Pg. 23

Length: 3592 words

Byline: Paul McGeough

Body

The mullahs rule the streets but behind closed doors Iran's well-heeled toke on pot and pass the bootleg vodka. Paul McGeough looks at an authoritarian state at war with itself.

ON A sultry afternoon at the crossroads of life in Tehran, a mother in her 40s wistfully recalls the excitement of the revolution - how almost three decades ago she ran into the streets of the capital as raw people power knocked the despised Shah of Iran from his gilded throne. "Today, our children attack some of us for being so stupid," says the woman, grinding the end of her cigarette into a glass ashtray.

She's a little ashamed a few friends try to save face with their children - denying they had even been in the streets. She hesitates over another cigarette. And then she makes a pained admission: "I went to the Shah's grave in Cairo and I told him it was all a big mistake."

In Tehran worlds collide - stock images of ayatollahs and turbans are not the whole story. By nature, Iranians are pleasure-seekers, forever exploring the void between what the state declares lawful and what they can get away with. Young **women** in particular find themselves at an extraordinary fork in the revolution's road.

Some offer to put their lives on the line. Hundreds dress as suicide bombers for stage-managed parades that provide a backdrop for the rhetorical salvos in Tehran's war with the world. Masked and menacing, they hitch their bomber's vests as they turn to Lebanon and Palestine. They raise a fist defiantly at the enemy: Washington.

Another army of <u>women</u> is bandaged and bruised. There is no regime choreography, but they wear their wounds with much the same badge-of-honour determination.

Numbering thousands, they emerge from the waiting rooms of Tehran's plastic surgeons and rush to their favourite coffee shops to show off a new symbol of Western decadence in Iran: their reshaped noses.

Both armies are a product of a propaganda war that intensifies as Iran flaunts its nuclear ambition and flexes its muscles as an emerging regional power, a status brought on by the US-led defeat of enemies that previously hemmed in Tehran: to the west, Saddam Hussein; to the east, the Taliban in Afghanistan.

The suicide squads are easily identified as a regime creation. But the obsession that has made Tehran one of the nose-job capitals of the world - by some estimates up to 100,000 procedures are done each year - is a surprising byproduct of a propaganda campaign that emanates from distant California.

A battery of pirate satellite TV stations run by Iranian exiles in Beverly Hills and the San Fernando Valley bombards their homeland with anti-regime propaganda. Despite claims by the pirates that their calls to action have instigated spontaneous street protests in Tehran, Iranians from all walks of life - the regime, academia, the media and in the streets - tend to dismiss their rallying as the out-of-touch ravings of "armchair" counter-revolutionaries. And while many young Iranians tune in, a good portion of them ignore the propaganda. Instead, they lap up the entertainment that comes through the ether.

The Tehran regime has only limited success in jamming the signals from Los Angeles and, despite several campaigns, it has failed to shut down a thriving black market in satellite dishes. This week it had police teams back on the rooftops in the capital and in three of the provinces, ripping out dishes in a futileattempt to control the flow of information.

That it worries so much is revealing because many young Iranians are believed to have opted out of all politics and propaganda. Instead, they immerse themselves in a make-believe world of Hollywood films and MTV.

The cosmetic surgery craze is a surprise amid the straitlaced fervour of the mullahs. But Bahareh Ahmade, a 22-year-old student, proudly tells the Herald that her new nose was designed from a very up-to-the-minute magazine tear-out of the singer Michael Jackson's nose. Bailed up on the curb in leafy north Tehran, she says: "My life is a bubble - I have absolutely no interest in politics. I study and I worry about getting a job; I hang out in coffee shops, I swim in the pool or go to parties with my friends." Does she watch satellite TV? "Just the movies and the entertainment," she says.

The award-winning Iranian filmmaker Mehrdad Oskouei was so perplexed that he made a film on the nose phenomenon - Noses Iranian Style. He asks: "Is this a whole lost generation? In the Iran-Iraq War in the 1980s, young Iranians lost whole limbs and parts of their faces for their country; now they line up five-abreast in operating theatres to give up a part of their faces. What has happened to their values? How did they become so distracted from real issues in such a short span of time?"

The fixation of young <u>women</u>, in particular, with westernising the only visible feature on their well-covered bodies has come to symbolise the thinning ranks of foot soldiers in a gloomy internal review of the Iranian reformist movement's failure to win and hold sufficient political power or to demonstrate that it is possible to change the grinding reality of life under the successors of Ayatollah Khomeini.

The Herald's observations of life in Tehran confirm a foreign diplomat's snapshot of the state of play 27 years after the overthrow of the shah: "The mullahs have firm control. The top end of business relies on corrupt government deals and permits, so they're not too upset; professionals and the middle class who have not joined the brain drain stay indoors and get smashed on homemade vodka; and the poor masses are too hungry and too desperate to think of reform or revolt."

Even amid such despondency, maintaining state control still requires a campaign of intimidation. Journalists, lawyers and intellectuals are regularly rounded up and jailed on spurious charges. And street protests by <u>women</u>, by bus drivers and by minority Sufis have been busted in a harsh new police crackdown.

Exact figures are not available. But hundreds are said to be under detention without trial. And thousands more are harassed in a constant bid by the regime to wear down the will of would-be reformists, often threatening them with the loss of their jobs or cancelling their access to university studies.

UPHEAVAL in the region is creating a new balance of power. Shiite and Persian Iran is on one side. The US-backed Israelis are on the other. And fretting between them are all the Sunni-dominated Arab regimes who see their influence being eroded.

Previously isolated, Tehran is back in the business of attempting to export its Islamic revolution to the Muslim - and mainly Arab - masses of the region. It has its hand up the back of the Shiite leadership in Baghdad and the militias who own the chaotic streets of liberated Iraq. It is drawing in the new Afghan government. It still counts on Syria as

its ambassador in the Arab world, and it sees Hezbollah in Lebanon and <u>Hamas</u> in the Occupied Territories as its proxy pincers on Israel.

In the wake of the September 11, 2001, attacks, US President George Bush locked Iran into his "axis of evil" depiction of the global threat faced by Washington. Top US officials, Bush included, have left open the option of military strikes as a response to Tehran's refusal to bow to Western demands to curb its uranium-enrichment program. But despite all its rhetoric, Team Bush seems for now, at least, to be opting for diplomacy over forced regime change.

The evidence that Tehran funds, supplies and guides Hezbollah in Lebanon appears to be much stronger than the Americans' fabricated weapons of mass destruction case for the 2003 invasion of Iraq. But despite his insistence on getting to "root causes", Bush subcontracted the war against the Iran-sponsored Hezbollah to the Israeli Defence Forces, who failed to deliver on the promises they made as they went to war in July.

And, uncharacteristically, Bush sits on his hands while European, Russian and Chinese diplomats make painful efforts to defuse the nuclear crisis. That issue comes to a head again at the UN Security Council in 12 days.

AT FIRST glance, it seems anything goes beneath the perpetual pollution haze that blankets Tehran. A visitor loses count of the shiny BMW and Lexus cars on jammed freeways. Giant billboards shriek Western indulgence - Pierre Cardin, Calvin Klein, Versace...

There are glitzy shopping strips and coffee shops. The florists' displays are exquisite. Monsoon restaurant, on the north's Ghandi Street, is so expensive it doesn't bother with a menu in Farsi.

Despite a state ban on alcohol, bootleggers do home deliveries of imported or home-brewed beers, wines and spirits. Party hosts offer pot to their guests as readily as they dispense their preferred analgesic - a local, paint-stripper-like variant of vodka. "Is it Danish?" the Herald asks a host who produced the distinctive aluminium flask in which Danzka Vodka is marketed. He replies: "The bottle is!"

But that's well-heeled North Tehran, where the bandaged noses of young <u>women</u> are like beacons of indifference in the pavement crowds and where pharmacists report a run on nose bandages by those who can't afford the surgery - but who want to look hip.

Across the city, the state does its billboards, featuring revered ayatollahs and the pitiable martyrs of the 1980-88 lraq-lran War. The wall of a downtown high rise is given over to a huge depiction of the US flag - hung vertically, it has skulls for stars and each red stripe is the trajectory of a falling bomb marked: "Made in the USA."

Then there is the poverty of southern Tehran and the sprawling hinterland, powder kegs of resentment over economic hardship that are capable of erupting at any time.

Despite Iran's huge oil reserves,imported petrol is in short supply and becoming more expensive - there's talk of rationing. Inflation and unemployment are rampant. Meat and housing are priced beyond the means of most families who, on average, earn a quarter of what they were getting under the ousted shah. Prostitution and drug abuse are said to be widespread.

But Saddam's Baghdad it is not. In Tehran, regime control is a sophisticated blend of a crude but velveted glove that warns dissidents not to step beyond the bounds of what is tolerated.

Euphemistically referred to as "red lines", the bounds are delineated for the many by the hammer-fist treatment of the few who are prepared to speak out. Iranians are allowed toexpress raw opinion, but to have it published domestically can be fatal. Just to be interviewed by a foreign correspondent can lead to charges and time in the notorious Evin Prison.

IN THE midst of all this stands the mercurial new Iranian President, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, whose popularity is soaring in this time of twin crises - nuclear energy and Lebanon. Exploring Ahmadinejad's diatribes against Israel, a city lawyer takes time to consider whether his President is serious or merely indulging in crude diplomatic sport

when he calls for Israel to be "wiped from the map". "He's not a stupid man, is he?" the Herald ventures. There was a pause before this reply: "We can't be sure."

But Amir Mohebian, a writer who claims to be a friend of the Iranian President, tells another reporter: "Wipe Israel off the map? Really? Israel has atomic warheads. Maybe we make irrational statements, but we're not mad by saying things like that, we know the US runs to help Israel - and that's expensive, we think."

Ahmadinejad is rated as the most fundamentalist president since the 1979 revolution. But he is also a deft populist recently he blocked a police effort to codify **women**'s dress.

But even he can overstep the mark. Before this year's World Cup football tournament in which Iran was knocked out early, he declared that the ban on <u>women</u> attending public sporting events should be lifted. He was overruled by the mullahs.

Promising justice, an end to endemic corruption and to put Iran's huge oil income "on the people's tables", Ahmadinejad came to power on a landslide vote last year. He holds onto that support with targeted cash handouts in the provinces and in his appeals to Iranian nationalism through his hectoring of Washington over Iran's right to go nuclear.

But the presidency is just one spoke in an Orwellian wheel in which the will of the people, the voice of the parliament and that of the executive are subservient to "divine" rule by a deeply corrupt and conservative clerical elite headed by Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Khomeini's successor as the Supreme Leader of the Revolution.

Dissent is allowed but rigidly controlled. Support for reformist elements, like the Iran Participation party of the former president Mohammed Khatami, waxes and wanes according to the whim of an unelected religious leadership that retains all real political power for itself.

In what became known as the Tehran Spring, the reformists won control of Iran's elected parliament in 1997, but that did not mean control of the country - virtually every reform bill they passed in the following seven years was rejected or watered down by the overarching authority of the clergy.

The reformists lost credibility because, despite all the religious strictures, they acquiesced rather than confront the ayatollahs. There hadto be a showdown, but they didn't bring it on.

The Nobel Peace Prize winner and human rights lawyer Shirin Ebadi underscores the impotence of thereformists during the Tehran Spring when she says: "[When I was arrested in that period] the president said he was very sorry - he couldn't help. Now it's not much different, but the President doesn't apologise any more."

The reformists' hands were tied, too, because the religious authorities reserve the right to vet the Islamic and revolutionary credentials of all would-be parliamentary candidates.

Before the 2004 elections more than 3000 reformist candidates, including 87 sitting MPs, were disqualified by the religious authorities. Even the brother of then president Khatami and the granddaughter of Ayatollah Khomeini had no protection - they were swatted like flies. "Resignation and hopelessness forced many to stay away from the polls," says Tehran politics professor Hermidas Bavand.

Bavand admits to being one who turned his back on the reformists because of their submission to the will of the Supreme Leader. "People became indifferent and as a result of their non-participation, the hardliners emasculated the reformist movement," Bavand tells the Herald.

As the reformists attempt to pick up the pieces, they are confronted by a new hurdle - the nuclear and Lebanon crises have become the dominant prisms in all internal debate. Tehran's handling of both draws huge public support in a country where historicUS interference has embedded aferocious anger in the political psyche.

There is the possibility that Iran's overt support for Hezbollah in Lebanon could backfire: "Many Iranians don't see a vital interest for Iran in Lebanon, but we are paying a very high price [because] these military operations could become a kind of solution for Israel and the US [to regional problems]. The scenario is frightening," Bavand says.

But this week Ahmadinejad was triumphant. On the stump at Arbadil, in Iran's north-east, he taunted Washington on the failure by Israel to achieve its combat objectives: "God's promises have come true. On one side, [the] corrupt powers of the criminal US and Britain and the Zionists with modern bombs and planes. And on the other side is a group of pious youths relying on God."

Despite being on the back foot, the reformist movement does have a star player. But Shirin Ebadi defends the nuclear program, saying it is those in control of nuclear power who constitute a security threat, not the energy program itself.

She argues in a recent paper that the nuclear program is rooted in Washington's 1970s encouragement of the Shah of Iran to go nuclear: "[In power, the Iranian] reformists supported the program but wanted it to be in compliance with Iran's international obligations. But instead of backing Iran's fledgling democratic movement, which would have led to nuclear transparency, the US undercut it by demonising Iran."

Criticism of the nuclear program or the Supreme Leader is not tolerated. And any who dare to question Tehran's support for Hezbollah are pounced upon as "Zionists" by publications speaking for the regime.

Mohammad Atrianfar, publisher of the reformist newspaper Shargh, dared to publish an unsigned criticism and in an interview he tells an American reporter: "Officially, Iran is not aware of what Hezbollah does. [But] logically and unofficially, Iranis always aware. The reason is clear, because of all that Iran has done for Hezbollah. Hezbollah is Iran in Lebanon - when Iran looks at Hezbollah, it sees Iran."

Dubbed "the face of resistance", the journalist Akbar Gangi was jailed for six years after he publicly linked a series of dissident killings to senior figures in the regime. When he was released from Evin Prison this year, he was so gaunt after a three-month hunger strike that friends did not recognise him.

Gangi remains defiant, but he has fled to the US, from where he still attempts to co-ordinate protests against the regime.

ACROSS the city from Bobby Sands Street, 51 pairs of shoes at the door to a fourth-floor apartment suggest unusual activity. There are no banners or posters in the street, but the furtive coming and going of foreign TV and press crews confirm something is afoot.

By the standards set by the Irish Republican Army hunger striker, this assembly is small beer. But under the menacing eye of the Iranian security services the assembly is a small sign of courage in the face of such deep despondency about the political commitment of young Iranians.

The shoes' owners - student, political and <u>women</u>'s rights activists - have responded to a call by Gangi for reformists in Iran and exiles around the world to pressure the regime with a three-day hunger-strike.

This is the third day and the air in the closed apartment is pungent. In the semi-darkness, Abdullah Momeni, 29, a student activist, says that none of the Tehran media shows an interest because the protest is too hot to handle. He has done 45 days in solitary and is awaiting the outcome of an appeal against a five-year jail sentence for his protest activities.

As his comrades loll on pillows and watch videos, they allow themselves only sweet tea and water. Meanwhile, pleased as Momeni is just to have a gang around him, he makes clear that it's not enough. "We have to show to human rights groups outside Iran that our efforts to win the release of political prisoners have hit a dead end."

Momeni's explanation for the small turnout goes to fear of the regime - but it also turns on young Tehran's plastic surgery obsession. "Young people became frustrated by the performance of the reformists in power. When they looked at their first few years, they could see that the fundamentalists and extremists were in control.

"The risk in joining a protest is huge, so they opt out and worry instead about the shape of their noses and the colour of their eye lenses. Anyone who protests gets kicked out of university and suspended from other community activities. You get threatened or you get sent to prison."

ISA SAHARKHIZ has been a prominent journalist in Tehran for 20 years. But, his lawyers say, in the coming days he will become an inmate of Evin because he dared to question the nature of what Iran likes to call its system of guided democracy.

Under the reformist rule of Khatami, the fortysomething Saharkhiz was the government overseer of the domestic press, but it was his subsequent writing and publishing that were his undoing.

"What am I guilty of? I printed articles against the state, Islam, the constitution, the revolutionary guard and, for good measure, the clergy," he says during an interview. "WhenI defended Gangi they closed my newspaper."

The Iranian reality, Saharkhiz says, is that there is no reality: "Genuine debate is impossible. Editors no longer tell the truth - they all live a lie. Key reformists are arrested; student offices are closed and activists jailed; people are not allowed to assemble; even political parties are not allowed to have annual conferences. And independent-minded clerics are barred from the mosques."

Like others who spoke to the Herald, Saharkhiz is hoping the regime will collide with its own economic failure. Inflation is getting worse, jobs are harder to find, and the brain-drain and the flight of capital will continue in such a lethal combination that even soaring oil process cannot save the regime, he says. He doesn't have a timeline, but he makes a blunt prediction: "It will be the poor, not the intelligentsia, who will revolt."

But for now the tea leaves that Tehran analysts and political players read are Lebanese - not Iranian. The regime seems emboldened by what it perceives as the success of a more confrontational foreign policy -especially its sponsorship of Hezbollah. They predict that the outcome in Lebanon - a stalemate that allows Hezbollah to claim victory as Israelis resort to infighting over what went wrong - will fire the regime's urge to crack down even more tightly on domestic dissent.

The film director Oskouei - frustrated that most of his work is banned in Iran - describes how, so far, he has sidestepped the authorities.

"Every day in the forest, the deer wakes up and runs to escape from the lion. The lion wakes up to chase the deer - it's an everyday activity and the one that runs faster is successful.

"I am the deer - this is my life."

Graphic

THREE PHOTOS: Sign of her success ... a young woman in the north of Tehran wears a nose bandage after plastic surgery. The bandages are a status symbol for the city's young elite. Photo: Aslon Arfa Yearning for more ... hunger strikers want foreigners to see their quest for political freedom. Photo: Aslon Arfa Drive for reform ... Shirin Ebadi. Photo: AFP/Hassan Ammar

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Byline: Hala Jaber in Baghdad, Sarah Baxter in Washington and Michael Smith

Body

America clocked up a rare victory in Iraq last week with the killing of al-Zarqawi. Can it maintain the momentum? Hala Jaber in Baghdad, Sarah Baxter in Washington and Michael Smith report

He was still alive and moaning from an injury to his head when American helicopters and Humvees arrived at the scene. It had taken seven Iraqi men to drag him from the rubble minutes after the American air strike on the farmhouse where he was staying in the village of Hibhib.

They did not know then that the man they were trying to save was Abu Musab al

Zarqawi, the leader of Al-Qaeda in Iraq and the country's most wanted terrorist.

Ali Abbas, 25, a labourer, had just got home on Wednesday when, shortly after 6pm, the first of two huge blasts shook his house. He was only 300 yards from where the F-16 aircraft dropped two 500lb laser-guided bombs.

"It was so close I thought my uncle's house next door had been attacked," he said.

In the calm that followed, Abbas rushed out to help. He found his uncle unharmed, but as they looked across the fence they saw that the neighbouring house on the edge of a date palm grove was a smouldering wreck.

"We ran to it and started to look around for anything, but it had all been reduced to rubble," he said. "We saw the bodies of two <u>women</u> that had been flung away from the blast. Both were dead. Another body was totally destroyed and in pieces, and then we heard a moan coming from another part of the house."

They raced to where the sound was coming from. "We found the body of a big man, middle-aged. There was life in him still. It took seven of us to move him from within the rubble and carry him out about 100 metres. He had a black dishdasha (robe). His hair was longish and his beard soft black. He just moaned over and over again. He had an injury to the back of his head."

As they dragged the wounded man from the ruins of the house, an ambulance and Iraqi forces turned up, taking the total number of people at the scene to about 14. The men had barely finished placing him in the ambulance when seven US helicopters landed by the house and four Humvees rumbled through the dust.

"They were shouting and screaming and in a very tense and agitated mood," said Abbas. "They lined us up in a ditch and told us to turn our faces. We thought they were going to execute us. I started reciting koranic verses to

myself." The soldiers then took the wounded man from the back of the ambulance, placing his stretcher on the ground.

"The Americans tore his dishdasha and they kept on asking him through an interpreter, 'What is your name, what is your name?'," said Abbas. "They were tearing his dishdasha, not to wrap his head with it as they did later but because they were afraid he might be wearing a suicide belt. They kept shouting, 'Keep your distance, he may be wearing a suicide belt'."

He was not. "Under the dishdasha he was wearing only knee-length white undershorts," said Abbas.

Once the soldiers had established the man was not a threat, they started to kick him in the chest, said Abbas and an Iraqi policeman also there. "They kept kicking him, shouting, 'What's your name?', but

the man only moaned and said nothing," said Abbas.

As the small crowd of Iraqis looked on, the wounded man grew paler and blood oozed from his mouth and nose. It took about a quarter of an hour for him to die from the time when he was removed from the ambulance, Abbas estimated.

Abbas and other witnesses say the Americans then brought out black bodybags before taking the remains of all the dead away in a helicopter. Troops from the Humvees then rounded up the locals.

Abbas said: "A commander spoke to us all together and told us, 'We know you have nothing to do with this and that you came to the scene to help your neighbours, but these people were terrorists'.

"When (further one-to-one questioning) was over they took us a distance from the house. They placed five detonations around the house and asked us to open our mouths and close our ears. They then blew up what remained of the rubble house."

The next day Abbas saw pictures of the dead Zarqawi on television, his face swollen, cheeks bruised, eyes closed, with a neatly trimmed beard and moustache.

There were streaks of blood beneath his skull. He was sure it was the same man.

The US military's account differs from the Iraqis in only one important detail.

According to a US spokesman, army medics tried to save Zarqawi's life.

"He attempted to roll off the stretcher, I am told, and get away, realising it was the US military," Major-General William Caldwell, a spokesman for the coalition forces in Iraq, said. "Everybody re-secured him back onto the stretcher, but he died almost immediately."

THE precise details of the death of the 39-year-old Jordanian leader of Al Qaeda in Iraq will pass into legend, with each faction telling its own version of events. But while DNA testing of his identity continues, nobody doubts that at 6.15pm on Wednesday the Americans got the killer they had sought for so long.

It was quite a hit. As one former Iraqi solider put it last week, it was as if "the ghost of death has disappeared".

By immersing himself in an orgy of the most extreme and indiscriminate violence after the overthrow of Saddam Hussein three years ago, Zarqawi had become the face of barbarism in Iraq. More than that, his sickening beheadings of western hostages, snuff videos and regular slaughter of ordinary Iraqis had made his name synonymous with evil throughout the world.

It was Zarqawi's most fervent ambition to unleash civil war in Iraq; to create a bloody anarchy that would destabilise neighbouring states and allow Al-Qaeda's brand of fundamentalist Islam to spread throughout the region.

For Zalmay Khalilzad, the American ambassador in Iraq, "Zarqawi was the godfather of sectarian killing in Iraq. He led a civil war within Islam and a global war of civilisations."

In the end it was Iraq that turned on him. In recent weeks he had been squeezed out of one safe haunt after another

as ordinary Iraqis grew sick of his killing.

In the area around Hibhib there had been a spike in violence in the days before Zarqawi's killing. Nine severed heads were discovered in fruit boxes and 21 Shi'ites, many of them young students, had been pulled off a bus and shot.

Rejection by the Iraqi population was a situation that Zarqawi had foreseen. His aim was to destabilise the place before it happened.

In a letter to Osama Bin Laden, intercepted in late 2004, he noted that the influence of Al-Qaeda in Iraq could wane once a democratic government was installed in Baghdad. "If we fight them, that will be difficult because there will be a schism between us and the people of the region," he predicted.

Yet it was Bin Laden, not Zarqawi, who took the lesson to heart. The millionaire Saudi ideologue had reportedly taken an immediate dislike to the swaggering Jordanian street bully when he met him in Afghanistan in the 1990s.

Later Bin Laden came to regard the upstart - who was energetically recruiting Islamic zealots to his banner in Europe as well as the Arab world - as a challenge to his authority and feared that his fomenting civil war in Iraq would damage Al-Qaeda's authority in the Muslim world.

It was these factors, combined with ruthless tracking by American and British special forces, that proved to be Zarqawi's undoing.

FOR more than two years a "combined joint special operations task", recently renamed Task Force 77, had been hunting down Zarqawi and his Al-Qaeda in Iraq network. It included American troops from Delta Force, a US special operations intelligence unit known as the Activity, US Rangers and, on the British side, an SAS "sabre" squadron and about 60 paratroopers from the Special Forces Support Group.

The search for Zarqawi had started badly. Corporal Ian Plank, 31, a member of the British Special Boat Service, was killed in 2003 when a joint SAS and SBS operation against a house in west Baghdad, where the terrorist was thought to be hiding, went wrong.

"The intel guys underestimated the threat and they stepped into a hornets' nest," said a British special operations source.

In February last year there was another near-miss. The taskforce had learnt that Zarqawi would be travelling on a particular stretch of road from Falluja to Ramadi.

An ambush was set up, but the target was late and the special forces troops were packing up when Zarqawi drove by. His vehicle then sped through a second roadblock, but soldiers were forbidden to shoot at it because they were unsure of his identity.

With troops in hot pursuit, his driver swerved off the main road and Zarqawi jumped out and ran for his life. He would have been caught, say military insiders, had the video camera on a Predator remote control aircraft not swung out of focus and lost him.

Another close shave came last October when a special forces "A-team" raided an Al-Qaeda safe house in Mosul, northern Iraq, surprising Zarqawi and three of his lieutenants. The team was commanded by Tony Yost, a US special forces master sergeant who gunned down the three subordinates but was killed in the firefight.

Zarqawi managed to blow up the house and escape via a tunnel. He was badly wounded and there was even speculation that he had died.

Apparently rattled by these and other near-misses, Zarqawi decided to go public earlier this year, posing on video, Rambo-style, with an American automatic assault rifle in the desert. The pictures were broadcast around the world and, say intelligence analysts, would have enraged Bin Laden who had not found an opportunity to show his face on video since October 2004.

Shortly after the broadcast, Task Force 77 received a vital tip. It was told - apparently via Jordianian intelligence - that Al-Qaeda had dispatched Sheikh Abdel Rahman, a new "spiritual adviser" to liaise with Zarqawi in Iraq. Armed with this information, Task Force 77

was able to start tracking Rahman as he used a Thuraya satellite phone. This, in turn, enabled them to start building

a better picture of Zarqawi's movements.

"It was a painstaking effort, very focused over about three weeks," Caldwell said.

"There was a lot of information coming in that allowed us to build that puzzle."

Early last week intelligence pinpointed the isolated safe house surrounded by date palm groves in Hibhib, about 40 miles north of Baghdad. It had been sold only a fortnight ago to a Sunni family for about 70m Iraqi dinars.

A Predator drone tracked Rahman as he drove from Baghdad to Hibhib on Wednesday afternoon, while a reconnaissance team from Task Force 77, including a small number of British SAS soldiers, moved stealthily into the village and installed themselves 100 yards from the house. Quietly, they signalled to American commanders that they had found their target.

The decision was made to call in an airstrike, while troops from the 101st Airborne began sealing off the village in case anything went wrong.

"They came to the conclusion that they could not really go in on the ground without running the risk of letting (Zarqawi) escape," said Donald Rumsfeld, the American defence secretary. "So they used air power and attacked the dwelling."

Two F-16s, flying on routine missions nearby, were called in for the task, but one was refuelling in mid-air and could not make it in time.

The commandos of Task Force 77 "painted" the target

by using a laser marker and

the two 500lb bombs, dropped in quick succession, flattened the house.

Five people, apparently including Rahman and three women, were killed on impact.

It was only Zarqawi who was not killed outright.

NEWS of the Jordanian's death was quickly relayed to the White House but it was not until early on Thursday that fingerprints confirmed his identity. A jubilant Rumsfeld then hailed Zarqawi's death as a "stunning shock to the Al-Qaeda system".

Is it?

Having boasted prematurely of "mission accomplished" when Saddam was toppled three years ago, President George W Bush sounded a contrasting note of caution

over Zargawi's death last week. The American people should expect "tough days ahead" in Iraq, he warned.

Privately British officials also sought to play down the news. "It will probably have less impact than everybody wishes," said one senior military source.

"The presence of foreign fighters in Iraq is not the issue any more. Sunnis are fighting Sunnis, Shi'ites are fighting

Shi'ites and they're all fighting each other." In short, Zarqawi's work was already done.

There is also the question of Bin Laden himself. For all

the elation, the death of Zarqawi has been an uncomfortable reminder that the world's number one terrorist remains at large.

He is believed to be hiding out in the mountains of northwest Pakistan, close to the Afghan border, hidden from unmanned drones by the inhospitable terrain and cloud cover. There have been no recent Zarqawi-style nearmisses and he is not likely to be found anytime soon.

One by one, the Al-Qaeda network is being rolled up. Since the attacks of September 11, 2001, more than a dozen key figures have been killed or captured, including Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, the mastermind of the 9/11 hijackings. Hundreds of lesser suspects have also been hunted down disrupting Al Qaeda cells across a wide area.

"Al-Qaeda is an organisation like the mafia," said Peter Galbraith, a former US ambassador and senior fellow of the Center for Arms Control

and Non-Proliferation, speaking from Irbil in northern Iraq.

"No doubt in Iraq it has produced more suicide bombers and terrorists than have been eliminated, but Al-Qaeda has been diminished as the most effective and imaginative terrorist organisation."

Yet the durability of the global Al-Qaeda hydra was demonstrated only last week when Islamic groups in Somalia, suspected of harbouring Al-Qaeda terrorists, defeated warlords who had been financed and supported by the United States. The Islamist groups seized control of the capital, providing a new haven for Al Qaeda supporters.

In Iraq itself new leaders are already emerging to take Zarqawi's place, even if they are unlikely to have his notorious impact.

Caldwell, the US military spokesman in Baghdad, predicted that Zarqawi's role was likely to be filled by an Al-Qaeda operative known as Abu Ayyub Masri who met Zarqawi at a training camp in Afghanistan in 2001 or 2002.

Masri is Egyptian-born, however, and sources close to the insurgents say Zarqawi's place will go to an Iraqi commander.

The most likely successor

is a man who has used the pseudonym Abu Abdul Raham al-Iraqi. He has appeared in past statements from Zarqawi's group as the "deputy emir". His name was on a statement that

it issued on Thursday confirming Zarqawi's death and vowing to continue on his path of jihad, or holy war.

"It is highly likely that the new head of Al-Qaeda in the land of two rivers (Iraq) will be Abu Abdul Rahman al-Iraqi," a member of one of the groups within the Mujaheddin Shoura - an umbrella body composed of Al-Qaeda in Iraq and other militant groups - told The Sunday Times.

"For political reasons and to prevent anyone in the future from saying that the leader is a non-Iraqi, it is more likely that they will go for an Iraqi commander this time.

"There is no shortage of leaders to lead Al-Qaeda and the difficulty will not be to find a replacement. The difficulty will be who to choose from the list of men that can fill his command.

"The death of Zarqawi will not cease attacks or operations in Iraq. On the contrary, it will boost the insurgents in different ways. The insurgency or resistance in Iraq against the occupation is not dependent on one man."

Despite such bombast, the new Iraqi government was last week in bullish mood. "We will get the next leader, too, whoever it is," said Nouri al-Maliki, the prime minister.

Intelligence sources predict more "targeted assassinations" of key insurgent figures in Iraq in the coming weeks and months. The tactic will be similar to that adopted by the Israelis against <u>Hamas</u> leaders, according to Dan Goure of the Lexington Institute, a think tank with ties to the Pentagon.

Maliki also gave notice last week that the battle for control of Baghdad would begin soon. "We will meet head-on the armed gangs and terrorists who we believe constitute the main threat to security," he vowed.

American and Iraqi forces have been waiting for the appointment of new ministers of the interior and defence to begin their assault. It is expected to be launched in July or August at the latest.

Baghdad will be divided up sector by sector, following the example set by the British Army in Northern Ireland.

"It's a useful model because you're trying to suppress a minority - in this case the Sunnis - while at the same time trying to protect them from a majority, the Shi'ites," said one source.

While insurgents will be rooted out, huge sums of money will be poured into reconstruction by army Sweat (sewage, water, electricity and trash) teams to improve living conditions and security.

Where they can, the Iraqi forces will take the lead in army and police operations, but American troops, embedded as mentors in Iraqi units, will

be on hand to gather intelligence and restrain outbreaks of sectarianism.

On the political front, Bush is summoning his chief Iraq policy advisers to Camp David for a conference to be held tomorrow and Tuesday, which will be video linked to key American and Iraqi personnel in Baghdad. Top of the agenda will be how to capitalise on the momentum offered by Zarqawi's death to bring more moderate Sunnis into the fold and detach the Shi'ites from their radical fringe.

For all the violence, the step-by-step political process that was fostered by the Americans and which began with Iraq's first free elections in January 2005 has been tempting Sunni nationalists to join tentatively in the creation of a democracy.

The Iraqi government will also be encouraged to move swiftly to amend the constitution to allay Sunni anxieties about being left without

oil and resources in a weak, federal Iraq.

Will it work?

"Without Zarqawi there will be less of the really nasty stuff, such as beheadings and kidnappings," said a senior British official, "and that'll help."

In the rosiest of White House scenarios, the stage will then

be set for significant coalition troop withdrawals in the autumn. This will be early enough for Bush to impress the American electorate before the November congressional elections - and for Tony Blair to start firming up his plans for an honourable retirement.

The transition this year to an Iraq led by Iraqis for Iraqis was already part of the coalition's plan; but the terrifying rise in sectarian violence, following the bombing of the holy Shi'ite mosque at Samarra in February, made all talk of withdrawal look like irresponsible cutting and running.

The killing of Zarqawi offers a fresh chance to bolster the Iraqi government and to give the Americans and the British an honourable exit strategy.

However, as the unravelling of every piece of good news from the capture of Saddam to the purple elections has shown, it is wise to hope for the best and prepare for the worst.

Additional reporting: Ali Rifat and Nick Fielding

AL-QAEDA: KEY FIGURES CAPTURED OR KILLED

Nov 2001 Muhammad Atef, military commander, killed by airstrike in Afghanistan.

March 2002 Abu Zubaydah, operations chief, captured in Pakistan.

September 2002 Ramzi Binalshibh, believed to have helped plan 9/11, caught in Pakistan.

March 2003 Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, alleged mastermind of 9/11, caught in Pakistan.

Feb 2004 Hambali, alias Riduan Isamuddin, arrested in Thailand. Suspected mastermind of 2002 Bali bombings.

July 2004 Mohammed Naim Noor Khan, communications expert for Al-Qaeda, arrested in Pakistan.

July 2004. Ahmed Khalfan Ghailani, said to be top Al-Qaeda man suspected of role in 1998 bombings of US embassies in east Africa, seized in Pakistan.

Taken after 14-hour gun battle in city of Gujarat.

May 2005 Abu Faraj al-Libbi and three other Al-Qaeda suspects captured after gun battle in town of Mardan in Pakistan near border with Afghanistan.

Jan 2006 Abu Khabab al-Masri, bomb-maker, was one of four Al-Qaeda leaders captured in Pakistani village of Damadola.

He is said to have trained Richard Reid the failed shoe bomber and Zacarias Moussaoui, convicted of involvement in 9/11.

Feb 2006 Security forces kill fi ve out of 36 most wanted militants in Saudi Arabia, including Fahd Aljuwair, Al-Qaeda leader in the kingdom.

Feb 2006 Muhsin Musa Matwalli Atwah, Egyptian implicated in 1998 US embassy bombings in east Africa, killed in shoot-out in Pakistan.

STILL AT LARGE.

Osama Bin Laden.

US offering reward of \$25m.

Ayman al-Zawahiri No2 to Bin Laden. Reward \$25m.

Saif al-Adl Implicated in east African embassy bombings.

Reward \$5m.

How Iraq 's Ghost of Death was cornered

Jamil Ahmad Badawi Yemeni responsible for attack on USS Cole. Imprisoned in Yemen, but escaped.

Abdullah Ahmed Abdullah Egyptian, suspected of embassy bombings, killing US soldiers in Somalia.

Load-Date: June 11, 2006

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In 1979, followers of Ayatollah Khomeini seized 66 Americans in Tehran and held them for 444 days. The crisis marked the start of a conflict that continues to this day. Here, for the first time, hostage takers explain their actions

The Independent (London)

May 27, 2006 Saturday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 20 Length: 3535 words

Byline: By Mark Bowden, author of 'Black Hawk Down'

Body

Nowadays the grand old US embassy in Tehran looks forlorn, like a hostage left behind and long forgotten. A solid battleship of an office building in orange brick, it was once the symbol of America's formidable presence in Iran. Long ago dubbed the "Den of Spies"by Islamic radicals, the old embassy building is now covered with anti-American graffiti, banners and propaganda displays to remind people of the nation's undying disdain for its once-favourite ally. The embassy compound is home to the Revolutionary Guards, an Zlite military unit that reports to the blackturbaned clerics of Iran's authoritarian mullahocracy, and to the basij, Islamic brownshirts, the civilian squads that turn out en masse to demonstrate on behalf of the regime and to help put down those who engage in public displays of dissent and "immorality", such as <u>women</u> whose scarves do not fully cover their hair, or young people who hold hands. The former embassy itself serves as an anti-American museum, with a grim, ugly permanent display called "The Great Aban 13 Exhibition", commemorating one of the most important dates on the modern Iranian calendar. Aban 13 corresponds to 4 November, the date on which, 27 years ago, scores of Iranian students scaled the compound walls and took hostage the entire US diplomatic mission, setting off a tense 15-month stand-off between the United States and Iran. It was one of the founding events of the Islamic Republic, and its geopolitical repercussions are still being felt throughout the world.

The old embassy is supposed to be an official shrine to that bold act of national defiance, which defined for the world the glorious 1979 revolution. Yet in the four times I went to the embassy during trips to Iran in recent years, it was empty of visitors. The slogans and artwork that had been spray-painted on the embassy's brick outer walls by angry crowds during the tumultuous hostage crisis had faded. Even the guardhouse on the south-east corner, where visitors enter, was in shambles.

For a visiting American, Iran is like an inverse world. Bad is good and good is bad. In the West we are bombarded with advertising images of youth, beauty, sex and life' in Tehran the preponderance of advertising images celebrate death. There are murals everywhere honouring martyrs - primarily those who died in the Iran- Iraq War in the

1980s, but also more recent Islamic martyrs, including Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, the spiritual leader of <u>Hamas</u>, who was assassinated by Israeli forces in Gaza in 2004. Billboards in the West often feature provocatively posed teenagers, but in Tehran the murals tend to depict grumpy-looking white-bearded clerics - especially the bespectacled face of the current Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, and the more imposing, threatening visage of the late Imam, Ruhollah Khomeini, the major force behind the overthrow of the Shah in 1979, and the father of Iran's theocratic state.

And just when one seems to have the place in full inverse focus, there comes some wildly discordant note - such as the sprawling openair drugs market right in Tehran's centre, where dealers hawk Viagra, ecstasy and opium, at rock-bottom, infidel prices. In this pious city where <u>women</u> are forced to cover their bodies and heads, even in stifling summer heat, it is common to see prostitutes - duly scarved and draped - freely patrolling the streets. As I posed before a Khomeini mural for a snapshot one afternoon, a well-dressed young Iranian passerby asked me in perfect English,"Why do you want a picture of that asshole?"

Nowhere is the inverse nature of Iran more evident than in the country's national memory of the gerogan-giri, the "hostage-taking". On 4 November 1979, a well-organised core group of Iranian university students scaled the walls of the US embassy compound, seized the embassy building, and bound and blindfolded about 60 Americans, including the embassy's top foreign-service and CIA officers, military liaisons, administrators, clerks, secretaries and a detachment of Marine guards. The invaders, calling themselves Students Following the Imam's Line, demanded that their despised Shah, who had been forced to flee the country nine months earlier and had just been admitted to the United States for cancer treatment, be returned immediately to face revolutionary justice. Hundreds of his former associates had already been executed or thrown in jail.

President Jimmy Carter refused the demand, and the subsequent 15-month stand-off became one of the signature international crises of modern times. It left a lot of Americans feeling helpless and enraged, while imbuing Iranians, many of whom blamed the US for the Shah's inarguable despotism, with a new sense of strength and national purpose. The episode turned tragic when the secret rescue mission, approved after much agonising by President Carter, ended in catastrophe at a staging area in the Iranian desert: owing to freak dust storms, several helicopters had to set down or turn back and the entire operation had to be aborted. During the withdrawal one helicopter collided with a transport plane, exploded into flames, and left eight servicemen dead. In a final insult to Carter, the hostages were at last released on 20 January 1981 - Inauguration Day for the man who had defeated him, Ronald Reagan.

The different ways this event is remembered in America and in Iran illustrate how nations invent their own pasts, and how the simplification of history can create impossible gulfs between peoples. To Americans, for whom the incident has become little more than an embarrassing footnote, the hostage crisis was an unprovoked crime, carried out by a scruffy band of half-crazy Islamist zealots driven by a senseless hatred of all things American. It was a terrifying ordeal for the hostages and their families, fatal for eight of the would-be rescuers, and a political disaster for Jimmy Carter - perhaps the single most important factor in making him a one-term President. It was a protracted public humiliation and America's first modern encounter with militant Islam, and the first time Americans heard their country called "the Great Satan".

For many Iranians, however, the hostage crisis was an unalloyed triumph. Embossed with florid Shia mysticism, the episode has taken on the force of national myth - an epic story of a small group of devout young gerogangirha (hostage-takers) who, armed with only prayer and purity of heart, stormed the gates of the most evil, potent empire on the planet, booted out the American devils, and secured the success of the mullahs'revolution. And when the Great Satan dispatched its deadly commandos to slay these young heroes, Allah stirred dust storms to down the infidel helicopters and turn back the invaders. This is the story taught to schoolchildren who are bussed in to see the Great Aban 13th Exhibition and to touch the remains of the helicopters that Allah scorched while the gerogangirha slept. During my trips to Tehran I went looking for the people who planned and directed the embassy takeover and the ones who found themselves caught up in it. I wanted to know what had happened to them in the quarter century since they climbed the embassy walls, what they had hoped to accomplish, and how they felt about what they had done.

Ibrahim Asgharzadeh, a ringleader of the takeover who has become a reform politician and newspaperman, is emphatic in his assessment. "Hostage-taking is not an acceptable action under international norms and standards,"he tells me. "The hostages underwent severe emotional difficulties. Prolonging it affected both countries in a negative way. The chaos caused such tension between Iran and the US that even now no one knows how to resolve it." I learnt from talking to the gerogan-girha that the "hostage crisis"was not supposed to involve the prolonged detention of hostages. The young Iranians envisioned having to subdue and confine members of the American mission for perhaps a day or two, but they had no intention of holding them for any length of time. They made no preparations for doing so.

The demand for the Shah's return was primarily rhetorical. The hostage-takers' immediate goal was to put pressure on the provisional government of Prime Minister Mehdi Bazargan. This interim authority had been appointed by Khomeini after the fall of the Shah to preside until a new constitution could be written. Bazargan favoured a Western-style state, but in the eyes of extremists - both Islamists and Marxists - he was watering down the revolution. They saw the provisional government's efforts to re-establish ties with the rest of the world as a sell-out.

The opportunity for radical change appeared to be slipping away. So extremists fanned fears of an American-led countercoup' the plan to seize the embassy grew out of these fears. Khomeini was not informed about the takeover in advance, and by the time it was presented to him it was a fait accompli, and hugely popular. Hundreds of thousands of gleeful Iranians celebrated in the streets around the embassy night and day, burning Carter in effigy and chanting: "Death to America!"Khomeini had little choice but to embrace the brash gerogangirha, and to officially anoint them as national heroes. Bazargan's government resigned two days after the takeover, and the revolution tilted permanently into the arms of the mullahs.

The gerogan-girha saw themselves as part of an experiment: they were trying to build a utopia. They were striving toward umma, a perfect, classless, crimeless Muslim community infused with the "spirit of God".

But instead of a shining city upon a hill, Tehran today is a teeming sprawl, a study in faded brown and grey, swimming in a miasma of smog and dust. Umma remains a distant, unfulfilled promise, as Iranians grapple with unemployment, rampant corruption and selfdestructive domestic and foreign policies. Straining under tight economic sanctions imposed by the US and some of its allies, Iran remains an international pariah' it courts tougher sanctions - even invasion - by its resumption of a nuclear programme, amid fears that the country is working to manufacture nuclear weapons. <u>Women</u> live under archaic restrictions on employment, social relations and mode of dress. Teachers and other intellectuals labour under oppressive government oversight. The country's Intelligence and Security Ministry is as omnipresent and feared as was Savak, the Shah's old secret police.

The gerogan-girha live in the ruins of their dream. Those who despise the current regime now regret their role in bringing a small circle of authoritarian clerics to power. And more than anything they blame the hostage crisis for a litany of problems and set backs that have befallen their country in the past quarter of a century. Iran's loss of ties to the US after the embassy seizure prompted Saddam Hussein to invade in 1980 (when the hostages were still being held). In the ensuing war Iran lost more than half a million young men. Iran's status as an outlaw nation has had a stifling effect on its chances for an economic turnaround.

Asgharzadeh was a wiry, intense, bearded engineering student when he came up with the idea, in September 1979, to seize the American embassy."The initial idea was mine, "he tells me at the office of his newspaper, Hambastegi. "Ever since high school I had been outraged by American policies."

According to him, there were five students at that first planning meeting. Two of them - Mahmoud Ahmadinejad (who became Iran's president last year) and Mohammed Ali Seyyedinejad - wanted to target the Soviet embassy. But the others supported Asgharzadeh's choice. "Our aim was to object to the American government by going to their embassy and occupying it for several hours, "he said. "Announcing our objections from within the compound would carry our message to the world in a much more firm and effective way."

Asgharzadeh has since served as a member of the Majlis (Iran's legislature) and as president of the Tehran City Council, and ran unsuccessfully for President in 2001. In his politics and journalism he has strongly urged the

mullahs to adopt democratic reforms, such as freedom of the press and the elimination of veto powers they wield over political candidates and legislation' he has now been banned from seeking public office, and has served a term in solitary confinement.

Asgharzadeh is the most prominent of the gerogan-girhawho have turned against the mullahocracy. He now sees the embassy takeover as a mistake - one that has had a disastrous long-term impact on his country. "We failed in enforcing it the way it was meant to be,"he says."We lost control of events very quickly - within 24 hours! Unfortunately, things got out of hand and took their own course. The initial hours were quite pleasant for us, because [the protest] had a clear purpose and justification. But once the event turned into a hostage-taking, it became a long, drawn-out, and corrosive phenomenon."

In the confusion, Asgharzadeh recalls, they failed to fully control even their own members. "American hostages were not supposed to be paraded blindfolded in front of the press,"he says."The blindfolding was done only for security reasons' in order to control the hostages we used strips of cloth to blindfold them. Unfortunately, our humane objectives were distorted. We objected strongly to this behaviour, and the people who did this were reprimanded, but the damage had been done. We tried very hard to prevent the operation from being manipulated by political groups and factions." Asgharzadeh and his fellow students eventually chased the other political groups out of the compound and locked the gates.

How would President Carter respond? Would there be military action? Sanctions? A blockade? The thing began to take on a life of its own. With the provisional government in tatters, the US had no one with whom to negotiate a solution.

In the coming weeks, it became clear that the stalemate would not be resolved quickly, the hostage-takers recruited hundreds of volunteers to serve as guards. Others went to work piecing together documents that had been shredded by embassy officials on the day of the takeover, while others tried to decipher and translate them. Fluent English-speakers were brought in, including Massoumeh Ebtekar, who became the voice of the gerogan-girha at her daily press conferences with the world media. For the young Iranians, those days were heady and even romantic: Asgharzadeh met and proposed to his wife, and Ebtekar met and ultimately married Mohammad Hashemi, one of the core group of leaders.

For the first two days the seized Americans inside the compound were tied to chairs in the ambassador's residence and blindfolded. In the coming months, 13 of them were released - all <u>women</u> and blacks, in the hope of winning the public support of America's "oppressed" minorities. Most of the remainder - lowerlevel embassy staffers, guards and a few unfortunates who had come to Iran on business or as part of cultural exchanges - were herded into the basement of a warehouse on the embassy grounds, where they lived for months in a large windowless space divided into cells by bookshelves. They were forbidden to speak. The higher-level Americans - diplomats, CIA officers and military-liaison personnel - were taken away one by one for interrogation. Some were beaten' the CIA officers were worked over with heavy rubber hoses.

Asgharzadeh realises that he cannot change the past. But knowing what he knows now, he would not do it again."If today I were to devise a plan or political action, it would certainly not be an action along the lines of the takeover of the American embassy, "he says.

The surviving gerogan-girha who have prospered most in the mullahocracy are regarded by many Iranians as opportunists, and the most tempting targets for this label are Hashemi, who retired as first deputy of the Ministry of Intelligence and Security, and Ebtekar, now Minister of the Environment. They are Iran's premier power couple. Both regard the embassy takeover as an unadulterated success.

I found Hashemi in an office several flights up from a noisy, bustling street in downtown Tehran. He served the customary small glasses of tea and chatted animatedly. Self-assured, even imperious, Hashemi defends not only what he and the other hostage-takers did but also how they did it.

"We knew that there is an end to everything, like there is peace after every war,"he told me. "We wanted it to be a hostage-taking without any harshness and scuffle, unique in history, a hostage-taking that represented a nation and its concerns, and that is what we are proud of."

As one of the ringleaders of the embassy takeover, Hashemi recruited Ebtekar. He knew that, having lived in a suburb of Philadelphia as a child, she spoke fluent English. Known as "Mother Mary" and "Screaming Mary", she was especially disliked by many of the hostages, in part because her accent made her seem like a turncoat, a "Tokyo Rose", in part because of her endless propagandising. She would saunter through the captured embassy with a camera crew in tow, urging the hostages to describe their ordeal in upbeat terms. "You have been treated well, haven't you?" was her constant refrain. During one such filming session, in the final days of captivity, Army Sergeant Regis Regan got so fed up with Ebtekar that he let loose with a stream of invective and was dragged into a hallway for a beating.

It had occurred to me as I finished my interview with her husband that his willingness to talk to me might reflect an ulterior motive. He and his wife have heavily invested in an ambitious new vacation resort on the Caspian Sea called Cham Paradise. Hashemi showed me slick brochures and advertisements for the venture, printed in both Farsi and English' they were evidently designed to attract foreign visitors as well as Iranians. Hashemi was clearly excited as he showed me a detailed model of the project - a cluster of modern apartment buildings, hotels, villas, restaurants, lakes and other features arrayed on the tip of a peninsula. Then he had an idea.

"Perhaps, in a few years,"he said,"we might invite back the Americans we held hostage, and they can all stay at the resort as our guests!"

"This time, can they go home when they want?" I asked, and waited for my interpreter to relay the question to him.

Listening to the Farsi, Hashemi first scowled, and then reeled with laughter. He said to me in English, "You make a joke!"

By the time I next returned to Iran in August 2004, Cham Paradise had gone bust. Hashemi and Ebtekar had been forced to sell their home to pay off their debts, and the two were living with her mother - somehow, one suspects, blaming the US for their troubles.

On my last day in Tehran I visited the Den of Spies one more time. I was accompanied by David Keane, a film-maker who was shooting a documentary in tandem with my reporting. David (who is also my cousin) wanted to shoot some film inside the compound and inside the old embassy building itself. We stopped at the by now familiar guardhouse on the south-east corner, and to our surprise, it had been spruced up. The walls and ceiling looked as if they'd been given a new coat of paint, the boot prints had vanished, and the broken-down furniture had been replaced. Another bored-looking team of young Revolutionary Guards - this time a threesome - sat sullenly behind the marbleveneered reception counter.

We sat for hours before a mid-level official in the management of the compound arrived at the guardhouse. A worried-looking man, he said we would be permitted to walk through the exhibit, but no filming would be allowed. Our appointment, our document with the important signatures, did not seem to matter.

Eventually we gave up.We had already taken still pictures on an earlier visit. As we made our way out of the compound to hail a cab, the three young Revolutionary Guards came running after us.We wondered for a minute if the procedures were going to change yet again.

The guards all spoke to our interpreter Ramin in Farsi, smiling and gesturing towards us, and then he relayed their comments: "They want me to tell you that they are embarrassed, that they think this is silly. They want to apologise on behalf of their country."

Ramin grinned as the soldiers huddled around him. "They want me to tell you that they love America."

The soldiers flashed big smiles at us and nodded approvingly. And right there in front of a"Death to the USA"sign, in front of the faded banners denouncing "The Great Satan", one of the Revolutionary Guards raised his thumb high into the air and said in halting English, "OK for George W Bush!"

Extracted from 'Guests of the Ayatollah'by Mark Bowden, published 8 June by Atlantic Books, pounds 19.99. To buy the book for pounds 16.50, inc p&p, call Independent Books Direct on 0870 0798897

"We lost control of events very quickly, within 24 hours. Unfortunately, our humane objectives were distorted"

"During the secret US rescue attempt, a helicopter collided with a transport plane, leaving eight servicemen dead"

"We wanted it to be a hostage-taking that represented a nation and its concerns, and that is what we are proud of"

Graphic

The American hostage Jerry Miele is paraded to the US Embassy's gate on 11 November 1979. The man with the briefcase is believed by some to be Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the current hardline President of Iran' Top: the Stars and Stripes is burnt during the embassy takeover. Below: Ibrahim Asgharzadeh, one of the ringleaders of the hostage-taking, who is now a reform politician and journalist' The remains of one of the helicopters used in the failed US attempt by Delta Force to free the hostages in April 1980, near Tabas, Iran' Top: a woman walks past a Statue of Liberty mural now painted on the outside of the US Embassy in Tehran. Below: Massoumeh Ebtekar, who became the voice of the hostage-takers and is an unapologetic supporter of the action

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Age of terror, age of illusions: Part One: I remember the anger I felt watching the endlessly repeated images of the towers collapsing. But there's another kind of anger -- a more cerebral one toward the intellectuals of our time who contributed to all that destruction through their hostility toward the mores and traditions of western civilization.

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Body

NEW YORK - I still see bodies falling. Standing at my hotel window, overlooking Ground Zero, it's not hard to visualize the flaming towers and the bird-like figures of human bodies plummeting through the air. I especially remember a couple leaping hand in hand into emptiness. In their flapping clothes they looked like big clumsy birds, desperate to fly.

There were others, of course. Dozens. According to one estimate, some 200 people jumped from the North and South Towers in the hour-and-a-half the buildings remained standing after the planes hit the World Trade Center on the morning of Sept. 11, 2001. Clerks and executives, cooks and waiters, patrons and clients; they leaped in a continuous stream from the four sides of the buildings, from the office windows of Cantor Fitzgerald, the bond-trading firm, from the Windows on the World restaurant that occupied the 106th and 107th floors, from the offices of the insurance company Marsh & McLennan. Writer Tom Junod, in a recent article in Esquire magazine, described the jumpers in heartbreaking imagery: "They jumped through windows already broken and then, later, through windows they broke themselves. They jumped to escape the smoke and the fire; they jumped when ceilings fell and the floors collapse; they jumped just to breathe once more before they died."

Some clearly hoped they wouldn't die. They used drapes and tablecloths as parachutes. It did no good. The force of falling tore the makeshift parachutes from their hands. And so they fell, bodies arcing and wheeling and tumbling through space, dropping at an ever-increasing a rate of 9.8 metres per second. In the 10 seconds or so it took to reach the ground they were moving at more than 200 km/h. At that speed their clothes were shredded and stripped from their bodies.

For a while the television networks showed the jumpers, as they became known. You heard witnesses on the ground shouting in horror. "God. Save their souls. They're jumping. Oh, please God. Save their souls." And then the broadcasts stopped. Maybe it was too much horror on top of all the other horror. Maybe it was the realization that, no, this wasn't "almost like a movie." Indeed, in the days that followed it was as if a decision had been made at

some level of collective unconscious not to show the full horror of these deaths. Most North American newspapers ran only a few pictures of the jumpers and then never ran them again. By then, of course, the images were indelibly etched in the collective consciousness. No one who witnessed the events of that day will ever forget them. The most famous picture, the one that probably ran on every news broadcast and in every paper, is that of the unknown "Falling Man," who, as Junod says, appears to have embraced this death in his last moments of life, dropping through the air like an arrow.

I remember him, certainly. There have been numerous articles about who he might have been, and even a BBC television program documenting the efforts to identify him. But the picture I have never been able to get out of my head is that of the leaping couple. I imagine them as a man and woman, but it could have been two <u>women</u> or two men for all I know. Even now, on the fifth anniversary of the Sept. 11 attacks, I still wonder who they were -- lovers, friends, colleagues, or strangers who met in their final moments and chose to die together rather than alone. What were their last thoughts as they leaped, hand in hand, into the void? How long were they able to hold on to each other before the laws of physics pulled them apart?

Naturally, I have tried imaging myself in such circumstances. My mind doesn't want to go there, veering away instinctively in the same way your body pulls back from a cliff edge. Still, you wonder. When American Airlines Flight 11 plowed into the North Tower at 8:45 a.m. it sliced through floors 93 to 99 like a scythe, tearing up offices, hallways, conference rooms, rows of desks, ripping out elevators and stairwells, cutting off escape from the higher floors. Hundreds died instantly. Hundreds more were left stranded on floors 100 to 107. Eighteen minutes later, at 9:03 a.m., the second plane slammed into the top of the South Tower, trapping about 600 people. Inside the buildings, temperatures would have approached 1,000 degrees Celsius as the flames consumed furniture, wiring, carpets and computers, creating a tornado of poisonous smoke that funnelled upward to the top storeys. Even the steel beams melted. What would you choose: Death by immolation and choking smoke, or death by a final act of will, a final assertion of a terrible freedom?

I step back from the window, rolling my shoulders to ease the sudden tension in my neck. It's as though my body remembers the anger I felt watching those endlessly repeated images of the towers' collapse; the roiling storm of smoke and the ashen humanity emerging from the clouds of pulverized concrete and flesh; the shell-shocked relatives stalking the streets with photographs of missing loved ones; the firefighters and police officers crawling over the smoldering mountain of rubble, the mobs dancing on the streets of Damascus and Tehran and Gaza, celebrating mass murder.

But there's another kind of anger, too; a colder, more cerebral anger toward the intellectuals of our time, the cosmopolitans and sophists who, unwittingly or not, contributed to all that destruction through their sophisticated hostility towards the mores and traditions of western civilization.

I return to my chair and the book I had been reading -- Samuel Dill's Roman Society in the Last Century of the Western Empire. At the time, Christianity was displacing the old pagan religion and the empire was under frequent attack from barbarians. The great weakness, though, as Dill recounts, was the empire's effete elites. He describes the period as a time when the ruling class -- politicians, bureaucrats, intellectuals, artists -- were cocooned in lifestyle luxury, unwilling to respond to the barbarian threat on the borders. "This self-centred contentment with the material pleasures of life, this rather vacant existence, gliding away in ease and luxury, and a round of trivial social engagements ... is the real reproach against the character of the upper class of that age ... Faith in the stability of the Empire and Roman culture is perfectly untroubled. There is not a hint of those dim hordes, already mustering for their advance ..." It was, Dill concludes, an "age of illusions."

Continued from PAGE B1

I put the book down and go back to the window to look out over the canyons of Manhattan and watch the lights come on in the buildings as night falls. I imagine those lights blinking out permanently. All it would take would be a nuclear bomb on a freighter or a truck, or even a vial of anthrax. And for the umpteenth time, I wonder whether we,

like the fifth-century Romans, have become too decadent, too soft morally and intellectually. Decadence is not only a matter of artistic fashion or literary style; it is also a question of self-defence. A society that is unwilling to defend itself, and justifies that refusal with clever rationalizations, can only be described as decadent. This is especially true when the decadents include those elites that provide the ideas and concepts that guide society in its attitudes and conduct. When a society's opinion-makers, its teachers, writers, scholars, artists and thinkers, no longer uphold the values and traditions necessary for that society's survival, well, you're on the downward slope. The question thus needs to be asked: Is our time also an age of self-destructive illusions?

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The question is, why are so many unwilling to acknowledge the threat Islamism poses to western civilization? More to the point, perhaps, why are so many so quick to blame the West itself, particularly the United States, for the attacks, as though the 3,000 who perished in the collapse of those 110-storey towers, including many Canadians, deserved their fate?

Sept. 11 was what the German philosopher G.W.F. Hegel would undoubtedly call a "world-historical moment"; which is to say, the terrorist attacks forced a fundamental shift in the way we think (or should think) about the world. Simply stated: On Sept. 11, 2001, a half-hidden war against western civilization and all that it represents was finally made explicit for all to see. Only the most naive or ideologically purblind deny this. "Is there a war on?" asks Italian philosopher Marcello Pera. "My answer is: from Afghanistan to Kashmir, to Chechnya, to the Philippines, to Saudia Arabia, Sudan, Bosnia, Kosovo, Palestine, Turkey, Egypt, Algeria, and Morocco, and elsewhere, in a great part of the Islamic and Arabic world, groups consisting of fundamentalists, radicals, and extremists -- the Taliban, al-Qaeda, Hezbollah, *Hamas*, the Muslim Brotherhood, Islamic Jihad, the Armed Islamic Group, and many others -- have declared war, jihad, against the West. They have said it, written it, diffused it in plain speech. Why should we not take action?"

The last five years witnessed gruesome terrorist strikes -- or threats of strikes -- around the world in the name of Islam -- suicide bombings in Bali and mass murder in Madrid and London, to name only the three most deadly. But there was also the beheading of filmmaker Theo van Gogh on an Amsterdam street. In May, a 24-year-old Pakistani immigrant was convicted in the United States of plotting to blow up a New York subway station. More recently, 17 young Muslim men in the Toronto area were arrested for plotting terrorist strikes in this country. In Britain, two dozen young Muslims are accused of planning to blow airliners out of the sky over the Atlantic. In Germany, two men were nabbed in late July after leaving suitcases loaded with bottles of gasoline, propane and detonators -- the makings of a firebomb -- on trains. In late August, Italian anti-terrorist police arrested 40 people in raids on mosques, Internet outlets and money transfer offices in cities around Italy. With all these terror plots in the works, how can anyone not believe there is a war between radical Islam and the West?

But many, it seems, still do. Former Liberal party leadership candidate Sheila Copps, for example, was recently quoted as suggesting the terrorist roundup in Britain is a conspiracy. "Could it be that this whole thing was an orchestrated overreaction to steer public attention away from the difficulties facing the Bush-Tony Blair fight on terrorism?" she asked.

Lenin had a label for people who think in such an unreal fashion. He called them "useful idiots." We heard a lot from such people during the Cold War. High-minded, well-intentioned they may have been, but in their naivete and ignorance they served as apologists for Soviet totalitarianism with their ill-thought criticism of all things western. A great many were academics and journalists. We're hearing similar appearament psychology regarding Islamism. I can think of no better example than the reaction to former Italian prime minister Silvio Berlusconi's remark that western civilization is superior to Islamic culture.

"We should be confident of the superiority of our civilization, which consists of a value system that has given people widespread prosperity in those countries that embrace it, and guarantees respect for human rights and religion," Mr. Berlusconi said in late September of 2001. "This respect certainly does not exist in Islamic countries. ... We must be conscious of the strength and force of our civilization."

Not surprisingly, Muslims denounced him. "I consider his remarks racist, and by such remarks he has crossed the limits of reason and decency," said Amr Moussa, secretary general of the Arab League. In Turkey, the Islamist newspaper Akit described Berlusconi as "a new Mussolini." But the denunciations of western politicians and commentators were equally vitriolic. Amos Luzzatto, spokesman for the Italian Jewish Organizations, told La Repubblica newspaper: "In my opinion, one can not speak of the superiority of one culture over another." (You have to wonder what he would say about Nazi culture in Germany 70 years earlier.) The Belgian prime minister, Guy Verhofstadt, thought Mr. Berlusconi's remarks could have dangerous consequences. "I can hardly believe that the Italian prime minister made such statements."

It was, indeed, a surprising thing to say, considering the climate of opinion that prevails in western societies, particularly among the intelligentsia. As historian Keith Windschuttle says, "The statement was extraordinary because, although western superiority in every major area of human endeavour, especially in political and individual liberty, is patently obvious to everyone, it has become a truth that must not be spoken."

To say one civilization or culture is better than another is one of the Great Taboos nowadays, at least if you subscribe to the postmodern shibboleths of multiculturalism, multi-racialism, egalitarianism, relativism, post-structuralism, etc. There is one exception, of course. If the civilization you love to hate has its roots in European Christian culture, well, that's all right, then. You can have a nice career as a professor or a newspaper columnist denouncing the traditions and values of western civilization, even as you enjoy the best that civilization has to offer.

Nevertheless, Berlusconi was right -- assuming you think societies that allow religious freedom, free speech, human rights, etc. are "superior" to those that forbid the open practise of all religions, denounce non-believers as less that human and impose death sentences of those who dare criticize the faith. If you don't assume the former is better than the latter -- if you disagree with Berlusconi -- then you really need to ask yourself why you live in the West. To partake of its material benefits while denouncing its fundamental values is the life of a parasite. This isn't to say you're obliged to worship all things western. To the contrary, one of the secrets of the West's vitality is its openness to rational self-criticism (at least until recent decades). But to be "anti-western" while partaking of the benefits of western society is, to say the least, to live with a false and hypocritical consciousness. But that perhaps describes the zeitgeist for many contemporary intellectuals in these early years of the Age of Terror.

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How this zeitgeist has come about, why it dominates the psyche of western elites, and whether it continues to hold sway -- the answers to such questions may well decide whether the West prevails in this war, or whether we are already seeing its decline and fall. The idea of the West in decline is a hoary trope, but societies don't always recognize when their moment in the sun has been eclipsed. The Muslims of the Ottoman empire did not think their hegemony was on the wane when the Turkish navy lost the Battle of Lepanto in 1571 to a fleet of Holy League ships. In fact, the Ottomans, who had not lost a battle since the 15th century, bounced back to reassert naval supremacy and control the coasts of the Mediterranean from the Straits of Gibraltar to Croatia and Slovenia for another century or so. Nevertheless, after the Battle of Lepanto, Islam never again threatened the heartland of Christianity, arguably allowing the West to devote its burgeoning energy to its own expansion. The Ottoman Empire, meanwhile, slowly fell apart, unbeknownst to most of its subjects.

So, too, today westerners might not notice -- or notice too late -- when one too many bricks have been pulled out of the western edifice. In any case, it can take a long time for a civilization to fall. The final collapse of the Roman Empire took at least a century -- from, say, the end of Emperor Valentian I's reign in AD 375 to the sad and short rule of Romulus Augustus in AD 476. After that, well, it got very Dark Age very fast. The point, though, is nobody noticed the coming darkness, least of all the Roman elites. Even at the end of the fourth century, with the barbarians soon to sack Rome, "faith in the stability of the Empire and Roman culture is perfectly untroubled," says Samuel Dill. "There is not a hint (in the writings of Rome's elites) of those dim hordes, already mustering for their advance, who within twenty years will be established on the banks of the Garonne."

The situation is equally disturbing today, if not more so. The Roman elites -- poets, rhetoricians, scholars, soldiers and senators -- may have been blind to the barbarian threat, lost to decadent pursuits, but they weren't actively promoting their civilization's destruction. The same cannot be said of contemporary western elites.

In the words of philosopher Marcello Pera, the western elites, particularly in Europe, are delusional in their views of the Islamist threat, and for much the same reason as the ancient Roman elites. In their denunciations of the United States and the war on terror they have chosen wrongly, says Pera, having "made a flawed analysis of Islamic terror -- based on an anti-American bias -- in the mistaken belief that it is a limited and easily contained phenomenon." He attributes this choice to the mistaken, if comforting, belief that "the terrorist war is an act of reaction rather than aggression." Westerners, Pera writes in an essay entitled "Relativism, Christianity and the West," have enjoyed peace for 60 years and are thus "inclined to believe that peace is a natural state and a natural right, and that perpetual peace can indeed exist." As a result they think no price is too high to achieve peace, "not appeasement, not massacres on its own soil, not even surrender to terrorists." Such an attitude betrays intellectual and moral impotence, says Pera. Tragically, it is this impotence that shapes the response of many western elites to the Islamist threat. Why this is so, why this zeitgeist dominates so much of the western mind, needs to be understood if the West is to recover from its decadent ennui.

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In a 2004 speech, "The Spiritual Roots of Europe," Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger -- now Pope Benedict XVI -- said: "There is a self-hatred in the West that can be considered only as something pathological. The West attempts in a praiseworthy manner to open itself completely to the comprehension of external values, but it no longer loves itself; it now only sees what is despicable and destructive in its own history, while it is no longer able to perceive what is great and pure there."

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Pope Benedict also finds a parallel between the West's situation today and that of ancient Rome. "There is a clear comparison between today's situation and the decline of the Roman Empire. In its final days, Rome still functioned as a great historical framework, but in practice it was already subsisting on models that were destined to fail. Its vital energy had been depleted." In particular, the Pope points to Europe's low birth rate, its seeming unwillingness to reproduce itself, as evidence of decline. "Europe is infected by a strange lack of desire for the future. Children, our future, are perceived as a threat to the present, as if they were taking something away from our lives. Children are seen as a liability rather than as a source of hope."

Might Europe's reluctance to reproduce -- at least on the part of the non-Muslim population -- reflect a spiritual malaise, a psychic impotence, similar to that which afflicted ancient Rome? As commentator Douglas Davis asked in a recent National Post column, "Why would a civilization, at the height of its intellectual, cultural and technological power, seek to subvert its own values to appease a bunch of jihadist fanatics?"

The key reason is the ideology that currently prevails among the western intellectual class. As Keith Windschuttle explains in his essay, "The Cultural War on Western Civilization," recent decades have seen leading opinion-makers in the media, the universities, social and political institutions, and even the churches, promote the notion that the West's "superiority" is shameful and must be opposed because it is based on power and domination of others.

This is a radical change from past understandings of western civilization. Up until the 1960s, most intellectuals believed the West's achievements in political freedom, scientific advance and cultural development were largely explainable in terms of its own internal evolution: the inheritance of ancient Greece and Rome, the rise of Christianity, the Renaissance, the Reformation, the Enlightenment, and the industrial and scientific revolutions. This self-understanding is now rejected by the radical intelligentsia. As Windschuttle says: "Western political and economic dominance is more commonly explained not by its internal dynamics but by its external behaviour,

especially its rivalry and aggression towards other cultures." Western achievement, in other words, has come at the expense of other civilizations. Ergo, the West is guilty of victimizing the world for its own enrichment. Therefore, westerners should be ashamed of their civilization. Its supposedly universal values -- reason, individual freedom, human rights, democracy, etc. -- are merely ethnocentric projections used to justify the West's imperialist exploitation of others. Even science is merely the "western way of knowing."

Admittedly, westerners have not always done well by other societies, and a rational critique of western abuse and exploitation is be welcomed. But this new radicalism goes far beyond self-criticism to constitute hatred of the West. Even if the West is guilty of many of the charges against it, says Windschuttle, that does not justify "an overwhelmingly negative critique of Western civilization itself."

The biggest factor contributing to this negative critique is, arguably, the West's history of empire-building. The critique might be warranted if it was only the West that engaged in imperial adventures. The fact is that every rising civilization has been imperialistic, including Islam, which from the seventh century through to the 16th century established its hegemony in the Middle East, the Indian subcontinent and North Africa through bloody conquest. Should Muslims now feel guilty about conquering what were once Christian lands in the Middle East and North Africa? Should they be expected to vacate those lands and return them to the Christian fold? The questions are purely rhetorical, but there's no gainsaying the hypocrisy in denouncing the West for its imperial past while letting other cultures off the hook. In any case, denunciations of western imperialism are, in many cases, unjustified.

Political theorist Lewis Feuer points out in his book Imperialism and the Anti-Imperialist Mind that western imperialism by and large brought improvements in social, economic and political conditions to those they ruled --everything from better education and health to an end to slavery and tribal genocide. "Anti-imperialist literature has perhaps beclouded the great fact that the world's advances have been associated with the eras of progressive imperialism," says Feuer. "A progressive imperialism is one in which energies are liberated for the advancement of civilization and creative activity ... A rising, progressive people will be a correspondingly commercial, scientific, and imperialist people; such imperialism is not atavistic but creative. Decay comes when those energies have become effete."

Feuer distinguishes between regressive and progressive imperialism. The former, he argues, were devoted to pillaging their colonies, while the latter sought, at least to some extent, to improve social and economic conditions. Feuer offers Mongolian, Spanish and Soviet imperialism as examples of regressive imperialism. The Alexandrian, Roman, French, Dutch and British empires were more progressive forms of imperialism in that for all their errors and arrogance -- the British Opium War with China in the 1840s, for example -- their rule was generally beneficial. In modern times, imperialism brought improvements in social conditions and economic wealth to many regions of Asia and Africa. As well, Britain's outlawing of slavery throughout the Empire largely put an end to the slave trade, except in the Arab world. "Between the years 1860 to 1876 at least four hundred thousand natives, it has been estimated, were enslaved for use in the Middle East and North Africa," Feuer writes. Arab slave traders castrated thousands of African boys to turn them into eunuch slaves.

So why, Feuer asks, do "the writings of Arab and black ideologists alike evince no trace of an Arab-Muslim guilt" comparable to the guilt westerners are supposed to feel about their imperial past? Somehow, he says, the "white man's burden" has been transmuted into a burden not of power but of guilt that has been enthusiastically taken up by leftist intellectuals.

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(Continued on Part Two)

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The Toronto Star

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Body

Language, like terrorism, keeps evolving.

So when the media cite the menace of "jihads", the word is now used without translation and understood to mean Islamic Holy War against infidels.

Except that it doesn't, not quite.

To mainstream Muslims, jihad also translates as "struggle"; a personal striving.

It also describes what I experienced during two overseas postings for the Toronto Star - a journalistic journey that evolved into a personal struggle, a kind of journalistic jihad, to understand the roots of religious radicalism and the pull of ethnic extremism.

How does faith mutate into fundamentalism? What motivates young men to massacre innocents in pursuit of martyrdom? Why does ethnic identity - and the quest for self-determination - descend into intolerance or tribalism?

These questions became the focal point of my decade-long odyssey, leading me down blind alleys and into the occasional dead end. There are no certainties when faith, ethnicity and extremism are involved.

I watched these volatile ingredients form a combustible mix that fuelled terrorism. Together, they are the transcendent forces of our time.

And much misunderstood. Many Canadians still equate fundamentalism almost exclusively with Islam; more often than not, Muslims get all the bad press thanks to the gruesome exploits of groups like Hezbollah, *Hamas*, Islamic Jihad, and Al Qaeda.

My travels exposed me to the reality that no one is immune to religious radicalization. I encountered the pogroms of Hindus against Muslims in India, the bloody-mindedness of Buddhists against minority Hindus in Sri Lanka, the misplaced messianism of Jewish settlers in the occupied West Bank, and the deep-rooted intolerance of Christians towards Muslims in the Philippines.

From the desert religions of the Middle East to the mystical faiths of Asia, fundamentalism holds a powerful, universal appeal for people of all faiths.

Leaving Canada for Jerusalem in the mid-1990s as the Star's Middle East correspondent, I landed in the middle of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict: a tale of two faiths fighting a Hundred Years War. In the battle between Jewish settlers and Palestinian martyrs, rivals became soulmates by jointly undermining the fledgling peace process.

Fundamentalist Jews took land, Islamic jihadis took lives. And each side dehumanized the other.

Amid the symbiotic self-destructiveness, both claimed spiritual justification for their transgressions and profited from the fallout: a renewed Palestinian intifada and predictable retaliation from Israel's armed forces. And as the peace process unravelled, terrorism moved into the void to capture the world's attention.

In Jerusalem, terror had its own special sound: the dull thud of a suicide bombing followed by the wailing of sirens and the moaning of victims.

The most unnerving part of my job was rushing to the scene of a bomb blast, like the one that exploded at a crowded food market near our office. I remember threading my way past throngs of panicked shoppers fleeing in the opposite direction. Using my notebook as a kind of psychological shield, I moved through the carnage: Cobs of corn strewn among severed limbs and shards of glass. Bits of human flesh splattered on market stalls. Chunks of watermelon immersed in pools of blood. Elderly victims slumped amid the detritus of the daily market, groaning in pain or eerily silent from the shock. The charred, decapitated torso of a bomber splayed on the street alongside the corpses of his victims. United in death.

Surrounded by the misery, I tried to fathom the method behind the madness. The bomber's family, brimming with pride, would invariably erect a mourning tent to celebrate the good deed, distributing sweets to mark the happy occasion. There would be talk of how the "martyr," by righting Israeli wrongs, could look forward to 72 virgins in paradise.

I had presumed the Israeli-Palestinian conflict placed me at the epicentre of terrorism, but it didn't take long for the growing popularity of suicide bombings to create an arc of terror stretching across the Middle East, with Muslims slaying Muslims over theological disputes.

The next leg of my journey took me to Algeria and Egypt on the trail of mujahedeen Holy Warriors who thought nothing of planting bombs in holy places. On assignment in Yemen, I visited the tribal battleground that doubled as a recruiting ground for Osama bin Laden. In Saudi Arabia, the birthplace of Islam and latter-day crucible of intolerance, I found a place of faith and loathing, where pious bombers attacked civilians with impunity. In Sudan, I covered the civil war over the imposition of Sharia (Islamic law) and brutal mistreatment by tribal militias.

In Iran, the testing ground for an Islamic revolution that promised a kinder, gentler theocracy, I saw a regime lapse further into brutality toward its own citizens. In Lebanon, I listened as Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah, Hezbollah's leader, defiantly laid out his anti-Israel agenda from his heavily guarded South Beirut headquarters, and vowed never to disarm his Iranian-backed fighters. Across town in his fortress-like prime ministerial offices, a fearless Rafik Hariri described his vision of peaceful coexistence - a patriotic voice silenced, last year, by Syrian assassins.

Posted four years later to the Asia Bureau, I felt the puritan terror of Taliban Afghanistan and the menace of Pakistan's jihadis well before 9/11. Their rudimentary reading of Islamic scriptures, superimposed upon centuries-old tribal laws, wrought intolerance toward both family and foreigners. Afghanistan became the breeding ground for the conspiracies of Al Qaeda and fostered the Talibanization of Pakistan, where attacks against minority sects were rife.

It is nightfall in Karachi, October 2001; time for evening prayers as American warplanes rain bombs across the border in Afghanistan. A month after the carnage of 9/11, the United States is at war next door, and this port city of 12 million people is on edge. Pakistan is a flashpoint in the West's fight against the neighbouring Taliban, but it is also a country at war with itself: Muslim against Muslim, moderate against extremist, Shiite against Sunni.

Together with my translator, I am awaiting a rendezvous on a dimly lit street with one of Pakistan's most notorious militant groups: the Guardians of the Friends of the Prophet, soon to be banned by Pakistan's military government for inciting hatred and assassinating enemies. A spotter in flowing robes and sandals looks us over from a distance. Satisfied, he leads us through winding alleys to the group's headquarters in a heavily guarded mosque. After a final invocation of "Allahu Akbar" (God is Great), the head of the Karachi wing emerges from evening prayers and summons me for an audience.

With his untrimmed beard and white skullcap, Ilyas Zubair is a picture of piety - and possessed of a charismatic brand of Islam that can be lethal. His group accuses Christians and Jews of conspiracies against Islam and condemns fellow Muslims from the minority Shiite sect as infidels. Inconveniently for my translator and me, we fit both descriptions: Shiite Muslim and Canadian Jew collaborating on a reporting assignment.

"The Shiites are anti-Islamic," Zubair complains bitterly in rapid bursts of Urdu, rendered into English by my increasingly nervous translator.

"They are not Muslims, they are kaffirs (infidels)," he continues, fingering his prayer beads reflectively. "They should not be allowed in mosques, nor in Mecca. My feeling is the same as if a Jew were entering Mecca."

With Zubair's blessings, assassins have gunned down dozens of Shiite physicians in the waiting rooms of Karachi. Thousands more Shiites have been slain in the city's honeycomb slums or soaring mosques. Young disciples sit at Zubair's feet on the carpeted floor, listening raptly as he outlines a jihad against perfidious Jews and heretical Shiites.

The sermon concluded, we are offered sweet tea and pleasantries before being escorted to the door. A guard clutching an AK-47 springs to attention as farewells are exchanged in the courtyard. Unfamiliar with my Jewish surname, the militants offer a warm embrace and tell me to go in peace. But my translator, Hussain Askari, tarred by his identifiably Shiite name, is refused a handshake or a glimmer of eye contact. On this occasion, at least, the Jew felt safer than the Muslim.

But such luck cannot always be counted on. A few weeks later, another Jewish journalist attempting a story about Karachi's tangled web of terrorism meets a different fate: Wall Street Journal correspondent Daniel Pearl is kidnapped by the Islamic extremists he sought to interview. Instead of the Islamic salutation and hug bestowed upon me, he is beheaded.

I had crossed paths with Pearl on assignment in Iran - where we shared the same translator - and again in Israel. As his death sank in, fellow journalists warned that my own conspicuously Jewish surname put me in danger: Along with my notebook and Nikon, I carried the extra baggage of being a Cohn in the lion's den. No longer could I venture into hostile territory with the comforting assumption that a Canadian passport granted any kind of protective immunity.

Years earlier, when I had ventured into Hezbollah's South Beirut headquarters to interview Nasrallah, his personal gatekeeper, Ibrahim, had questioned me closely about the Toronto Star. Oblivious to my own background, he demanded to know whether my newspaper was "pro-Israel," if any Zionists worked there, and how many Jews were on staff.

"About average for Canada," I deadpanned. Thus reassured, he gave armed guards the signal to hustle me into a utility vehicle with black curtains drawn for the drive to Nasrallah's salon. For more than an hour his protectors meticulously checked my belongings for any incriminating evidence, until at last I was ushered into a room with his translator.

The encounter seemed to go well until my post-interview chat with the trusty Ibrahim. The press aide caught sight of my official Lebanese government press card listing my surname, "Cohn," ahead of my given names, "Martin Regg." He had approved the interview on the assumption that my surname was "Reggcohn."

Turning pale, Ibrahim interrogated me feverishly.

"Cohn - is this really your name?" he sputtered. "Isn't this a Jewish name?"

I nodded, Yes.

"But are you a Jew?" He seemed in a state of shock. I wasn't sure who was in greater peril - me for being Jewish or Ibrahim for having allowed a Jew into the inner sanctum. After an interminable silence, he calmed down.

"No problem, we are not fanatics here," he mused.

On other occasions, my surname had a calming effect, like the time I encountered a gun-wielding Jewish settler in the West Bank. No one had ever pointed a gun at me before, not until Noam Shapiro came speeding down from his hilltop settlement of Yizhar to confront us. With his wife and baby watching blithely from the back seat, the bearded settler was dressed for battle: a machine gun in hand, a kippa prayer cap on his head, and the prayer fringes of an orthodox Jew on his waist. Shapiro was the first fundamentalist of any faith to take aim at me, only to remove his finger from the trigger upon inspecting my press pass.

In Beirut and the West Bank, I had come a little too close for comfort. Now, in the wake of Pearl's death, the comfort zone was narrowing even more.

Leaving the Middle East behind to travel through the Indian subcontinent and Southeast Asia, I was reminded that far more Muslims live in Asia than the Middle East, and that they tend to be more moderate. The often violent Islamic extremism of the Middle East - radiating out of the Arabian Desert as far as Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan - is quite unlike the nuanced, mystical Islam practised in most of Asia.

Indonesia, the world's most populous Islamic country with 200 million Muslims, remains a bulwark of moderation and pluralism. Islam came to the archipelago only in the 14th century, long after Hinduism and Buddhism had taken root, so Indonesians adapted Islam's more mystical Sufi strain and melded it with their own animist beliefs to forge a tolerant faith that endures to this day.

India's Muslim population, the world's second largest, has been heralded as among the most progressive, democratic and successful anywhere. As Prime Minister Manmohan Singh reminded me in an interview, Indians "take pride in the fact that these 150 million Muslims live as peaceful citizens of our country, that there is not a single incident of their being involved in Al Qaeda and other international terrorist groups."

Despite the relative restraint shown by India's Muslim minority, the same could not always be said for its Hindu majority, nor for the Buddhists in its northern territory of Ladakh and in neighbouring Sri Lanka.

My first exposure to India's religious extremism came in Ayodhya, a graceful town of temples and mosques. The streets are lined with gentle Hindu priests and sadhus (ascetic holy men), marking it as one of Hinduism's holiest sites - but also its bloodiest.

Overflowing with pilgrims, it brims with hate. Fifteen years ago, zealots demolished a mosque to make way for a Hindu temple. Hindu fundamentalists have camped out at the site ever since and taken the entire nation hostage. I listened as the Hindu hardliners taunted the Muslim minority with fundamentalist slogans.

"Hindi Hindu Hindustan," they chanted, which translates roughly as "India for the Hindus and the Hindi-speakers."

"Katua Bhago Pakistan," they continued: "Circumcised (men) run to Pakistan" - a reference to Muslim men for whom circumcision is a religious obligation.

Hindutva, or Hinduization, has been dubbed the "saffronization" of India: the rooting out of Islamic or Western influences that are deemed "foreign" to the population of one billion.

Back in 2002, Hindutva was the declared ideology of the governing BJP party in New Delhi and the western coastal state of Gujarat, where tensions over Ayodhya culminated in anti-Muslim pogroms that claimed as many as 2,000 lives.

At the scene of the Gujarat massacre, I came upon one of the survivors, Abeda Begum. From her perch along the muddy, garbage-strewn alley where chickens and cows jostled for space with pedestrians, Begum had witnessed the slaughter that spared the domestic animals but claimed her loved ones. There is a dead end where the Hindu mob doused her Muslim neighbours with kerosene and burned 92 of them to death. Among them were the mother and sister of Begum's husband.

When I visited, she was looking after one of the orphaned survivors, 12-year-old Samina Begum. Together they rolled incense sticks with their blackened hands for 30 cents a day, their only income since Begum's husband was let go by Hindu employers in an economic boycott.

"I'm doing all this work because the Hindus won't keep Muslim workers any more and our houses were destroyed, so we have to start from scratch," Begum told me plaintively, adjusting the folds of her purple sari.

I was struck by her clothing and manners. The flowing saris worn by <u>women</u> like Begum often leave their midriffs partly exposed, which might appear immodest for Muslims elsewhere in the region. But in Gujarat it was the local Hindu fashion, and so it had been adopted by Muslims as their own in a state where people of both religions wore the same clothes, spoke the same local dialect, and watched the same movies.

Yet they remained worlds apart in Gujarat, fearing for their lives in the birthplace of Mahatma Gandhi. The killing fields of this coastal state were a reminder that nearly six decades after Gandhi's dream of a pluralist state for Indians of all faiths, the country is still haunted by the ghost of communal violence.

India's disputed Himalayan territory of Kashmir, where Muslims are in the majority, adds another dimension to the country's religious tensions. It is not only the minority Hindus who feel besieged here, but also the Tibetan-Buddhists living along Kashmir's northern border with China.

In the high-altitude enclave of Ladakh, I listened to Kushok Bakula Rinpoche, the 86-year-old chief lama, explain why his fellow Buddhists were struggling to separate from Kashmir's Muslims. Swathed in scarlet robes in his monastery residence, he argued passionately that Buddhists wanted nothing to do with Muslims, because their religions were so utterly incompatible with one another: "We have nothing in common."

I had a chance years later to recount those xenophobic musings to Tibet's Dalai Lama at his residence-in-exile in the nearby Indian hill town of Dharamsala. His Holiness tried to laugh off the chief lama's combative remarks but later turned deadly serious about the subject of Buddhist fundamentalism:

Every religion, he acknowledged, is susceptible to extremism, and Tibetans are no exception. The only difference, he argued, is that Buddhist fundamentalists tend to take potshots within their own faith, rather than attacking others.

Not so in Sri Lanka, where warmongering monks have long raised a battle cry against the Hindu minority. This small South Asian island of 18 million people, which claims to be the centre of Buddhism, has transformed itself into a textbook case of religious radicalism and tribal identity run amok - a microcosm of the planet's ethnic conflicts.

When I visited their temples, Sri Lanka's most influential religious leaders cast the Sinhalese majority as custodians both of Buddhism's sanctity and the island's territorial integrity. To be sure, they feared separation by the Hindu Tamils in the northeast, but they bitterly opposed the very policies that could easily have fostered national unity, such as equal rights, official bilingualism and local empowerment for the minority. The monks cited a mythological prophecy that Buddhism would be entrusted to this island off India's southeast coast for 5,000 years, with the Sinhalese deemed a chosen people on a sacred mission.

Years of incitement against the minority Hindus gave rise to one of the world's most feared guerrilla movements, the Tamil Tigers. Rebelling against Buddhist chauvinism, government discrimination and army atrocities, ordinary Tamils rallied to the guerrillas despite their often grisly tactics that plunged the country into two decades of blood-curdling violence.

The Tigers claim credit for pioneering the phenomenon of suicide bombers long before it became identified with Islamist visions of religious martyrdom. They are an avowedly secular fighting force, yet they encourage cult-like loyalty toward their supreme commander, high-school dropout Velupillai Prabhakaran. Cyanide pellets dangle from the necks of recruits to avert capture. *Female* fighters, pledging blind obedience to their leader, are selected for the most daring suicide attacks.

When I travelled to the jungle headquarters of the Tigers' political leader, S.P. Thamilchelvan, he painted a portrait of earnest young <u>women</u> yearning to be selected for the elite Black Tigers force so they might lay down their lives

for the leader. Unlike Islamic suicide bombers, he stressed, the Tigers don't martyr themselves in hopes of entering paradise. They do it so their fellow Tamils can walk freely in their own homeland.

I let his words sink in during a stroll through the nearby Tiger cemetery, where a calligrapher was adding names to the thousands of headstones bearing the bones of slain guerrillas. Some had swallowed their cyanide capsules, others had incinerated themselves as suicide bombers.

They didn't do it for Allah. They did it for their kin, their cause, their cult - in the thrall of ethnic extremism.

We forget, amid today's heightened fear of fundamentalism, that so-called freedom fighters seeking ethnic and religious homelands have all evoked their own brand of terror in our time: not just the Tamil Tigers of Sri Lanka, for example, but the Sikh warriors who took up arms in India's Punjab in the 1980s and early 1990s.

Canada endured a bitter taste of their tactics in 1985 when the terrorist bombing of an Air India flight claimed the lives of all 329 people aboard. Now, the fight for a separate Khalistan seems a footnote to history, one of the few violent separatist movements ever to fizzle out.

On a visit to Amritsar's Golden Temple, the centre of Sikh worship, the ordinary voices of the devout told the tale: alienated by the gratuitous criminality of so many separatists, the local populace gradually sided with the iron fist of the Indian security forces, providing vital intelligence to wipe out terrorism in their own land.

The pacification of the Punjab is a rare exception to the rule that old self-determination movements fade away but never die. Nearly six decades after independence, India is still struggling to wipe out perennial rebellions along its border regions. Apart from Kashmir, more than 30 rebel armies clustered in five tribal states along India's northeastern fringe still bitterly resist central rule; in the east coast state of Andhra Pradesh, Maoist Naxalite rebels wage ideological warfare with a peasant-style rebellion.

And the list goes on. The Indonesian archipelago was the battleground for three distinct separatist movements - in East Timor, West Papua and Aceh.

In southern Sudan, the Christian minority wanted to break away from an Islamic government, while on the southern Philippines island of Mindanao a Muslim minority tried to separate from the Christian majority.

In China's remote western frontier province of Xinjiang, Uyghur Muslims wanted a separate state of their own.

Covering the competing claims for nationhood in India and beyond, I soon found myself suffering from self-determination fatigue.

Throughout my travels, Muslim intellectuals would not let me forget the plight of their peoples, but I couldn't help noticing their lack of empathy for that of non-Muslims - be it the suffering of southern Sudan's Christian minority at the hands of Islamic militias, or the military occupation of East Timor and West Papua by Indonesia's Muslim soldiers.

Deal with our demands, Islamic intellectuals averred, and the violence would vanish. Yet the grievances invariably depended on the geography of the aggrieved: to Pakistanis, the suffering of Kashmiris was the strongest evidence of Western perfidy; in the Arab world, the Palestinian cause was the priority; Indonesians blamed the West after "losing" sovereignty over East Timor; Arab sympathizers of Al Qaeda cited the presence of American troops on sacred Saudi soil as justification for Osama bin Laden's attacks. Today, Iraq and Lebanon top the Islamic world's list of grievances.

To be sure, resolving these problems would reduce resentment against the West; but the Islamic perception of victimization - and the Islamist path of violence - won't magically melt away if any or all of those perennial trouble spots recede from the horizon.

After a decade abroad, I came to the view that fundamentalism, tribalism and terrorism cannot be so easily explained away or wished away. It's not just about poverty. It's not solely about schooling. It's not entirely about injustice. And it's not really about Islam or other religions.

Craving status and purpose, aspiring martyrs find a raison d'etre in their jihad - a mission, an opportunity to rise above their dreary surroundings. The closer I came to these pious men, the more they looked like lost souls. They sought death not so much as a shortcut to paradise but as a quest for purpose in a mundane life.

We learned shortly after 9/11 that the roster of bombers was dominated by well-off Egyptians and Saudis leading privileged lives abroad. And we now have an inkling, after the arrests of 17 accused terrorist plotters in the GTA, that young Muslim men living comfortably in the banality of suburbia can become intoxicated by fantasies of saving the world by blowing up targets in Toronto.

Much has been written in recent times about the fight for Islam's soul, manifested by a battle between moderates and fundamentalists. We pay great attention to the small number of bombers who do the most damage, but it is also the believers - who make up the mainstream among the world's 1 billion Muslims - who must be engaged, along with those of other faiths.

In my travels across Asia, North Africa and the Middle East, I had always assumed that the fanatics were on the fringes. In fact, it was not only the foot soldiers of fundamentalism who had been pedalling poisonous ignorance, but many of the best minds, as well - either for what they said or left unsaid.

Most condemned the violence, but I found a surprising number who condoned it, excused it, or lapsed into denial. On assignment, I came across prominent, educated Muslims in every walk of life - scholars, doctors, politicians, generals - who blamed 9/11 and other attacks on Israel's Mossad secret service while exonerating Al Qaeda.

Quite apart from their readiness to vilify Jews, I marvelled at the willingness of so many in the Islamic world to besmirch one another as apostles, infidels, or inferior Muslims.

Equally, ultra-orthodox Jews excelled at self-hatred when vilifying their fellow Jews; Hindus excoriated their brethren of lesser castes or questionable orthodoxy; and Buddhists spouted insults at believers from rival sects.

Fundamentalism, like revolution, eats its own children.

Canadians can no longer turn a blind eye to the world beyond our borders; the globalization of terrorism has shattered our splendid isolation. Overseas, there is a different mentality: You are your tribe, and your tribe is you.

Fundamentalism and tribalism, once so alien to the Canadian psyche, have migrated from foreign war zones to our own shores. If we want to maintain our Canadian values of tolerance and harmony at home, we need to wake up to the terror and hatred abroad - not only infecting the Middle East but now poisoning the rest of the planet.

Martin Regg Cohn is the Star's Deputy City Editor.

Graphic

photos by martin regg cohn Above: A hardline Hindu sadhu (sage) stands near soldiers deployed in Ayodhya, India, to keep fundamentalists from praying on the site of a mosque they demolished in 1992. Left: A Muslim boy poses with a toy gun at a pro-Taliban street rally Lahore, Pakistan, shortly after 9 11. The rally was organized by religious groups. Martin Regg Cohn A village girl in Sri Lanka is guarded by local Buddhist militia against attacks by Tamil Tiger fighters.

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MIXED BLESSINGS - This Jewish child is alive and well today because of a kidney taken from an Arab boy killed by Israeli soldiers. So why has this extraordinary "gift of life" sparked such controversy? - HEARTS AND MINDS

Weekend Australian
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Length: 4373 words

Byline: Christine Toomey

Body

MATP

When a Palestinian boy was killed by Israeli soldiers, his organs were donated by his parents - saving the lives of three Jews, writes Christine Toomey.

More than anything, on the morning of November 3, 2005, Ahmed Khatib want-ed to buy a tie. "I want to look like a real bridegroom," he told his mother and father as he paraded in front of them, proudly smoothing his hands over his new beige shirt and matching trousers - a bridegroom being the 12-year-old boy's idea of the epitome of elegance.

His parents had bought him the clothes as a present to celebrate Eid-al-Fitr, the Muslim holiday marking the end of Ramadan. Ahmed was so excited about the day ahead that he had woken up much earlier than his siblings and, at dawn, had gone to the mosque to pray and visit the grave of his grandparents, as is traditional.

Afterwards he returned home to help his mother make morning tea for the family. "He was the one who helped me most around the house," explains Abla, Ahmed's softly spoken mother, while rocking her youngest daughter in her arms. "He had a gentle character and knew his sisters were too little to start doing household chores."

As the family sat sipping their tea, Ahmed kept talking about how he wanted a tie. "I told him all the shops would be closed. But he insisted that Nasser's store would be open," says Ahmed's father, Ismail, a tall man with stooped shoulders and dark stains of anguish circling his eyes. "He was a good boy and I gave him a few coins to let him go and see."

So Ahmed set off at a run. As he wound his way through the narrow alleyways of the Jenin refugee camp in the Palestinian West Bank, he picked up his friend Hithem. When the two boys reached the corner shop on the camp's outskirts, they found it shut, as Ahmed's father had predicted. But there was a crowd of children in the street, letting off fireworks to celebrate the feast, so the two friends ran to join them and started to play.

Hithem anxiously shifts his weight from foot to foot as he points to the spot opposite the shop where the two boys played that day - a semi-enclosed area of wasteland that must once have been a row of buildings. Hithem bites his lip as he remembers what his friend said to him that morning. "He said, 'I feel like I'm going to die today.' When I asked him why, he said, 'I don't know, man. But I feel it.' I was afraid for him."

The game the boys played that morning was what kids in Australia call cowboys and Indians. In Jenin - a refugee camp partially flattened by the 2002 Israeli army assault that left 52 Palestinians dead - it is called army and Arabs. Ahmed was the Arab, Hithem the army. Hithem was dressed for the part: his clothes were camouflage and he carried a toy gun. The boys who play Arabs carry stones and pretend Molotov cocktails, he explains earnestly. At just before 10am, however, the boys' game became horrifyingly real.

Earlier that morning, a small unit of elite Israeli soldiers had entered Jenin in search of a suspected terrorist. When word went around that the soldiers were there, Palestinian gunmen took up positions on rooftops, and a larger crowd of children congregated near Hithem and Ahmed. Afraid that the situation would escalate, the Israeli army called in reinforcements. Several Jeeps full of soldiers and at least one armoured personnel carrier rolled into the street where the children were gathered, according to eyewitnesses.

As gunmen fired shots at the soldiers, hitting the side of one Jeep, the children started throwing stones towards the vehicles 130m away. Hithem doesn't remember why Ahmed dashed out of the protected area where they had been playing. Perhaps it was to get a clearer view of what was going on; perhaps it was to toss stones at the soldiers though Hithem denies this. But what happened next is something he says he will never forget and "it hurts" to talk about.

Still crouched behind a wall playing army and Arabs, Hithem says he saw Ahmed suddenly collapse. Though he did not realise it immediately, his friend had been shot by Israeli soldiers - once in the head, once in the stomach. Terrified, Hithem says he tossed his toy gun in the direction that Ahmed lay and fled. While an older boy scooped Ahmed up and staggered off trying to reach a hospital, an Israeli soldier approached the children, picked up the toy gun and left. In an attempt to explain the killing of an innocent child, pictures of the toy gun they argued he was carrying would later be distributed to the press, laid out alongside a semi-automatic M-16 rifle to illustrate how like the real thing it looked.

Ahmed clung to life for two days. When it was clear the hospital in the refugee camp did not have the resources to treat such serious wounds, his father called Abla's brother, Muhammad, for help. He lives on the other side of the so-called "green line" drawn by the 1949 armistice separating Israel from the occupied territories. So Muhammad is an Israeli citizen and, as such, could request his nephew be airlifted to an Israeli hospital with better facilities. Ahmed was flown first to a hospital in Afula and then to one in Haifa. His parents were refused permission to accompany their dying son. As Palestinians are subject to travel restrictions, they had to request a permit to exit the West Bank. By the time this was granted, Ahmed had fewer than 24 hours to live.

What happened next made headlines around the world. When it was clear their son would not survive, Ismail and Abla took the decision to donate Ahmed's organs for transplant. Within a day of their son's life-support machine being switched off, Ahmed's heart, lungs, liver and kidneys were used for transplant operations needed by six desperately ill Israelis - two Arabs and four Jews, five of them children.

Newspapers as far away as Ottawa and New Delhi carried stories heralding the Khatibs' "gift of peace" and their "outstanding gesture of humanity". "The name of Ahmed Khatib won't go into the history books alongside that of Yitzhak Rabin or Yasser Arafat, but it deserves at least a mention," the Los Angeles Times wrote. The shooting of Ahmed got barely a mention in the Israeli media the day it happened, so frequent is the death of a Palestinian child. But when news of his parents' decision to donate his organs broke, it not only made the front page of most Israeli papers, but the country's future prime minister Ehud Olmert called Ismail and Abla to thank them for a -"gesture that would produce an atmosphere of deeper connection and goodwill between Israelis and Palestinians".

After this initial flurry of heart-warming stories, however, the Khatib family was forgotten as the media turned its attention back to the daily maelstrom of violence that engulfs the Middle East. Yet what happened, not only afterwards but before Abla and Ismail's son was killed, provides a chilling insight into the dynamics of a conflict that between 2000 and the end of May 2006 has claimed the lives of 1005 Israelis and 3512 Palestinians, many of them - 119 Israelis and 695 Palestinians - children.

MY FIRST GLIMPSE OF ISMAIL, Abla, five of their children, and other elderly relatives is as the family stands huddled together beyond the electrified wire fence, watchtowers and steel barricades of an Israeli checkpoint separating the West Bank area around Jenin from Israel. Despite having been told the previous day that they have permission to pass, the family is kept waiting beyond this barrier for more than an hour.

As the stalemate drags on, I approach one of the soldiers and ask if he is aware of the background of the family being kept waiting. He does not reply. Does he know, I ask, what happened to their son - that he was shot by Israeli soldiers while playing, and that his parents' decision to donate the boy's organs saved five lives, three of them Jewish? Silence. Does he know that the family's decision was hailed as both "moving" and "noble" by senior Israeli politicians?

Still no response. Growing increasingly frustrated, I ask the soldier if he had a terminally ill brother, sister, mother or father whose life depended on a transplant, would he not be desperately hoping for someone to make the decision of the family standing before him? Silence. Finally I raise my voice. Does he not feel ashamed at how he and others at the checkpoint are treating this family? Still he says nothing, but in the shadow of his helmet, I see one eye twitching rapidly, the only sign of inner turmoil. Immediately I feel ashamed of having lost my temper. The soldier is just a conscript, barely out of his teens. I have been here only a few hours, yet already I am torn by conflicting emotions that must tear at the conscience of those not already entrenched in extremist positions.

When the family is finally allowed to pass through, we squash into two cars and travel to the village of El-Bqa'a in northern Galilee. Here the family have been invited to a party prepared by the parents of 12-year-old Samah Gadbaan to give thanks for their daughter receiving Ahmed's heart. The Gadbaan family - Druze Arabs often treated with suspicion and hostility by Israelis and Palestinians alike - are joined by the parents of Mohammed Kabua, the five-year-old Bedouin boy whose life was saved by the transplantation of one of Ahmed's kidneys.

Kayed and Fairuz Kabua have travelled for many hours with their son from the Negev desert in the south of the country to thank Ismail and Abla. Samah's parents, Riyad and Yusra, also invited the families of the four Jewish recipients of Ahmed's lungs, second kidney and liver - split between a seven-month-old baby and a 57-year-old woman. None have chosen to attend.

The father of a four-year-old girl, whose life has been saved by the transplantation of one of Ahmed's kidneys, publicly stated afterwards that he wished the organ "had come from a Jew and not an Arab". His comments deeply wounded the Khatib family, and were greeted with outrage by other Palestinians and many Israelis. Following the outcry, the ultra-Orthodox family fell silent. I will meet them later. But before this, I hear Ismail and Abla's extraordinary story.

FOR THE HOURS THEY ARE HUNCHED by my side in the back of a car on the way to Galilee, the grieving couple are preoccupied only with recollections of their son. They talk about how he loved to draw and play the guitar. At the house of the Gadbaan family, Ismail and Abla's obvious pain amid the joy of those who welcome them is heart-rending. When Samah and Mohammed's parents bring their now-healthy children to greet the couple, others in the room fall silent at the poig-nancy of the scene. Samah's brother launches into an impromptu song of gratitude that his sister's life has been saved. A parade is then organised to march through the town in honour of the Khatibs, followed by a formal ceremony and many speeches of thanks in the town hall. It is a long day.

Back in their home in Jenin the next day, the couple are exhausted. Ismail is also on edge. He is due to leave early the next morning for Italy, but by midnight has still not received permission from the Israelis to leave the camp. He has been invited to attend a peace conference in Milan, one of several such invitations from abroad, and to meet a group interested in helping him set up an organisation he wants to found. It will be aimed at raising awareness of the need for organ donors, and would also help sick Palestinians find medical treatment beyond the confines of the occupied territories.

With no prospect of a transplant, Ismail's elder brother died of kidney disease years ago - a crucial factor in his decision to donate his own son's organs. Ismail is also hoping to finalise arrangements for his eldest son, Muhammad, to travel to Florence, where he has been invited by philanthropists to finish his school studies. "I want

to get him out of this place. I would like all my children to study abroad," says Ismail. "I want Mu-ham-mad to fulfil his brother's dreams through education, not by taking vengeance for what happened to Ahmed. I don't want my son to become a militant."

It is a legitimate fear. Raised amid the gun culture of years of warfare, it is the militants of extremist factions who regularly send suicide bombers into Israel, and whom children in the camp widely regard as heroes. Within days of Ahmed's death, pictures of him are pasted up alongside posters of the many suicide bombers - martyrs, as those here call them - who have come from Jenin.

Then Ismail begins to speak about his own childhood, spent entirely within the densely populated refugee camp, established by the UN in 1953 for those who lost their homes after the founding of the state of Israel. He talks of being sent to prison at 15 for throwing stones at Israeli soldiers, and of spending a total of five years in jail after that for offences including throwing Molotov cocktails. He talks of being abused in prison, of being forced to stand for days with his hands against a wall and a sack over his head into which someone had urinated. But it is when he and Abla start to speak of what happened to their family during the 2002 Israeli army incursion into Jenin that the most disturbing story emerges.

Because the couple's two-storey house stands near the top of a steep incline from which much of the refugee camp can be seen, it was taken over by Israeli troops and used as a lookout post. Together with their children and other relatives and neighbours - 29 in all - the couple were herded into a small windowless room and kept there under armed guard throughout most of the military operation. "We had to ask permission to go to the toilet and to make food for our children in our own house. It was humi-liating," Abla recalls. But while the <u>women</u> and children were kept like that for a week, Ismail and a brother were hauled from the room and used as human shields - pushed into house after house in front of soldiers, testing to see if the buildings were booby-trapped. In the confusion following one explosion, the brothers, unhurt, managed to break free. But later Ismail was recaptured and used as a shield again. This time he was stripped naked to ensure he did not have a bomb strapped to his body, and his shoulder was used as a gun prop.

Rather than talk about how this made him feel, Ismail describes the fear of the Israeli soldiers: "One was so afraid he started crying and his commanding officer shouted, 'Shape up! You're not in Bethlehem!" Amid the confusion of gunfire, Ismail once again escaped, and this time managed to flee the camp. Two days later, soldiers released his family and they also fled Jenin.

"When the fighting finally stopped, I was one of the first to set foot back in the camp," says Ismail. "The smell was incredible. There were body parts spread all over the rubble. Part of our house was destroyed. My children saw all this. They were extremely affected. They kept asking me questions I was incapable of answering." Ahmed was nine at the time.

The following year, Ismail says, his son was hauled by an Israeli soldier into one of their tanks, given a broom and ordered to clean it. "Ahmed tried to make a joke of it afterwards," says Ismail. "He said the tank was disgusting inside where the soldiers had dirtied themselves. He said the soldiers had tried to give him biscuits and crisps. But he told them, 'I don't need your stuff. My father can buy me what I need." After listening to the details of such humiliation and tragedy, I cannot help asking the couple how they could find it within their hearts to donate their son's organs, knowing that because they were in an Israeli hospital, they would almost certainly go to people of the same nationality as the soldiers who had shot Ahmed.

It is a question many others in Jenin also asked: the couple's decision to donate their son's organs did not find unanimous support. Anticipating this, and to safeguard his family, Ismail sought the approval of the grand mufti of Jerusalem, the most senior Islamic cleric in Palestine, before telling the hospital of his decision.

In answer to my question, Abla speaks of the final hours of Ahmed's life. As she and Ismail sat beside his hospital bed, she recalls being surrounded by parents all praying for their sons and daughters. "As we sat reading from the Koran, the other parents read from the Torah. Then one of these mothers came over to us and began to pray for Ahmed, and we went and prayed for her son," she says, pulling Ahmed's little sister Takwa tight against her breast.

"We are all mothers and fathers. We all love our children. The message I wanted to send with what we did was, 'Stop killing children!'"

Ismail nods agreement and then repeats a practised phrase: "Hope comes from suffering and we, as a people, have suffered a lot." When I press him further, he says: "Look," with a deep sigh, as if explaining an obvious truth, "a sense of common humanity is much bigger than any feelings of bitterness and revenge." Try telling that to some of those whose lives were transformed by the action Ismail and Abla took.

THE JERUSALEM DISTRICT OF RAMAT Shlomo lies less than 160km south of Jenin. But the newly built and immaculately maintained suburb seems much further removed from the virtual slum conditions of the Jenin refugee camp. It is here that Tova Levinsohn sits cradling her daughter Menuche. Menuche is four now and, with her golden curls, round cheeks and saucer-like eyes, she looks like a Botticelli angel. But Menuche did not always look so healthy. A year and a half ago she suffered sudden kidney failure, after which she spent three days a week undergoing dialysis. Menuche was put on the waiting list for a kidney transplant.

On November 6, the day after Ahmed died, the doctors called with the news of an available organ. "I burst out crying. It was such an emotional moment. They were tears of happiness," recalls Tova. Within hours, Menuche was having surgery at the Schneider children's hospital in Petah Tiqwa near Tel Aviv. At one point Tova describes the Khatib family as "messengers of God". "We believe God sent them to give us the kidney," she says. Her husband, Yaakov, claims he does not recall making the comment about wishing the kidney that saved his daughter's life had come from a Jew, not an Arab. "Some people say I said wrong things. But I don't really remember," he said. "Menuche was still in surgery when I was asked by the media what I thought. I didn't know how to react. It was all so shocking. I was so tired I hardly knew what I was saying."

Be this as it may, it is the casual comments both he and his wife make subsequently that signal a sad disregard for the circumstances in which their daughter received her new kidney. It is six months since Ahmed's death as I sit talking with the Levinsohn family, and Tova turns to me, looking for me to jog her memory. "I'm in the process of having a social worker help me write a letter to the family to thank them," she says. "What's their name again?" And then she adds: "It's not usual for Arabs to give to Jews, you know."

Asked how he now feels about what he said, Yaakov says he "didn't truly appreciate what they [Ismail and Abla] did at the time. It was a big thing". As he speaks, Tova mutters: "They didn't have any choice, really." Then Yaakov continues: "After all you get from Arabs, you know, they are the enemy, trying to do bad things, and then there they are donating organs."

Such views, Yaakov explains, have been greatly influenced by the time he spent in the Israeli army, during which his duties included identifying the bodies of Israeli soldiers killed in the conflict. "It is a very hard situation here." "That's right," Tova chips in. "On the one hand, we are very appreciative, but on the other hand, they are continuing with their terrorist attacks."

Tova is right in that once Ismail and Abla made the decision to donate their son's organs, medical ethics meant they could not stipulate to whom those organs would go; nor, say the couple, would they have wanted to. This has meant in the past that donated organs of Israelis killed in suicide bomb attacks have also gone to save the lives of Palestinians. But it is the Levinsohns' seeming inability to look beyond the fact that the donor came from "the other side" that is most striking.

They are not alone in this. the family of the teenage girl who received Ahmed's lungs, I am informed, is so anxious about the reaction of those in their Orthodox community to finding out that she received her transplanted lungs from an Arab child, that they refuse to be identified. And when I meet the 57-year-old Jewish woman to whom part of Ahmed's liver was transplanted, she makes her view clear: "It was not important who the organ come from. I did not want to know. I just wanted to get the liver. It was my own situation I was very sad about."

Ina Rubinstein, her husband and two children moved to Israel from Uzbekistan 16 years ago to escape persecution by nationalist forces there. "It was a big relief to come here, but then we found things were not so easy here either,"

says Ina, who was hours from death when the transplant of part of Ahmed's liver was performed. The operation did not go well. Ten days later she received a second successful transplant. "Of course, it was a pity what happened to the boy, and I am grateful to his parents," Ina finally concedes. "But the people I really want to thank are the doctors who saved my life."

Such grudging attitudes are counterbalanced by that of the parents of the seven-month-old girl who received the other part of Ahmed's liver. Anat and Amnon Beton called their baby daughter Osher, meaning "happiness", and pictures of her cover the walls of the couple's home in Akko, north of Haifa. But Osher lived for only two days after her transplant operation. "It's a pity. I would have been so proud if my daughter had lived with Ahmed's liver," says Anat.

They did not attend the Gadbaans' party because they are still in mourning. "If I could have gone, I would have hugged Ahmed's mother," says Anat. "I would have taken her and told her thank you, told her that her loss gave life to five people." Amnon adds: "We have friends who are Arab and Christian. We want peace. It did not matter to us that the liver came from a Palestinian boy. We are all humans."

In the months following Ahmed's death, the Israeli human rights organisation B'Tselem wrote to the chief military prosecutor of the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) demanding a criminal investigation into the shooting. Soldiers had not used teargas, but instead had used live ammunition as the first resort, B'Tselem argued, describing it as another example of the IDF's "trigger-happy" policy. According to witnesses, Hithem's account that his friend had not been carrying a toy gun is true - though one said the boys had been throwing stones at the soldiers.

For the past three years, B'Tselem and the Association for Civil Rights in Israel (ACRI) have been petitioning the IDF's judge advocate general's office to open criminal investigations into the killing of every Palestinian not participating in fighting. In May, the state attorney's office told the High Court of Justice that military police have been increasing the number of criminal investigations against Israeli soldiers suspected of killing "non-combatants". In the four years to July 2004, it said, the army had conducted 80 investigations, while during the following year, 55 new cases had been opened, and in the nine months after that, 40. The reason for this increase, it said, was that a lessening in Palestinian violence meant less reason for civilians to be hurt. Human rights workers argue a different case. They say there has been an escalation in Israeli military action since late last year, when Israel resumed targeted killings, and an even further increase since <u>Hamas</u> came to power this year. Such violence is widely viewed as a form of collective punishment for a people who voted in a party that refuses to recognise the state of Israel's right to exist.

But even this increase in criminal investigations means that of the 3512 Palestinians killed by the Israeli security forces from September 2000 to May 2006, only 175 investigations have been opened. Of this total, 19 cases, involving the deaths of 26 people, went to court, and seven of these resulted in convictions; six on charges such as illegal use of a weapon. The number of convictions on the charge of manslaughter? One.

As to the killing of Ahmed, the IDF says that while it "regrets" the shooting, it can find "no justification" to open an investigation. Puzzled that their written response to my inquiry refers to Ahmed as "the man", I call to confirm we are talking about the shooting of a 12-year-old boy. "We want to emphasise that he looked older than he was," a spokeswoman says. In Jenin, I walk the 130m from the place where Ahmed was shot to the position from which soldiers in a Jeep are said to have targeted him. My eyesight is not good, yet I can clearly see that Ahmed's friends, with whom I had been talking at the spot where he fell, are children.

Trying to make sense of what Ahmed's death and such reactions to it say about what is going on in the Arab-Israeli conflict, I visit the grand mufti of Jerusalem. But instead of a spiritual response, I find myself on the receiving end of more political diatribe about the mess in the Middle East being the fault originally of the British, who with the Balfour declaration of 1917 supported the formation of a Jewish national home in British-mandated Palestine.

Finally, I remember the words of another grieving father I had met in Jerusalem several years before. Rami Elhanan lost his 15-year-old daughter, Smadar, in a suicide bombing attack nine years ago, and has spent much of his time since touring Israeli schools talking about the conflict and the need for it to end. "Sometimes I feel like a boy with his

finger in the dam, talking about peace when the flood of violence and hatred has already swept away the wall," he says. "But I believe strongly that the minute the price of not having peace exceeds the price of peace, then peace will come. And the loss of a child is the highest price any parent can pay."

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Byline: Christine Toomey

Body

When a Palestinian boy was killed by Israeli soldiers last year, his parents donated his organs - saving the lives of three Jews. Hailed by some as a triumph of humanity amid the horrors of the conflict, it has also caused controversy. Christine Toomey reports.

More than anything else, on the morning of November 3, 2005, Ahmed Khatib wanted to buy a tie. "I want to look like a real bridegroom," he told his mother and father as he paraded in front of them, proudly smoothing his hands over his new beige shirt and matching trousers - a bridegroom being the 12-year-old boy's idea of the epitome of elegance.

His parents had bought him the clothes as a present to celebrate Eid-al-Fitr, the Muslim holiday marking the end of Ramadan. Ahmed was so excited about the day ahead that he had woken up much earlier than his siblings and, at dawn, had gone to the mosque to pray and visit the grave of his grandparents, as is traditional. Afterwards he returned home to help his mother make morning tea for the family. "He was the one who helped me most around the house," Abla, Ahmed's softly spoken mother, explains while rocking her youngest daughter in her arms. "He had a gentle character and knew his sisters were too little to start doing household chores."

As the family sat sipping their tea, Ahmed kept talking about how he wanted a tie. "I told him all the shops would be closed. But he insisted that Nasser's store would be open," says Ahmed's father, Ismail, a tall man with stooped shoulders and dark stains of anguish circling his eyes. "He was a good boy and I gave him a few coins to let him go and see." So Ahmed set off at a run. As he wound his way through the narrow alleyways of the Jenin refugee camp in the Palestinian West Bank, he picked up his friend Hithem.

When the two boys reached the corner shop on the camp's outskirts, they found it shut - as Ahmed's father had predicted. But there was a crowd of children in the street letting off fireworks to celebrate the feast, so the two friends ran to join them and started to play.

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carried a toy gun. The boys who play Arabs carry stones and pretend Molotov cocktails, he explains earnestly. At just before 10am, however, the boys' game became horrifyingly real.

Earlier that morning, a small unit of elite Israeli soldiers had entered Jenin in search of a suspected terrorist. When word went around that the soldiers were there, Palestinian gunmen took up positions on rooftops, and a larger crowd of children congregated near Hithem and Ahmed. Afraid the situation would escalate, the Israeli army called in reinforcements.

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Yet what happened, not only afterwards but - more incredibly in light of their subsequent decision - what had happened to Abla and Ismail before their son was killed, provides a chilling insight into the dynamics of a conflict that between 2000 and the end of May 2006 has claimed the lives of 1,005 Israelis and 3,512 Palestinians, many of them - 119 Israelis and 695 Palestinians - children.

Our first glimpse of Ismail, Abla, five of their children, and other elderly relatives is as the family stands huddled together beyond the electrified wire fence, watchtowers and steel barricades of an Israeli checkpoint separating the West Bank area around Jenin from Israel. Despite having been told the previous day that they have permission to pass, the family is kept waiting beyond this barrier for more than an hour.

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When the family is finally allowed to pass through, we squash into two cars and travel to the village of El-Bqa'a in northern Galilee. Here the family have been invited to a party prepared by the parents of 12-year-old Samah Gadbaan, to give thanks for their daughter receiving Ahmed's heart. The Gadbaan family - Druze Arabs often treated with suspicion and hostility by Israelis and Palestinians alike - are joined by the parents of Mohammed Kabua, the five-year-old Bedouin boy whose life was saved by the transplantation of one of Ahmed's kidneys. Kayed and Fairuz Kabua have travelled for many hours with their son from the Negev desert in the south of the country to thank Ismail and Abla. Samah's parents, Riyad and Yusra, also invited the families of the four Jewish recipients of Ahmed's lungs, second kidney and liver - split between a seven-month-old baby and the 57-year-old woman. None have chosen to attend.

The father of a four-year-old girl, whose life has been saved by the transplantation of one of Ahmed's kidneys, publicly stated afterwards that he wished the organ "had come from a Jew and not an Arab". His comments deeply wounded the Khatib family, and were greeted with outrage by other Palestinians and many Israelis. Following the outcry, the ultra-orthodox family fell silent. I will meet them later. But before this, I hear Ismail and Abla's extraordinary story.

For the hours they are hunched by my side in the back of a car on the way to Galilee, the grieving couple are preoccupied only with recollections of their son. They talk about how he loved to draw and play the guitar. At the house of the Gadbaan family, Ismail and Abla's obvious pain amid the joy of those who welcome them is heart-rending. When Samah and Mohammed's parents bring their now-healthy children to greet the couple, others in the room fall silent at the poignancy of the scene. Samah's brother suddenly launches into an impromptu song of gratitude that his sister's life has been saved. A parade is then organised to march through the town in honour of the Khatibs, followed by a formal ceremony and many speeches of thanks in the town hall. It is a long day.

Back in their home in Jenin the next day, the couple are exhausted. Ismail is also on edge. He is due to leave early the next morning for Italy, but by midnight has still not received permission from the Israelis to leave the camp. He has been invited to attend a peace conference in Milan, one of several such invitations from abroad, and to meet with a group interested in helping him set up an organisation he wants to found. It will be aimed at raising awareness of the need for organ donors, and would also help sick Palestinians find medical treatment beyond the confines of the occupied territories. With no prospect of a transplant, his elder brother died of kidney disease years ago - a crucial factor in Ismail's decision to donate his own son's organs. Ismail is also hoping to finalise arrangements for his eldest son, Muhammad, to travel to Florence, where he has been invited by philanthropists to finish his school studies.

"I want to get him out of this place. I would like all my children to study abroad," says Ismail. "I want Muhammad to fulfil his brother's dreams through education, not by taking vengeance for what happened to Ahmed. I don't want my son to become a militant." It is a legitimate fear. Raised amid the gun culture of years of warfare, it is the militants of extremist factions who regularly send suicide bombers into Israel, and whom children in the camp widely regard as heroes. Within days of Ahmed's death, pictures of him were pasted up alongside posters of the many suicide bombers - martyrs, as those here call them - who have come from Jenin.

Then Ismail begins to speak about his own childhood, spent entirely within the densely populated refugee camp, established by the UN in 1953 for those who lost their homes after the founding of the state of Israel. He talks of being sent to prison at 15 for throwing stones at Israeli soldiers, and of spending a total of five years in jail after that for offences including throwing Molotov cocktails. He talks of being abused in prison, of being forced to stand for days with his hands against a wall and a sack over his head into which someone had urinated. But it is when he and Abla start to speak of what happened to their family during the 2002 Israeli army incursion into Jenin that the most disturbing story emerges.

Because the couple's two-storey house stands near the top of a steep incline from which much of the refugee camp can be seen, it was taken over by Israeli troops and used as a lookout post. Together with their children and other relatives and neighbours - 29 in all - the couple were herded into a small windowless room and kept there under armed guard throughout most of the military operation. "We had to ask permission to go to the toilet and to make food for our children in our own house. It was humiliating," Abla recalls. But while the <u>women</u> and children were kept like that for a week, Ismail and a brother were hauled from the room and used as human shields - pushed into house after house in front of soldiers, testing to see if the buildings were booby-trapped. In the confusion following one explosion, the brothers, unhurt, managed to break free. But later Ismail was recaptured and used as a shield again. This time he was stripped naked to ensure he did not have a bomb strapped to his body, and his shoulder was used as a gun prop.

Rather than talk about how this made him feel, Ismail describes the fear of the Israeli soldiers: "One was so afraid he started crying and his commanding officer shouted, 'Shape up! You're not in Bethlehem!" Amid the confusion of gunfire, Ismail once again escaped, and this time managed to flee the camp. Two days later, soldiers released his family and they also fled Jenin.

"When the fighting finally stopped, I was one of the first to set foot back in the camp," says Ismail. "The smell was incredible. There were body parts spread all over the rubble. Part of our house was destroyed. My children saw all this. They were extremely affected. They kept asking me questions I was incapable of answering."

Ahmed was nine at the time. The following year, Ismail says, his son was hauled by an Israeli soldier into one of their tanks, given a broom and ordered to clean it. "Ahmed tried to make a joke of it afterwards," says Ismail. "He said the tank was disgusting inside where the soldiers had dirtied themselves. He said the soldiers had tried to give him biscuits and crisps. But he told them, 'I don't need your stuff. My father can buy me what I need.'" After listening to the details of such humiliation and tragedy, I cannot help but ask the couple how they could find it within their hearts to donate their son's organs, knowing that because they were in an Israeli hospital, they would almost certainly go to people of the same nationality as the soldiers who had shot Ahmed. It is a question many others in Jenin also asked: the couple's decision to donate their son's organs did not find unanimous support. Anticipating this, and so to safeguard his family, Ismail sought the approval of the grand mufti of Jerusalem, the most senior Islamic cleric in Palestine, before telling the hospital of his decision.

In answer to my question, Abla speaks of the final hours of Ahmed's life.

As she and Ismail sat beside his hospital bed, she recalls being surrounded by parents all praying for their sons and daughters. "As we sat reading from the Koran, the other parents read from the Torah. Then one of these mothers came over to us and began to pray for Ahmed, and we went and prayed for her son," she says, pulling Ahmed's little sister Takwa tight against her breast. "We are all mothers and fathers. We all love our children. The message I wanted to send with what we did was, 'Stop killing children!"

Ismail nods agreement and then repeats a practised phrase: "Hope comes from suffering and we, as a people, have suffered a lot." When I press him further, he says: "Look," with a deep sigh, as if explaining an obvious truth, "a sense of common humanity is much bigger than any feelings of bitterness and revenge." Try telling that to some of those whose lives were transformed by the action Ismail and Abla took.

The Jerusalem district of Ramat Shlomo lies less than 100 miles south of Jenin. But the newly built and immaculately maintained suburb seems much further removed from the virtual slum conditions of the Jenin refugee camp.

It is here that Tova Levinsohn sits cradling her daughter Menuche. Menuche is four now, and with her golden curls, round cheeks and saucer-like eyes, she looks like a Botticelli angel. But Menuche did not always look so healthy. A year and a half ago she suffered sudden kidney failure, after which she spent three days a week undergoing dialysis.

Menuche was put on the waiting list for a kidney transplant. On November 6, the day after Ahmed died, the doctors called with the news of an available organ. "I burst out crying. It was such an emotional moment. They were tears of happiness," recalls Tova. Within hours, Menuche was having surgery at the Schneider children's hospital in Petah Tiqwa near Tel Aviv.

At one point Tova describes the Khatib family as "messengers of God". "We believe God sent them to give us the kidney," she says. Her husband, Yaakov, claims he does not recall making the comment about wishing the kidney that saved his daughter's life had come from a Jew, not an Arab.

"Some people say I said wrong things. But I don't really remember," he said. "Menuche was still in surgery when I was asked by the media what I thought. I didn't know how to react. It was all so shocking. I was so tired I hardly knew what I was saying."

Be this as it may, it is the casual comments both he and his wife make subsequently that signal a sad disregard for the circumstances in which their daughter received her new kidney. It is six months since Ahmed's death as I sit talking with the Levinsohn family, and Tova turns to me looking for me to jog her memory. "I'm in the process of having a social worker help me write a letter to the family to thank them," she says.

"What's their name again?" And then she adds: "It's not usual for Arabs to give to Jews, you know." Asked how he now feels about what he said, Yaakov says he "didn't truly appreciate what they (Ismail and Abla) did at the time. It was a big thing". As he speaks, Tova mutters: "They didn't have any choice, really." Then Yaakov continues: "After all you get from Arabs, you know, they are the enemy, trying to do bad things, and then there they are donating organs."

Such views, Yaakov explains, have been greatly influenced by the time he spent in the Israeli army, during which his duties included identifying the bodies of Israeli soldiers killed in the conflict. "It is a very hard situation here." "That's right," Tova chips in. "On the one hand we are very appreciative, but on the other hand they are continuing with their terrorist attacks."

Tova is right in that once Ismail and Abla made the decision to donate their son's organs, medical ethics meant they could not stipulate to whom those organs would go; though nor, the couple say, would they have wanted to. This has meant in the past that donated organs of Israelis killed in suicide bomb attacks have also gone to save the lives of Palestinians. But it is the Levinsohns' seeming inability to look beyond the fact that the donor came from "the other side" that is most striking. They are not alone in this. The family of the teenage girl who received Ahmed's lungs, I am informed, is so anxious about the reaction of those in their orthodox community to finding out that she received her transplanted lungs from an Arab child, that they refuse to be identified. And when I meet the 57-year-old Jewish woman to whom part of Ahmed's liver was transplanted, she makes her view clear in three different ways: "It was not important who the organ come from. I did not want to knowl I just wanted to get the liver! It was my own situation I was very sad about."

Ina Rubinstein, her husband and two children moved to Israel from Uzbekistan 16 years ago to escape persecution by nationalist forces there.

"It was a big relief to come here, but then we found things were not so easy here either," says Ina, who was just hours from death when the transplant of part of Ahmed's liver was performed. The operation did not go well. Ten days later she received a second successful transplant. "Of course it was a pity what happened to the boy, and I am grateful to his parents," Ina finally concedes. "But the people I really want to thank are the doctors who saved my life."

Such grudging attitudes are counterbalanced only by that of the parents of the seven-month-old girl who received the other part of Ahmed's liver. Anat and Amnon Beton called their baby daughter Osher, meaning "happiness", and pictures of her cover the walls of the couple's home in Akko, north of Haifa. But Osher lived for only two days after her transplant operation.

"It's a pity. I would have been so proud if my daughter had lived with Ahmed's liver," says Anat. The reason the couple did not attend the Gadbaans' party, they explain, was because they are still observing a period of mourning.

"If I could have gone I would have hugged Ahmed's mother," says Anat. "I would have taken her and told her thank you, told her that her loss gave life to five people." Amnon says: "We have friends who are Arab and Christian. We want peace. It did not matter to us that the liver came from a Palestinian boy. We are all humans."

In the months following Ahmed's death, the Israeli human-rights organisation B'Tselem wrote to the chief military prosecutor of the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) demanding a criminal investigation be opened into the shooting. Soldiers had not used crowd-control measures such as tear gas, but instead had used live ammunition as the first resort, B'Tselem argued, describing it as another example of the IDF's "trigger-happy" policy.

According to witnesses, Hithem's account that his friend had not been carrying a toy gun is true - though one said the boys had been throwing stones at the soldiers.

For the past three years, B'Tselem and the Association for Civil Rights in Israel (ACRI) have been petitioning the IDF's judge advocate general's office to open criminal investigations into the killing of every Palestinian not participating in fighting. In response, the state attorney's office last month told the High Court of Justice that military police have been increasing the number of criminal investigations against Israeli soldiers suspected of killing "noncombatants". In the four years to July 2004, it said, the army had conducted 80 investigations, while during the following year, 55 new cases had been opened, and in the nine months after that, 40. The reason for this increase in investigations, it said, was that a lessening in Palestinian violence meant less reason for civilians to be hurt. Human-rights workers argue a different case. They say there has been an escalation in Israeli military action since last autumn, when Israel resumed targeted killings, and an even further increase since <u>Hamas</u> came to power this year. Such violence is widely viewed as a form of collective punishment for a people who voted in a party that refuses to recognise the state of Israel's right to exist.

But even this increase in the number of criminal investigations means that of the 3,512 Palestinians killed by the Israeli security forces from September 2000 to May 2006 - more than half of whom are believed not to have been participating in fighting when they died - only 175 investigations have been opened. Of this total, 19 cases, involving the deaths of 26 people, went to court, and seven of these resulted in convictions; six on charges such as illegal use of a weapon. The number of convictions on the charge of manslaughter: one - a situation that B'Tselem argues amounts to a "de facto climate of impunity" for killing civilians.

As to the killing of Ahmed, the IDF say that while they "regret" the shooting, they can find "no justification" to open an investigation.

Puzzled that their written response to my inquiry - B'Tselem is still waiting for a reply to their demand - refers to Ahmed as "the man", I call to confirm we are talking about the shooting of a 12-year-old boy. "We want to emphasise that he looked older than he was," a spokeswoman says.

In Jenin I walked the 130 metres from the place where Ahmed was shot to the position from which soldiers in a Jeep are said to have targeted him. My eyesight is not good, yet I could clearly see that Ahmed's friends, with whom I had been talking at the spot where he fell, were children.

Trying to make sense of what Ahmed's death and such reactions to it say about what is going on in the Arab-Israeli conflict, I visit the grand mufti of Jerusalem. But instead of a spiritual response, I find myself on the receiving end of more political diatribe about the current mess in the Middle East being the fault originally of the British, who with the Balfour declaration of 1917 supported the formation of a Jewish national home in British-mandated Palestine.

Finally, I remember the words of another grieving father I had met in Jerusalem several years before. Rami Elhanan lost his beloved 15-year-old daughter, Smadar, in a suicide bombing attack nine years ago, and has spent much of his time since touring Israeli schools talking about the conflict and the need for it to end. "Sometimes I feel like a boy with his finger in the dam, talking about peace when the flood of violence and hatred has already swept away the wall," he said. "But I believe strongly that the minute the price of not having peace exceeds the price of peace, then peace will come. And the loss of a child is the highest price any parent can pay."

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Body

In Late July, as the United Nations Security Council argued long into the night over the wording of a so-called presidential statement castigating Israel for the bombing attack that killed four U.N. observers in southern Lebanon, Wang Guangya, the Chinese ambassador, blew his stack. This was almost unprecedented: Wang, a veteran diplomat, typically comports himself with unnerving calm. But one of the four fatalities had been Chinese, and Wang had grown increasingly frustrated with the refusal of the United States to condemn Israel outright for the bombing. Worse still, the United States was represented not by Ambassador John Bolton but by a junior diplomat, a breach of etiquette that Wang apparently took to be a calculated insult.

Without naming any countries -- he lost his temper, not his grip -- Wang lashed out at "a tyranny of the minority in the council" and vowed that there would be "implications for future discussions" on other subjects. Once the meeting ended, Wang planted himself before the U.N. beat reporters and engaged in 10 minutes of robust public diplomacy, complaining that the presidential statement had been "watered down," observing in several different formulations that "we have to take into account the concerns of other countries" and predicting that the "frustration" his country felt "will affect working relations somewhat."

It was a delicately calibrated performance. In an earlier era, when the People's Republic of China tended to conduct diplomacy by tantrum, this might have been the signal for a real breach. But China cares too much about the international order for such revolutionary shenanigans.

Actually, in an earlier era Chinese nationals would not have served in an observer mission in Lebanon, and the People's Republic would have taken a pass on the whole subject. But China now aspires to play an active role on the global stage, which is why it sends skilled diplomats like Wang Guangya to the U.N. That's the good news. The bad news is that China's view of "the international order" is very different from that of the United States, or of the West, and has led it to frustrate much of the agenda that makes the U.N. worth caring about. The People's Republic has used its position as a permanent, veto-bearing member of the Security Council to protect abusive regimes with which it is on friendly terms, including those of Sudan, Zimbabwe, Eritrea, Myanmar and North Korea. And in the showdown with Iran that is now consuming the Security Council, and indeed the West itself, China is prepared to play the role of spoiler, blocking attempts to levy sanctions against the intransigent regime in Tehran.

It's a truism that the Security Council can function only insofar as the United States lets it. The adage may soon be applied to China as well.

It was only in 1971 that the People's Republic of China supplanted Taiwan as the representative of China in the United Nations. During the remaining years of the cold war, the hermetic Communist regime was generally content to follow the lead of the Soviet Union. Little changed even after the fall of the Berlin Wall: China's permanent representative in the early 90's, Li Daoyu, was known around the U.N. as Ambassador Look Out the Window. The Chinese stirred to action only in order to block peacekeeping missions to countries that had been so foolish as to recognize Taiwan.

Beijing sleeps no longer. The astonishing growth of China's economy has made it a global force, and the accompanying need for resources has pushed it to forge new ties throughout Asia, Africa and Latin America. The old revolutionary ardor is gone, and China surveys the world with increasing pragmatism and confidence. China is now a status quo power -- "an exporter of good will and consumer durables instead of revolution and weapons," as David Shambaugh, a China scholar at George Washington University, remarked in a recent essay. Unlike the United States and the West generally, China views the current global situation as fundamentally benign and malleable -- a setting conducive to diplomacy.

China has chosen to enmesh itself in global bodies like the World Trade Organization, regional groupings like the six-member, security-oriented Shanghai Cooperation Organization and a vast range of bilateral partnerships. China has begun routinely signing arms-control agreements and antiterrorism conventions. And it has begun playing a more active role at the U.N., contributing troops -- almost all of whom provide medical or engineering services rather than front-line patrolling -- as well as policemen to U.N. peacekeeping operations.

Wang Guangya, at 56, is a senior member of a new generation of Chinese diplomats vastly more sophisticated and better educated than the party ideologues of old. His English is quite good, and he so relishes speaking to the U.N. press corps that he sometimes keeps answering questions even as he edges away from the pack while graciously thanking the reporters. Still, he doesn't often attend diplomatic functions, and the occasional dinner in his Trump Tower apartment is normally limited to Asian diplomats. Earlier this summer, I became the first Western reporter to whom he agreed to speak at length.

Wang greeted me in a cheerless reception room in the Chinese mission and invited me to sit parallel to him, as though we were a pair of notables at a reviewing stand. (I took a corner chair instead.) The embassy spokesman and a political counselor seated themselves at a respectful distance across the room. At first the ambassador dutifully recited China's history at the U.N. But once we got on subjects that exercised him, like Japan's bid for Security Council membership, he dispensed with the abstractions and assumed the forthright and confident manner that seems natural to him. Throughout our conversation, Wang chain-smoked Chinese cigarettes -- Zhonghuas -- a habit that had turned his teeth slightly brown.

Wang is bespectacled and slight and has little of the artful smoothness of the more Westernized Asian diplomats. He grew up in Shanghai, the son of a worker, he says, with a low-level position in the Communist Party. Wang graduated from high school in the midst of the Cultural Revolution and along with tens of millions of other Chinese was sent out to the countryside for "re-education." But after President Richard Nixon's visit to China in 1972, the leadership recognized that it needed trained officials to exploit the new opening to the West. Wang passed a test that gained him entry to one of the country's 11 foreign-language schools. In 1974, he was selected as part of a group of 140 to go to England for further study, making him among the very first citizens of postrevolutionary China to receive a Western education. "You think it's a good thing or a bad thing?" Wang asked me, with a disarming grin.

Apparently, it was a good thing. At the London School of Economics, Wang met Cong Jun, a student from the Beijing foreign-language school and the daughter of Chen Yi, one of Mao's great comrades. They married soon thereafter. (Cong Jun now works as a minister counselor in the mission and has served as co-president, with the wife of the British ambassador, Emyr Jones Parry, of a discussion group called the <u>Women</u>'s International Forum.) In 1977 Wang was sent to New York as a junior diplomat and stayed for six years. He returned as a political counselor in 1988, remaining until 1992. He became director of international-organizations policy in the Foreign

Ministry, ultimately rising to the position of vice foreign minister before returning to New York as ambassador in 2003. Wang is considered the favored candidate to replace China's foreign minister, Li Zhaoxing, when he steps down a year from now.

Wang is one of the U.N.'s most adroit diplomats. Ambassador Jones Parry says that his Chinese colleague has a trick he's never seen anyone else perform: "In the council, he speaks in Chinese, but at the same time he listens to the English translation. Sometimes he pauses, and then he'll switch into English to say something similar to the translation but nuanced from it." Wang operates by suggestion, by indirection -- often by silence. "They play a very skillful game at the U.N.," says Vanu Gopala Menon, the Singaporean ambassador. "They make their opinions felt without much talking. They never come in first and make a statement. They always listen first and then make a statement which captures the main thrust of what the developing world wants."

But the game the Chinese play virtually ensures the U.N.'s regular failure in the face of humanitarian crisis. Indeed, the combination of Wang's deft diplomacy and China's willingness to defend nations it does business with from allegations of even the grossest abuse has made a mockery of all the pious exclamations of "never again" that came in the wake of the Security Council's passive response to Rwanda's genocide in 1994. The most notorious example of China's new activism in this regard is Darfur. While none of the major powers, with the intermittent exception of the United States, have shown any appetite for robust action to protect the people of this Sudanese province from the atrocities visited upon them by the government and its proxy force, known as janjaweed, the Chinese, who buy much of the oil Sudan exports, have appointed themselves Khartoum's chief protector.

China first worked to keep the issue of Darfur off the council agenda when both Kofi Annan and Jan Egeland, the U.N.'s humanitarian coordinator, tried to mount a publicity campaign in early 2004. When this failed and Egeland publicly described the horrors there, Wang -- along with the ambassador of Pakistan, a regular ally -- diluted the ensuing press statement so that the council simply called on "the parties concerned to fully cooperate in order to address the grave situation prevailing in the region." In the summer, after Congress had declared the ruthless assault on unarmed villagers "genocide," China vowed to veto an American resolution threatening (not even imposing) sanctions against Khartoum.

And yet, according to Munir Akram, the ambassador of Pakistan: "China was not nearly as active on Darfur as people think. The proposals came from us or from Algeria." The Islamic countries then serving on the council, as well as several African nations, considered any interference in Sudan's affairs a violation of its national sovereignty, even though the citizens being abused were Islamic and African. Wang was more circumspect. At moments of friction, according to a Western diplomat, he would quietly insist, "You cannot alienate the Sudan government; without them, the U.N. mission will fail." Akram is the kind of bombastic figure who suits Chinese purposes to a tee. "Their national style is different from the style of other people, including India and Pakistan," as Akram puts it. "We are an oral people; the Chinese are not. They make their position clear, and they stand by it."

And then, when it no longer suits their purposes, they change their position. Several years ago, China joined India in principled repudiation of the chlorofluorocarbon reductions mandated by the Montreal Protocol. But when the international community offered to pay for the technology needed to reduce emissions, China decided that global regulation of pollution did not, in fact, constitute a violation of national sovereignty, leaving the Indians all alone in their principled opposition. On Darfur, as well, China has seen the virtue of bending before the wind, if ever so slightly. As the hopelessly overmatched troops of the African Union failed to stem atrocities throughout 2005, China (along with Russia) continued to block a resolution authorizing a U.N. peacekeeping force. Then this past May, the Sudanese regime and one of the rebel armies signed a cease-fire pact, increasing the pressure for U.N. intervention. China's position was looking increasingly untenable. And so Beijing agreed to withhold its veto from -- though not actually endorse -- a resolution authorizing a U.N. military-planning mission.

The great issue that divides the U.N. is no longer Communism versus capitalism, as it once was; it is sovereignty. Ever since the catastrophes of Bosnia and Rwanda, and increasingly in recent years, the Security Council has been asked to defend individuals against an abusive state. When critics in the West deride the U.N. as a failed institution, they almost always mean that the Security Council cannot find the will to do so, whether through intervention, sanctions or merely opprobrium. But this failing is a Western preoccupation: most developing nations, with their

history of colonial rule and often their wish to abuse their own citizens without interference, object to all such inroads on sovereign rights. And in China, where memory of "the century of humiliation" at the hands of Western imperialists runs deep -- and where the state's right to abuse its own citizens is not to be questioned -- sovereignty has long been a fighting word. During the 90's, the Chinese abstained on, or publicly criticized, key resolutions authorizing the use of force to dislodge Saddam Hussein from Kuwait and establishing or fortifying peacekeeping missions in Somalia, Bosnia, Rwanda and Haiti. China is now more flexible in practice, but the doctrine of absolute sovereign rights remains central to its foreign policy.

My conversations with Wang kept looping back to this fraught topic. "Each country has to provide the well-being of their own people," Wang said to me. "In some countries there is a problem, where the protection of their own people is" -- here the diplomatic diplomat searched for the right word -- "neglected. The U.N. can come in a quiet way, providing help, providing advice. But the role to play is not to impose it when the government is functioning. Of course there are cases where you can say that the country is a failed country. But wherever there is a government, I think the best way to do it is by giving good advice wherever you can, tough way or soft way, to let the government pick up its main responsibility."

China has, for example, engaged in some gentle prodding of Myanmar -- the former Burma -- whose authoritarian regime depends on Beijing for weapons and trade. But the generals who run the country have shown no signs of releasing their grip or of ending the house arrest of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, the opposition leader and recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize. Nevertheless, Wang says that he has "firm" instructions to block a U.S. resolution, now circulating in draft form, that would condemn the regime and threaten sanctions. China does not feel that this issue belongs in the Security Council. "In our contact with the United States," he says, "their argument is that of course they have the human rights problem, they have the problem of drugs, they have the problem of AIDS. And then may I ask: 'The U.S. doesn't have the problem of AIDS, doesn't have the problem of human rights, doesn't have the problem of drugs? Then you ask the Security Council to be involved?' I don't think that is the case." I said that I didn't think John Bolton would be much impressed by this claim of moral equivalency. Wang waved this away.

In another conversation, held a week later in the U.N.'s Delegates Lounge, where Wang blithely violated the nosmoking rules, the ambassador insisted that the right to exercise sovereignty free from outside interference was enshrined in international law. But, I asked, when the world's heads of state, gathered at the U.N.'s 60thanniversary summit last September, approved the principle of "the responsibility to protect," didn't this, too, become a matter of international law?

This was true, Wang conceded -- even though China has strong reservations about the doctrine -- "but you have to decide how to apply this." And since this new obligation applied only to genocide or "massive systematic violations of human rights," it had no bearing on Darfur. Wang had just returned from a Security Council visit to the region, where he had concluded that the situation was very complicated and that the government had been unfairly criticized. China still stood by Khartoum. After abstaining on the peacekeeping resolution, Wang had asked for the floor in order to reiterate China's position that U.N. peacekeepers could deploy only with the government's consent.

Unfortunately, I observed, President Omar Hassan el-Bashir of Sudan had just flatly rejected the proposed peacekeeping force.

The African Union "is doing a good job on the ground," Wang insisted. "The U.N. force would be a good way to help them, but if in their judgment the Sudan government thinks the A.U. forces are enough, that is their decision." And second, the Sudanese had agreed to disarm the janjaweed.

"And if they can't?"

Wang ground a cigarette into his ashtray. "If you are not sure that it will not be successful, then why impose a solution on them before you prove that they will not be able to do it?"

China has become so influential a country, such an object of imitation, respect and fear, that you can no longer talk about an "international community" that does not include it. The West has a profound interest in China's development as a global power and its acceptance, however gradual and grudging, of the rules by which the West

has defined global citizenship. As Mark Malloch Brown, the deputy secretary general of the U.N., puts it, "How much less intractable so many issues would be if China was as fully engaged in the management and leadership of the United Nations as so many Western nations are." Malloch Brown takes the optimistic, or perhaps wishful, view that China will find itself inevitably adopting Western rules as it seeks to join the global club, arguing that "as soon as you start grappling with global issues, you find that things like human rights and development and legitimate government are things you come to care about as vital to international stability."

You can see why a high-ranking U.N. official would wish for such a denouement. If, alternatively, China continues to insist that the Enlightenment principles enshrined in the U.N. Declaration of Human Rights are little more than a Western hobbyhorse, then the great issues will remain intractable, and they will be resolved elsewhere than the U.N. In recent years, both liberal interventionists and conservative unilateralists have begun to call for some new body, or new mechanism, that will not sit idly by during the next Darfur (or more problematically, the next Iraq). This new entity would not include obstructive nations like China and Russia. But excluding China from the world's foremost decision-making body could have very grave consequences, since it might well rekindle the Middle Kingdom's old sense of encirclement and exclusion. You'd have to save a great many lives to compensate for that kind of damage.

China plainly wishes to join the international community on its own terms. The People's Republic is a singular entity, a world-class power almost wholly preoccupied with harnessing its internal energies and preventing domestic conflict. Unlike Russia, for example, China has little wish to use the power at its disposal, save to establish a harmonious environment for its "peaceful rise." And in any case, China has progressed so rapidly from an insular and impoverished state to a confident and immensely influential one that it has not had time to figure out what to do with its power, or even fully to acknowledge it. China thus cares a very great deal about matters of little concern in the West -- "territorial integrity," for example -- and very little about the burning issues in Washington, London and Paris. China has, for example, played almost no affirmative role in the reform debate that has exercised the U.N. over the last year. China is a member of the bloc of developing nations known as the Group of 77 -- the group's formal name is "the G77 plus China," even though the 77 have grown to 131 -- and it shares the organization's view that the U.N. should pay more attention to economic and social issues and less to matters of peace and security. But even on these questions, according to Ambassador Menon of Singapore, "They were basically just going with the tide."

Even with its negative agenda -- the reforms it wanted to prevent -- Ambassador Wang was happy to remain in the shadows. China had spent more than a decade fighting off resolutions introduced in the U.N.'s Human Rights Commission, and it implacably opposed Kofi Annan's proposal to replace the toothless commission with a much tougher body. But in the crucial final days last September, it was Munir Akram, not Wang, who produced a vague plan supposedly designed to break the deadlock. Western diplomats theorized that China allowed Pakistan to show good faith, intending all the while to block any substantive reforms. Akram, not surprisingly, denies this and says that he does not generally coordinate tactics with Wang. In the end, the General Assembly established a new Human Rights Council with membership standards sufficiently lax that Iran, Cuba, Russia and, of course, China were elected members.

The one issue that roused China to fury was Japan's bid for permanent membership on the Security Council. China's all-hands-on-deck mobilization was a reminder that propriety goes out the window on matters China deems to be of national interest, just as had been the case a decade earlier when it openly tried to kill peacekeeping missions in Guatemala, Haiti and Macedonia to punish those countries for their dealings with Taiwan. The merits were plainly not on China's side. No other country so self-evidently belongs on the council as Japan, which pays 19 percent of the U.N.'s budget, slightly below the U.S. assessment. (China pays 2 percent, and Russia 1 percent.) But Japan is China's chief competitor in Asia, as well as America's staunchest ally in the region.

Even more important, though, is China's deep sense of historical grievance over Japan's notorious invasion of Nanking in 1937 and its aggression in World War II. Wang explained to me that Japan's wealth and generosity could not erase this blot: "The current five has been selected not because of their economic power but because of the role they played during the Second World War. China played an important role, and also we didn't occupy other people's territory" -- unlike you-know-who. (It seemed too niggling to point out that the regime that had fought with

the Allies now held sway in Taipei, not Beijing.) China's bitterness at Japan's alleged lack of repentance has only been sharpened by the annual visits of Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi to the Yasukuni shrine, popularly seen to be a symbol of militarism. "For the last couple of years," as Wang expressed this in his oblique manner, "the signal from Tokyo is not that positive."

In April 2005, soon after Japan, Germany, India and Brazil formalized their candidacy for an expanded Security Council, anti-Japanese demonstrations sprang up in China. Japanese missions and businesses were trashed. The Japanese were shocked both by the virulence of the demonstrations and by the obvious signs of high-level toleration, if not approval. Meanwhile, Wang and several of his lieutenants worked on the ambassadors of wavering countries. Prince Zeid Ra'ad Zeid al-Hussein, the permanent representative of Jordan, which was considering becoming a co-sponsor of the resolution expanding the council's permanent membership, says that he was called to a caucus room at the Security Council to meet with a Chinese diplomat. "The guy was apoplectic," Prince Zeid recalls. "He said, 'How can a great power refuse to accept essential, fundamental truths and yet take pride in the good works it does across the globe?' "He later sent Prince Zeid a copy of a book titled "The Rape of Nanking: An Undeniable History in Photographs." Jordan continued to support the resolution but declined to become a sponsor.

China failed to persuade African countries to reject Security Council expansion as such, yet it still delivered the coup de grace at a meeting of the African Union in Libya in early August, where heads of state met to choose two nations that would join the other four in seeking permanent membership. Several weeks earlier, China was the host of a lavish state visit for Robert Mugabe, the increasingly tyrannical and eccentric Zimbabwean strongman and a longtime Chinese client. Soon after returning, Mugabe declared that African countries must insist not only on permanent representation in the Security Council but also on the veto. This demand was obviously self-defeating, since neither China nor the four other permanent members would agree to dilute the value of their veto. Nevertheless, vast shoals of Chinese diplomats roamed the halls in Tripoli, appealing to African pride, to the imperative of global parity and so on. The demand for an African veto carried the day, and with that, Security Council expansion died. The corpse bore no sign of Chinese fingerprints.

Last month, the U.N. began the process of selecting a successor to Secretary General Kofi Annan. Asian countries feel that it is their "turn" for the job, and China has promised to deliver an Asian. Any potential successor must survive both American and Chinese scrutiny. The Americans will reject too open an advocate for the third world agenda; China will reject an aspirant from too close an ally of Washington. Other difficulties will arise. China may be happy to firm up its ties with India by backing Shashi Tharoor, a career U.N. official who is India's candidate, but Pakistan, a close ally, may object strenuously. China may, for once, have to disappoint or even anger some fraternal members of the G77 -- a situation it tries very hard to avoid.

The Chinese are much too subtle to throw their support behind a single candidate, but it is widely assumed that they want a technocrat who will put aside Annan's (admittedly tarnished) mantle of moral authority. Wang, of course, disclaims any such ambition, but he does express the hope that Annan's successor "might bring some perspective from Asia." By this, he explained, he meant "patience over rush" and an emphasis on collective rights -- those of the state -- rather than individual ones. If China succeeds in this regard, the U.S. might find the U.N. an even less hospitable place than it is now.

China and the United States are the twin betes noires of the U.N.: the U.S. insists on enlisting the organization in its crusades, while China refuses to let any crusade get in the way of national interest. Washington is all blustering moralism; Beijing, all circumspect mercantilism. Both can afford to defy the consensus view. The emissaries of the two capitals are united by a wary mutual regard and understanding. Bolton and Wang met as midlevel diplomats in the early 90's and worked together on nonproliferation issues in 2001 and 2002. In their first meeting in this latter capacity, according to an American diplomat, who agreed to talk with me only if he remained unnamed, as he was not authorized to speak publicly, Bolton and Wang talked for four and a half hours without finding much common ground. As the discussion drew to a close, the time came for the inevitable speech on China's inalienable claims to Taiwan. Wang, who knew Bolton to be impervious to all such oratory, simply said, "Taiwan." And Bolton nodded and said, "And Taiwan."

Relations between the two are strictly professional. But Bolton, who declined to be interviewed for this article, is said to appreciate his counterpart's pragmatism and lack of polemics. China and Russia take the same view on issues involving sovereignty, but whereas Russia, with a home audience to play to, likes to snap Uncle Sam's suspenders, China, with no wish to harm its relations with Washington, looks for common ground. While Russia openly threatened to veto any resolution authorizing war in Iraq, for example, China stated its opposition as undemonstratively as possible. More recently, both Russia and China have resisted any Security Council condemnation of Iran's nuclear program, but China has proved far more accommodating of White House concerns. "The Russians spent 45 minutes arguing over the meaning of consult," the American diplomat recalls. "Wang finally said, 'Consult is fine.' " Wang also earned points when he and the "director" of Taiwan's unofficial mission to the U.N. happened to arrive simultaneously at the Saudi mission to sign the condolence book after the death of King Fahd; Wang walked over and shook the hand of his diplomatic nemesis.

Wang talked with me about Bolton, and about America diplomacy generally, with the faint irony and mellow wisdom of an antique culture. "I can talk to many people," he said equably, "those who wish to have nice discussion or those who wish to quarrel." Wang is, of course, a partisan of the nice discussion. "I do not want to give advice to my good friend," he went on to say, delicately, "but I believe that sometimes the way that you work, especially the way that your work is respected by others as showing due respect for others, is where common ground can be found." But what exactly does Wang mean by "common ground"? The consensus that China has sought on Darfur looks like a formula for paralysis. And China's insistence on showing "due respect" for Iran seems designed less to persuade Tehran to end its nuclear program than to preclude any of the punitive actions currently being contemplated by the West.

Wang told me he believed that blunderbuss diplomacy is the American way "because America is a superpower, so America has a big say." China would appear to have a big say of its own, but that's not Wang's view. At the end of our second conversation, he returned to a favorite theme. "The Americans have muscle and exercise this muscle," he said. "China has no muscle and has no intention of exercising this muscle."

I said that, in fact, China had a great deal of muscle but punched below its weight. Wang smiled at the expression and said, "It's not good?" Well, I said, that depends. And then Wang said something quite startling: "China always regards itself as a weak, small, less powerful country. My feeling is that for the next 30 years, China will remain like this. China likes to punch underweight, as you put it."

Why was that? Why did China want to punch underweight? Wang spoke of China's peaceful rise, of the need to reassure all who fear its growing clout. "We don't," he said, "want to make anyone feel uncomfortable."

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Graphic

Photos: Ambassador Wang at China's U.N. mission in New York. (Photograph by Alessandra Petlin)

No Pushovers: From left: Wang discussing Haiti with British ambassador Emyr Jones Parry and French ambassador Jean-Marc de la Sabliere in a 2006 session

voting in 2004 for a draft resolution condemning Israel for the killing of the founder of *Hamas*

facing reporters on North Korea

and getting along with John Bolton, right. (Photographs From Left: Stan Honda/Afp/Getty Images (2)

Kyodo News/Newscom

Don Emmert/AFP/Getty Images.)

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Views of the world Who is the most influential commentator in China? Or the most powerful voice in Iran? Or Britain? FT foreign correspondents gave us their picks, and came up with a revealing list that says as much about the world's political elites as the media that analyse them

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Body

AUSTRALIA - Alan Jones

Paul Keating, Australia's former Labour prime minister, once described conservative radio host Alan Jones as a pedlar of "middle-of-the-road fascism". But Jones has survived, indeed thrived, on such insults all his life and is now the undisputed king of talkback radio in Sydney, Australia's biggest city.

Prime minister John Howard has made many appearances on Jones's 2GB morning radio show, as have many other national figures who feel Jones is too influential to ignore. They may be right: in 2001 the then New South Wales premier, Bob Carr (another frequent Jones guest), sacked his police minister, Paul Whelan, after Whelan criticised Jones for running a virulent campaign against the police force.

A former Australian rugby coach, Jones was lured to 2GB from a rival station in 2002 by a reported ADollars 4m yearly salary plus a 20 per cent stake in the station.

Often controversial, his paid on-air endorsements of Australian companies led broadcasting regulators to investigate him for taking "cash for comment", and he must now disclose all his commercial agreements. He has also been rebuked by the NSW Independent Commission Against Corruption (for criticising a commission witness); fined for contempt of court; and frequently sued for defamation, though by no means always successfully.

Not that it seems to matter: in the 2004 Queen's birthday honours, Jones was made an Officer of the Order of Australia for his services to the media and sport.

Lachlan Colquhoun, Sydney.

BRAZIL - Elio Gaspari

Brazil has many influential columnists but no one has the range or depth of Elio Gaspari. Published in both the proopposition Folha de Sao Paulo and the more pro-government O Globo in Rio de Janeiro, Gaspari is an independent and occasionally surreal writer whose encyclopedic knowledge of Brazil lends a gravitas to his political commentary.

His four- (soon to be five) volume history of Brazil's 20-year military dictatorship is a bestseller and his columns are peppered with insightful historical references. In recent weeks Gaspari has been a

vituperative critic of the leftwing government of president Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, especially its faltering foreign policy. But Gaspari is equally likely to criticise Brazil's economic elites and the main opposition parties that they support. And he often takes up quite local issues, questioning the fairness of ticketing plans for the Sao Paulo public transport system, for example.

"He is not only very perceptive and very attentive, he also has real influence and gets decisions changed," says Fabio Santos, editor until recently of the monthly journal Primeira Leitura.

A close second to Gaspari would be Miriam Leitao, a journalist who writes a daily column for O Globo and whose morning TV programme Bom Dia, Brasil is seen by millions of people each day. Leitao was previously an investigative leftwing reporter, but her explanation of Brazil's orthodox economic policies and her defence of the benefits of economic stability have made her a national figure.

Richard Lapper, Latin America editor.

CANADA - Margaret Wente

Canada's better known columnists range from The Globe and Mail's Jeffrey Simpson, who has soberly analysed Ottawa politics for the past 20 years, to the National Post's Terence Corcoran, an indefatigable advocate of free markets. Even the state-owned Canadian Broadcasting Corporation is mixing news and opinion: a garrulous Newfoundlander, Rex Murphy, offers comment on its prime-time news show.

But for perceptive observations on the issues of the day, leavened with humour and common-sense, it is hard to beat The Globe's Margaret Wente.

Wente is a former business editor who makes no secret that she is on the wrong side of 50 and has used her hip replacements to comment on Canada's increasingly strained healthcare system.

In a country suffused with political correctness, Wente is refreshing, if hard to pigeon-hole. "I'm all for multiculturalism, up to a point. Head scarves, turbans and kirpans don't bother me at all. But my open-minded tolerance deserts me when I see <u>women</u> completely covered up. In every culture where this is the norm, <u>women</u> are oppressed. Do I need to learn to be more tolerant? Or am I right to think that <u>women</u> in chadors (and, more to the point, the men who walk four steps in front of them) should adapt to us?"

Bernard Simon, Toronto.

CHILE - Hermogenes Perez de Arce

As the most prominent defender of the disgraced former dictator Augusto Pinochet, Hermogenes Perez de Arce is something of an anachronism in the new democratic Chile. But he is still the mostly widely read columnist in the country.

"Many people may hate him but everybody reads whatever he writes," says Marta Lagos, the director of Latinobarometro, a prominent Santiago-based polling company. "He has had a longstanding influence."

Perez de Arce's staunch defence of Pinochet and the repressive regime of the 1970s and 1980s provides an important reference point against which the anti-Pinochet and democratic political mainstream defines itself. His elegantly written and witty columns in El Mercurio defend unfashionable conservative causes such as the restrictive divorce laws that were liberalised less than two years ago. He is also apt to slam the decline of public morality or the incidence of pre-marital sex. Against the Current, a selection of his columns, was a bestseller in Santiago last year.

A handful of other columnists, including Carlos Pena (who also writes for El Mercurio), reflect more middle-of-theroad thinking. None, perhaps, is as widely read nor widely known as Perez de Arce, but Chile is changing. Clinic, a left-of-centre satirical weekly launched when Pinochet was arrested seven years ago in London (and held under police custody in a clinic), is one of the best-read weeklies in the country.

Richard Lapper, Latin America editor.

CHINA - Hu Shuli

Hu Shuli is a business columnist, but that bland description tells you little about the impact of her writing in China in the past five years. As editor of the thriving Beijing-based Caijing (Finance) magazine, Hu has exposed accounting fraud, environmental degradation and the hyper-sensitive issue of Communist party control of personnel in top state enterprises. One prominent banker calls her "Scandal Lady", out of both fear and admiration. The 53- year-old former Worker's Daily journalist also uses her bi-weekly column to press the government to pursue market reforms. "All of China's successful economic reforms since 1978 can be summed up in one simple statement: 'Reduce direct government intervention and increase the reign of the market,'" she wrote recently in an attack on state manipulation of the property market. "A profit-driven local government cannot ensure the stable development of the sector; instead it becomes an accomplice pushing up housing prices."

Another influential columnist is the leftist Zhu Dongli, a researcher at the Marxism Institute who moonlights for the adventurous Phoenix Weekly current affairs magazine. He thinks democracy is wrong for China, because of the country's limited resources. "With limited resources, you need unified planning under the control of a centralised power," he wrote recently. Anyone who still believes the internet will inevitably democratise China might note that Zhu's essay was a particular hit online, where it was posted on about 700 chatrooms.

Richard McGregor, Beijing.

EGYPT - Mohammed Hassanein Heikal

No political commentator in the Arab world has ever come close to the iconic status enjoyed by Mohammed Hassanein Heikal, the Egyptian writer and one-time editor-in-chief of Al-Ahram newspaper.

At 83, Heikal may not have much influence on governments any more, but he remains the only political analyst capable of riveting Arab television viewers. Heikal's career spans more than 60 years, including two decades in which he wielded enormous influence as a close confidant of president Gamal Abdel Nasser.

These days he presents a series of programmes on the Al-Jazeera network. In one of his broadcasts he traced the Arab world's lack of weight in international politics to what he described as a "pact with the devil", made by the region's leaders in the early 1970s, when many governments, including Egypt's, strengthened ties with the US at the expense of Arab solidarity.

Heikal's link with political power was broken in the mid-1970s when he fell out with Nasser's successor, Anwar El Sadat. However, his prolific writing and encyclopedic knowledge of both regional and international politics means that he remains a deeply respected figure.

Heba Saleh, Cairo.

FRANCE - Nicolas Baverez

Dominique de Villepin, France's prime minister, has coined a term for people like Nicolas Baverez: declinologues. Ever since the publication in 2003 of La France Qui Tombe (France in Free Fall), the 45-year-old historian and essayist has come to personify the idea that France is in decline. In books, essays and newspaper columns, Baverez argues that France's political institutions are dysfunctional, its economy is in a mess, and its global influence is fading away.

"The crisis is not only economic, it is intellectual, moral, even spiritual because it profoundly affects the identity, values, and historic destiny of France," he writes. His views are the subject of furious discussion and drive many Gaullist ministers to distraction. "There are journalists and a certain number of thinkers - Baverez prominent among them - who have made denigration of France a source of business," fumes one minister. "What they are doing is scandalous." But Baverez disagrees. By highlighting the "truth" about how far France has fallen behind the rest of the world, he is preparing the ground for radical change, embodied by Nicolas Sarkozy, the leading rightwing contender for the presidency, who has been calling for a "rupture" with the failed policies of the past.

John Thornhill, Paris.

GERMANY - Hans-Ulrich Jorges

Hans-Ulrich Jorges is a rogue element in the polite and often clannish world of German political commentators.

His rivals may derive their authority from their proximity to decision makers, but the deputy editor and chief commentator of the mass-market Stern weekly prides himself on his lack of political friendships.

His Zwischenruf (Interruption) column is politically conservative with a liberal social twist; substantial yet often humorous. More intuitive than analytical, Jorges is readable and good at grasping the Zeitgeist.

In the run-up to last year's election, he predicted not only the defeat of the incumbent, Chancellor Gerhard Schroder, but his subsequent estrangement from the Social Democratic party.

Jorges may not be an insider, but he is well connected and a reliable source of information about who thinks what in Angela Merkel's notoriously secretive left-right coalition.

But his soft spot for counter-intuitive views can sometimes come at the expense of consistency. While exasperated at the grand coalition's lack of reformist ambition one week - "We want to see more than 'little steps', tactical fiddling and short-lived compromises" - he lavishes praise on its unspectacular style the next - "whoever calls it boring, cowardly, smallest-common-denominator politics could be wrong."

But at least he can rarely be accused of being dull.

Bertrand Benoit, Berlin.

INDIA - Thomas Friedman

In a country with at least a dozen major English-language newspapers and countless regional ones, it is hard for any individual columnist to claim a genuine national influence. Prem Shankar Jha of the Hindustan Times, Shekhar Gupta of The Indian Express and M.J. Akbar of The Asian Age are among those who come close.

Strangely, however, it may be that it is an American writer - Thomas Friedman of The New York Times - who is lapped up most ardently by the country's ruling elite.

His recent bestselling book, The World is Flat, was a hymn to India's brilliant future in a fully inter-connected globalised world and made him for a time the country's de facto chief publicist. His New York Times columns, which are regularly republished in Indian newspapers, provide readers with what must be a pleasant reminder of the book's gushing tone. In one recent column he described India as a "beacon of tolerance and stability" (somewhat mystifyingly to those who follow Indian politics or communal passions).

"Call me biased," he says, "but I have a soft spot for countries of one billion people, speaking a hundred different languages and practising a variety of religions, whose people hold regular free and fair elections."

His appeal in India speaks to a significant shift in the tectonic plates of world politics. Once the guardian of the non-aligned movement, India is rapidly succumbing to the ardent courtship of the US. The world's sole superpower is taking India as its new strategic mate and nobody does more to sugar the pill than Friedman.

Jo Johnson, New Delhi.

INDONESIA - Goenawan Mohamad

Goenawan Mohamad is almost without peer in Indonesia, the world's largest Muslim nation. He founded the news weekly Tempo, which led what little media fight there was against the regime of former President Suharto. More recently, he has turned his sights on America and its paradoxes.

Mohamad is a rare and versatile intellectual voice in the archipelago, as likely to write about Michael Jackson as Guantanamo Bay and Turgenev.

When US security guards stopped him for questioning at a tiny Missouri airport last year, convinced he was carrying TNT in a cake his wife had packed for him to take to relatives, US embassy officials back in Jakarta must have quietly groaned.

Mohamad has learned to veil his arguments when necessary. In a recent column about depicting God, following the Danish cartoon furore, he said God's "regulations" were meant for man, not God, which meant man could bend them - a controversial comment in a society where religious literalists often rule debate.

But Mohamad tempered the thought by offering it in the form of a "profound question" posed by Jesus about working on the Sabbath: "Weren't those laws for man, and not vice versa?" "These days," said Mohamad, "people should hear that question once again."

Shawn Donnan, Jakarta.

IRAN - Hussein Shariatmadari

Hussein Shariatmadari is the editor-in-chief of Kayhan, the country's main state-owned newspaper. Appointed by Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Iran's supreme leader, Shariatmadari is a careful analyst of Iranian affairs.

He approved of last year's landslide election victory of president Mahmoud Ahmadi-Nejad, which he felt reflected the ongoing appeal of the 1979 Islamic Revolution's values. And when Ahmadi-Nejad stirred international uproar by calling for Israel to be "wiped off the map", Shariatmadari said the new president had not said "anything new or unprecedented" to justify such tumult.

But he does not always agree with Iran's leaders. He was a trenchant critic of negotiations begun under the previous government with the European Union over Iran's nuclear programme: why talk to people who wanted to block Iran's path to peaceful nuclear technology, he asked.

He has also attacked the "dangerous trap" in this year's proposal to start talks between the US and Iran on stabilising Iraq. "As our late Imam (Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini) once said, America has already done everything within its power against Islamic Iran," he wrote. "If there is any hostile action it hasn't yet done, the only reason is that it hasn't been able to."

Islamic Iran, he wrote last month, is the "banner-holder in the fight against global domination, a successful model for other movements seeking freedom and independence". Far better, then, to improve relations with China, and with non-aligned and Islamic countries, than to waste time talking to those who want to deny Iran nuclear technology or even overthrow its regime.

Gareth Smyth, Tehran.

IRAQ

Newspaper commentators don't have a lot of impact in most of Iraq, where years of Ba'athist rule and tight media controls mean the press is widely mistrusted. Some writers stand out, such as Adnan Hussein of the pan-Arab London-based daily, Asharq Alawsat, who last year wrote that then-prime minister Ibrahim al-Jaafari's florid

speaking style reminded him of a rawzakhon, a traditional storyteller who commemorates the death of Shia martyrs. The nickname stuck and Jaafari eventually had to step down, in part because other political groups simply couldn't talk to him.

But religious figures are far more important than media commentators to most Iraqis, especially the Shia working classes for whom newspapers symbolise a state unable to keep the lights on, or a pan-Arab media that panders to Sunni countries such as Saudi Arabia or Egypt.

At Baghdad's Buratha mosque, for example, thousands gather each Friday to hear the sermons of Jalal al-Din al-Saghir, who recently accused the Al-Jazeera television network of "shooting arrows of hate at the Iraqi people... guided by the Mossad".

Print commentators have more influence in the Kurdish-controlled north, especially in the area ruled by former rebels from the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan. There, journalists such as Asos Hardi and Twana Osman, co-founders of the independent Hawlati weekly newspaper, have criticised the guerrillas-turned-governors and struck a chord with people tired of corruption and mismanagement. But press freedom has its limits: early this month both journalists received six-month suspended prison sentences after the regional prime minister sued them for publishing false information.

Steve Negus, Baghdad.

ISRAEL - Akiva Eldar

The veteran columnist, Akiva Eldar, is one of Israel's most prominent and controversial commentators. He has consistently argued that the country should seek a negotiated settlement with the Palestinians, even though many Israelis have taken a more hardline position against the Palestinians since the start of the intifada in 2000.

"I get very nasty e-mails, especially from the US, with some suggesting I move to Ramallah!" says the 60-year-old.

His newspaper, the liberal Ha'aretz, is one of Israel's lower- circulation dailies but its English-language website is read all over the world. Eldar is also a panelist on Army Radio's current affairs show each morning, listened to by one million Israelis.

His comments inspire callers from across the political spectrum: "I get calls from politicians, mostly from the left when I criticise them. But sometimes from the Likud as well."

He says Israel has a partner with whom it can work for peace in the form of Mahmoud Abbas, the Palestinian president, and is sceptical that the Islamic movement, <u>Hamas</u>, which runs the Palestinian Authority, can change. "I think Israel should talk to anyone who is willing to accept two states side by side," he says. "It's a waste of time to talk to someone who refuses your right to exist."

Eldar believes in a negotiated solution to the conflict but has little to no faith in the present crop of politicians. "People of both sides have a clear idea of how to put an end to this disarray," he said. "But I've never been so pessimistic."

Sharmila Devi, Jerusalem

JAPAN - Soichiro Tawara

A culture that prizes agreement above dissent is not exactly designed to produce scintillating commentators. Most of the best- regarded columns in Japan are anonymous, including Ten Sei Jingo ("Heavenly voice, human voice"), which appears each morning on the front page of Asahi newspaper. The column, the first stop for many of Asahi's 8.3 million readers, is more gentle musings on the quirkiness of life than an expression of political conviction.

Perhaps the best-known personality columnist is Soichiro Tawara, a veteran of the airwaves, and an occasional dabbler in print. Brusque, direct, and with a gravelly voice, Tawara's Sunday Project television programme is required viewing for anyone in politics. Each week he subjects a parade of politicians to bruising cross- examination (by Japanese standards, at least).

Tawara's reputation for independence has not been damaged by his closeness to prime minister Junichiro Koizumi, in whom he has a touching faith as a crusader for clean politics. Like Koizumi, who heads the everlasting Liberal Democratic party but who is constantly threatening to smash it to pieces, Tawara's political views are hard to pin down, for all his forthrightness. In his ambiguity, he is more typically Japanese than his blunt posturing might suggest.

David Pilling, Tokyo.

KENYA - Louis Otieno and Wycliffe Muga

The ambitious young Louis Otieno is a prominent voice in Kenya, where he is a news anchor and television host. On Newsline, one of his two weekly shows, he grills public figures and presents a viewers' phone-in, a format that has grown in popularity as Kenyan politics has opened up.

"It's new for both ends, for the politicians who are not used to being put on a platform and being questioned, and for the Kenyan public who can ask questions," says the 34-year-old presenter.

A more contentious figure is Wycliffe Muga, a columnist for the Daily Nation. He covers everything from wildlife to global affairs, and Kenya's president, Mwai Kibaki, is a repeated target: "Of what use is it for the president to have a 'hands-off' approach when the country is being plundered by 'hands-on' thieves whom he is responsible for having placed in high office?"

The 45-year-old stuck his neck out again last year when he backed a British ambassador who had angered president Kibaki's government by accusing its officials and ministers of "vomiting on the shoes" of foreign donors.

"I feel the Kenyan public is not very well informed about international issues," says Muga. "It's very easy to have anti- American or anti-British feelings, so I try to explain more the other perspective."

Andrew England, Nairobi.

NIGERIA - Dele Olojede

Some of Nigeria's most pointed political commentary comes from two of the country's literary giants, novelist Chinua Achebe and playwright Wole Soyinka. And it says something else about the state of the country's media that its most influential journalist is neither a columnist nor a commentator, but an investigative reporter best known for the work he has done for a US newspaper, Newsday.

Dele Olojede won a Pulitzer prize for international reporting last year for his coverage of the 10th anniversary of the Rwandan genocide. "It is a situation scarcely imaginable anywhere, as if most Jewish survivors were compelled to remain in Germany immediately after the Holocaust, living cheek-by-jowl with their erstwhile neighbours," he wrote.

His biggest story in his home country was a 1986 report in the Nigerian news magazine Newswatch, which resulted in the freeing of the internationally known musician, Fela Kuti, and the dismissal of the judge who sentenced him.

Based in Johannesburg, Olojede now wants to make an impact on post- military Nigeria's press, which he says lacks quality and critical muscle. "There is a real disconnect between the media and public," he says.

Dino Mahtani, Lagos.

POLAND - Adam Michnik

Poland's most influential columnist is undoubtedly Adam Michnik, the editor-in-chief of Gazeta Wyborcza, one of the country's leading dailies. Although he now writes rarely, his words still have an enormous impact. He made a crucial contribution to the end of communist rule in 1989 when he came up with the formula "Your President, Our Prime Minister", which allowed the communists to retain control of the presidency while the first post-war non-communist government was formed.

Although at heart a leftist, Michnik strongly supported the shock therapy that turned Poland into a market economy. He was most influential in the early years of democracy, when his friends from Solidarity were in power. He is now seen as left of centre.

The country's second-most influential columnist is Michnik's opposite in just about every way - although the two are friends. Jerzy Urban, the former spokesman of the communist regime, is the editor of Nie, a weekly scandal sheet with an excellent record for scoops. Urban's often malicious pen skewers Poland's many holy cows, from the Solidarity movement to the Church and even the former Pope.

Jan Cienski, Warsaw.

RUSSIA - Mikhail Leontiev

Just before Vremya, Russia's flagship TV news broadcast, ends most nights, the neatly groomed presenter is replaced on screen by a bearded, dishevelled figure in sports jacket and T-shirt. This is Mikhail Leontiev, whose prime-time comment slot on state-owned Channel One is testament to the direct line many believe he has to the Kremlin.

For two decades Leontiev, 47, has been on a political odyssey that has transformed him from Soviet-era dissenter to 1990s liberal to a conservative nationalist and one of president Vladimir Putin's most vocal supporters.

A journalist on two of Russia's early independent newspapers, Leontiev went on to co-found Sevodnya (Today) as the "first real post-Soviet publication" in 1993. He became one of Russia's most- quoted columnists - as an ardent supporter of liberal economic reform and critic of the first Chechen war.

By the mid-1990s, however, he was already warning of "mounting anti-Russian sentiment" in US policy. By decade's end he was convinced Russia needed a strong hand to pull it out of its Yeltsin-era chaos - and he conducted a high-profile TV interview with Putin in 2000 that was widely seen to have helped secure the president's victory.

Today Leontiev's commentaries are shot through with suspicion of the west, and the need for Russia to be a strong, sovereign nation. "Boosting the authoritarian component is the only way to restore order," he declared after the Beslan tragedy.

Neil Buckley, Moscow.

SERBIA - Dragoljub Zarkovic

Certain themes crop up repeatedly among Serbian commentators: suffering, heroism and the nation's destiny to be misunderstood by the rest of the world.

But Dragoljub Zarkovic, editor-in-chief of the weekly Vreme (Time) and frequent columnist in Belgrade's leading daily newspaper, Politika, is an interesting exception.

Take the touchy subject of Kosovo, the breakaway ethnic-Albanian province that may finally achieve formal independence this year, after seven years of United Nations interim rule.

Conventional Serbian wisdom says western leaders are only backing Kosovo's independence because they want a share of its mineral resources. But Zarkovic has reminded his readers of another perspective: "If the communists

had not seized British shares in the Trepca (mining complex), Tony Blair would have defended the Serbian position in Kosovo."

His take on Serbia's future remains generally optimistic, however. Cynics and extreme nationalists who play on popular despair ought to read the latest reports from the buoyant Belgrade stock exchange, he says. For there they would "see what is deeper: our trepidation or our hope".

Neil MacDonald, Belgrade.

SOUTH AFRICA - Moeletsi Mbeki

Political commentators play a crucial role in South Africa's young democracy, and President Thabo Mbeki himself publishes a rambling, often provocative weekly letter on the African National Congress website. However, the opinions of his younger brother Moeletsi arguably carry as much - if not more - clout.

The younger Mbeki is a businessman, deputy chairman of the South African Institute of International Affairs and a former journalist. He doesn't publish a regular column, but his opinions can become mini-news events. This is partly because he is the president's brother, but he is also an independent thinker, important in a country where frank comment is often blunted by a perceived need for political correctness.

In 2003, Mbeki unleashed a noisy debate by describing Black Economic Empowerment (an attempt to make the economy reflect the country's racial demographics) as a cynical ploy by white- controlled businesses to further their interests by co-opting politically connected black businessmen as shareholders. More recently, he has blamed rapacious elites for holding back development in Africa, claiming that the average African was worse off today than during the colonial era. He has also urged more South African support for democracy in Zimbabwe.

As one journalist wrote of him some time back, South Africans should be proud of thinkers "who are not too politically correct to say the emperor has no clothes, if the emperor is embarrassing us by roaming the streets stark naked".

John Reed, Johannesburg.

SOUTH KOREA - Kim Dae-joong

Most people think of South Korea's former president when they hear the name Kim Dae-joong. But this also happens to be the name of the country's most important columnist, the editor-in-chief of the conservative Chosun Ilbo, the largest newspaper in this nation of 48 million people.

Readers of the popular Sisa news magazine voted Kim the country's most influential journalist for 13 years in a row from 1992. One of his most contentious columns appeared in 1980 when he described the 300,000 protesters who took part in a popular uprising in the city of Kwangju as "violent rioters". (The protesters said he had not understood the rebellion and had upset their quest for democracy.)

The 66-year-old has annoyed more readers recently by urging support for the free trade agreement now being negotiated with the US ("The US is not an 'object' but a 'means'. We can just make full use of it"). But he says his favourite column was one he wrote in 1984 about a measure ordering newsstand owners to put a red cross on any story that criticised the government.

"I'm so shamed and embarrassed but I can't do much about it except laugh and think 'Those guys are really good at finding out just one paragraph (of criticism)," he wrote. One reader in particular noticed it: the authoritarian president at the time, Chun Doo-hwan, told him to take a year off and do some more study.

Woo Jae-yeon, Seoul.

UNITED KINGDOM - Trevor Kavanagh

Britain has a glut of influential commentators. Richard Littlejohn, who recently left The Sun for the Daily Mail, has enormous populist appeal. Melanie Phillips, also of the Mail, has built a large following by castigating authorities for their moral and governance failures. The Daily Telegraph's Simon Heffer can claim to have been publicly attacked by Tory leader David Cameron (whom he once called a "PR spiv") - though this may mean Heffer's influence is waning.

Of the leftwing crowd in The Guardian, Martin Kettle is magisterial; Jonathan Freedland is insightful at home and abroad; Timothy Garton Ash is an incisive and liberal voice on Europe and beyond. Simon Jenkins is the most elegant and distinctive, but Polly Toynbee, who spans both "old" and "new" Labour, is probably the paper's most influential writer.

The most powerful journalist in Britain, however, is Trevor Kavanagh, for many years the political editor of The Sun and now its associate editor. Kavanagh is believed to be behind The Sun shifting its support from Tony Blair to the Tories. Two years ago he was leaked the contents of the controversial report into the death of government scientist David Kelly, and he was also named Britain's eighth most influential media figure (well ahead of The Sun's editor but behind proprietor Rupert Murdoch).

Kavanagh rules because of the size of his readership, his own industry and a style that destroyed the boundaries between reporting and commentary.

John Lloyd, London.

UNITED STATES - Charles Krauthammer

A syndicated columnist with the Washington Post, Charles Krauthammer has influenced US foreign policy for more than two decades. He coined and developed "The Reagan Doctrine" in 1985 and he defined the US role as sole superpower in his essay, "The Unipolar Moment", published shortly after the fall of the Berlin Wall.

Krauthammer's 2004 speech "Democratic Realism" set out a framework for tackling the post 9/11 world, focusing on the promotion of democracy in the Middle East.

A trained psychiatrist, Krauthammer writes with wit and occasional venom. Here's a Krauthammer intro: "Say what you will about Bashar Assad, dictator of Syria and perhaps the dimmest eye doctor ever produced by British medical schools, but subtle he is not."

Lately, his proclamation of the "dawn of a glorious, delicate revolutionary movement in the Middle East" looks less prescient than a year ago, but he is a long-term thinker.

Runner-up to Krauthammer is Thomas Friedman of The New York Times. A gifted populariser, he is most fluent when writing about the Middle East and is an impassioned advocate of globalisation. But he can sound facile and smug. He does not "get" Europe and his francophobia is grating.

Maureen Dowd, also of the Times, is often achingly funny but occasionally crabby. Paul Krugman was brave and brilliant after 9/11 when few dared challenge President Bush's "war on terror", but now he's mono-tonal.

Among conservatives, Bill Kristol of The Weekly Standard is the biggest hitter. And don't forget the iconoclastic Jon Stewart, the faux TV news anchor on Comedy Central's The Daily Show.

Lionel Barber, Financial Times editor and former US managing editor.

Load-Date: May 19, 2006



Hamas passes plate around

Sunday Mail (South Australia)

May 14, 2006 Sunday

State Edition

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Section: FOREIGN; Pg. 40

Length: 83 words

Body

NABLUS: Thousands of <u>Hamas</u> followers gathered yesterday to donate money and jewellery to their cash-strapped government.

The <u>Hamas</u>-led Palestinian Government has been economically squeezed, with the West freezing hundreds of millions of dollars in aid unless <u>Hamas</u> recognises Israel's right to exist.

About 5000 Palestinians gathered in the West Bank city of Nablus to make personal contributions. Several <u>women</u> put jewellery in a collection plate, but officials did not say how much money was raised.

Load-Date: May 14, 2006



Letter: Hamas and struggle against theocracy

The Independent (London)
July 13, 2006 Thursday
First Edition

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Section: LETTERS; Pg. 36

Length: 140 words

Byline: DR BRIAN ROBINSON

Body

Sir: Johann Hari (10 July) argues that the Palestinians didn't give <u>Hamas</u> a mandate on the basis that it "is an organisation that loathes <u>women</u>'s rights, believes in the execution of homosexuals, and defends the deliberate targeting of Jewish children". The comparison is overstretched, nevertheless the German people didn't at the start give the Nazi party a mandate to slaughter up to 6million Jews.

Hari may be right that <u>Hamas</u> might have reformed, but is this more than hope? Isn't <u>Hamas</u> only part of an Islamist imperialism that seeks to restore the Caliphate and impose a medieval theocracy? And whatever the rights and wrongs in establishing the state of Israel in the first place, isn't the conflict with the Palestinians now one part of the struggle between a religious totalitarian mindset and liberalism?

DR BRIAN ROBINSON

MILTON KEYNES

Load-Date: July 13, 2006



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR; Women under Hamas

The International Herald Tribune February 27, 2006 Monday

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Section: OPINION; Pg. 9

Length: 162 words

Body

As <u>Hamas</u> begins to shape its government and political agenda, one of its first priorities is to introduce Shariah law with a particular focus on revamping the Palestinian education system. Some <u>Hamas</u> leaders have prioritized separating the boys and girls in the schools.

This would be a bad idea for shaping young Palestinian minds.

Many young <u>women</u> in the Middle East find that their freedom in general and their sexuality in particular are drastically curtailed. <u>Women</u> enjoy neither equal status in society nor equal rights; they are highly vulnerable. <u>Women</u> face legal discrimination in terms of both inheritance and divorce. The lack of <u>women</u>'s rights in many parts of the Arab world means that half of the available human capital is not used, a terrible waste of resources that impedes development.

Greater respect for human rights and the strengthening of <u>women</u>'s rights to make their own decisions is a primary need.

Ewa Bjorling, Stockholm

Member of the Swedish Parliament

Load-Date: February 27, 2006



Reply: Letter and emails: Hamas, Palestine and the prospects for peace

The Guardian - Final Edition
January 30, 2006 Monday

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Section: GUARDIAN LEADER PAGES; Pg. 29

Length: 75 words

Byline: William Shawcross

Body

* In your leader (January 27) you say that <u>Hamas</u> is "best known in Israel and abroad for the suicide attacks it used against its Israeli enemies". This is a description you have used before. You appear to have forgotten that under the laws of war, children and <u>women</u> and other civilians are not legitimately targeted as "enemies". <u>Hamas</u> has murdered many innocent people in brutal crimes against humanity. Why do you not say so?

William Shawcross

London

Load-Date: January 30, 2006



Bomber left Hamas before attack

South China Morning Post April 19, 2006 Wednesday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 8

Length: 152 words

Byline: Abraham Rabinovich

Body

Before setting out on Monday to blow himself up in Tel Aviv, Sami Hammad stood before a video camera with a Koran in his hand and an Islamic Jihad banner behind him saying he was to become a martyr in the Palestinian cause.

His identification with Islamic Jihad was new - but not his readiness to die. He reportedly was a <u>Hamas</u> member, but switched allegiance when that group, honouring its commitment to a ceasefire with Israel, refused to send him on a suicide mission. Some media said he was 16, which would have made him the youngest suicide bomber, but his family said he was 21. Hammad came from a poor family in Al-Araqa village near the West Bank city of Jenin and worked in restaurants in Jenin.

He matched the profile of Palestinian suicide bombers, being a young, single, Muslim male. More than 80 per cent are single, mostly between 18 and 23. The few **women** suicide bombers are an exception.

Graphic

Sami Hammad

Load-Date: April 19, 2006



ISRAELIS CELEBRATE.. .. AS HAMAS DIG IN

Daily Record
June 29, 2006, Thursday

Copyright 2006 Reach PLC All Rights Reserved

Section: NEWS; Pg. 2

Length: 136 words

Body

ISRAELI troops cheered yesterday as they moved back into the Gaza Strip for the first time in 10 months.

They returned to the Palestinian-controlled territory after soldier Gilad Shalit was kidnapped by militants linked to governing party *Hamas* four days ago.

Their fighters began digging in behind makeshift street barricades and sand embankments as Israel demanded Shalit's release.

The Palestinians want women and children to be freed from Israeli prisons.

Tanks took up positions near the Palestinian town of Rafah overnight.

Airstrikes cut the electricity supply to 65 percent of Gaza and bridges were hit.

Prime Minister Ehud Olmert denied Israel wanted to re-occupy Gaza following its unilateral withdrawal last summer.

He said: "We do not intend to stay there. We have one objective and that is to bring Gilad home."

Graphic

TROUBLE AHEAD: Soldiers from Israel cheer after entering Gaza as local militants display weapons AP /GETTY IMAGES

Load-Date: June 29, 2006



Letter: Obstacles to peace in the Middle East

The Independent (London)
February 3, 2006 Friday
First Edition

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Section: LETTERS; Pg. 44

Length: 172 words

Byline: JEREMY COHEN

Body

Sir: The suggestion by Charles Duff (letter, 2February) that Israeli violence is "a thousand times" worse than <u>Hamas</u> is as unhelpful as it is nonsensical. The IDF targets militants and therefore those actively engaged in conflict.

By contrast, deliberate targeting of civilians - men, <u>women</u> and children-by <u>Hamas</u> not only breaches international law, but has the sole aim of spreading fear and increasing tensions throughout the region.

The stated goal of *Hamas* is to destroy the state of Israel and remove the Jews from the land. This explains why each positive step towards peace between the two peoples is met by further violence from *Hamas* and their ilk.

Rewarding a terrorist organisation with funding to support the economy not only sends the wrong message, but treats the symptoms and not the cause. Only peace will improve the Palestinian economy and lead to a removal of checkpoints and roadblocks. The only way to peace is through dialogue. Whilst <u>Hamas</u> refuses to recognise Israel, this is not an option.

JEREMY COHEN

LONDON N3

Load-Date: February 3, 2006



ISRAEL TROOPS ON GAZA BLITZ STANDBY

Daily Record
June 27, 2006, Tuesday

Copyright 2006 Scottish Daily Record & Sunday Mail Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Section: NEWS; Pg. 2

Length: 107 words

Body

ISRAELI forces began massing near the Gaza Strip yesterday - after Palestinian militants holding a soldier demanded the release of prisoners.

Prime Minister Ehud Olmert warned of a "comprehensive and protracted operation" after a raid into Israel on Sunday which saw two soldiers killed and a third - Corporal Gilad Shalit, 19 - kidnapped.

Militants linked to Palestinian ruling group <u>Hamas</u> want the release from Israeli prisons of children under 18 and **women**.

Israeli officials have hinted that if they don't get Shalit back, they will blitz Gaza from the air and target top *Hamas* officials, including Palestinian Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh.

Graphic

MISSING: Shalit PICTURES: AP

Load-Date: June 27, 2006



New union hopes to end sanctions

The Advertiser (Australia)
September 12, 2006 Tuesday
Metro Edition

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Section: FOREIGN; Pg. 24

Length: 138 words

Body

THE ruling <u>Hamas</u> party and moderate Fatah party have agreed to form a coalition government - a move the Palestinians hope will ease crippling international sanctions.

The groups have been negotiating for months to form a coalition, which may soften the militantly anti-Israel stance taken by the current *Hamas*-led government.

"The continuous efforts to form a national unity government have ended successfully with the announcement of a political program for this government," Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas said last night. "Efforts in the next few days will continue to complete the formation of the national unity government."

Meanwhile, a <u>female</u> protester disrupted British Prime Minister Tony Blair during a media conference in Beirut yesterday, accusing him of complicity in the recent Israeli bombardment of Lebanon.

Load-Date: September 12, 2006



Palestinians protest loss of salaries

The Vancouver Province (British Columbia)

May 7, 2006 Sunday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A18

Length: 160 words

Byline: The Associated Press

Dateline: GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip

Body

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip -- Hundreds of Palestinians staged strikes and demonstrations yesterday in the West Bank and Gaza Strip to demand payment of overdue salaries to government workers -- one of the first

public signs of discontent with the *Hamas*-led cabinet's handling of a growing financial crisis.

Until now, the Palestinian public had heeded calls for patience, largely following the government in blaming the crisis on western hostility to *Hamas*.

Yesterday, however, teachers at five schools in the West Bank city of Hebron cancelled classes.

In Nablus, also in the West Bank, hundreds of Palestinian government workers demonstrated to demand their salaries.

"If this government can't function, it has to think carefully about its people and change its political way of thinking," said Sheik Majed Dwikat, a local religious leader.

About 150 people, mostly **women** and children, rallied in the Gaza city of Rafah, criticizing the government for the growing hardship.

Load-Date: May 7, 2006



Gaza pullback is temporary, Israelis say

St. Louis Post-Dispatch (Missouri)

July 29, 2006 Saturday

SECOND EDITION

Copyright 2006 St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Inc.

Section: NEWS; Pg. A27

Length: 186 words

Byline: THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dateline: GAZA CITY, GAZA STRIP

Body

Israeli tanks and troops pulled back to the Israel-Gaza border Friday after a military operation that killed 30 Palestinians over three days. The army said the withdrawal was temporary and did not mean its monthlong offensive in the Gaza Strip was over.

Palestinians streamed out of their homes, inspecting their battered houses and vehicles while rescue workers searched for bodies underneath rubble as militants picked up mines and explosives they had planted to hit Israeli tanks.

Palestinian officials said they had not received a response to their demand that Israel guarantee that it will free <u>women</u>, children and long-serving Palestinian prisoners before an Israeli soldier seized by Gaza militants is released.

The Israeli, Cpl. Gilad Shalit, 19, was captured by <u>Hamas</u>-linked guerrillas in a raid into Israel on June 25. The attack prompted the latest Israeli attacks in the Gaza Strip.

Dr. Salah Bardawil, a senior <u>Hamas</u> official, said Israel's refusal to guarantee that it would release any Palestinian prisoners if Shalit were freed created a stalemate.

Shalit is believed to remain held by Palestinian militants.

Load-Date: July 29, 2006



<u>NEWS</u>

The Mirror

June 7, 2006 Wednesday

3 Star Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 2 **Length:** 178 words

Body

HAMAS GIVEN 48 HRS OVER ISRAEL

PALESTINIAN president Mahmoud Abbas last night gave the hardline <u>Hamas</u> government 48 hours to recognise Israel or face a referendum on the issue. Polls suggest Palestinians would support the vote, leading towards talks to create a Palestinian state.

STOLEN LIBRARY BOOKS ON NET

A LIBRARY worker has been arrested after rare books turned up on eBay. A user told police who found the books one worth pounds 20,000 - from Manchester Central Library at his Hulme home.

UNI LECTURERS END PAY BUST-UP

UNIVERSITY lecturers last night ended months of industrial action which hit student exams. They agreed a pay deal which will be worth 13.1 per cent over three years.

pounds 14M HOLE AT STANDARDS UNIT

FRAUD squad officers have found a pounds 14million missing from South Yorkshire Trading Standards. The figure is double that feared after its boss Michael Buckley, 54, died from a heart attack.

THRILLER HEELS

ONE in five <u>women</u> find the buzz of buying a pair of shoes better than sex - with ankle boots, knee high boots and stilettoes the favourites.

Load-Date: June 7, 2006



<u>NEWS</u>

The Mirror

January 31, 2006 Tuesday

2 Star Edition

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Section: FEATURES; Pg. 2

Length: 189 words

Body

DEMO TO STOP ATTACK ON FREE SPEECH

THOUSANDS of protesters are expected at Westminster today to oppose a proposed law banning incitement to religious hatred. Supporters, including MPs, religious groups and comedian Rowan Atkinson, say it attacks free speech and want to widen its limits.

VALENTINE'S DAY SPENDING SPREE

MEN will spend twice as much as <u>women</u> on Valentine's Day gifts. They spend pounds 44.63 on average, pounds 800million across the UK, but nine out of ten don't realise their partner is expecting a proposal, said a survey by Visa.

HAMAS TOLD TO AXE TERRORISM

THE European Union and US President George Bush called on the new ruling Palestinian party <u>Hamas</u> to recognize Israel, renounce violence and disarm. The EU threatened cuts in aid if the demands were ignored.

BLAIR DEFEAT ON ID WATCHDOG

GOVERNMENT plans to restrict the independence of the identity cards watchdog were defeated last night when the Lords blocked plans to let the Home Secretary appoint the watchdog.

NUCLEAR FISHIN'

FISHERMEN landed hundreds of fish per day by casting a net over a powerful water intake at Hinkley Point B nuclear power station, Somerset

Load-Date: January 31, 2006



Reply: Letters and emails: Shelling beaches prospects for peace

The Guardian - Final Edition
June 12, 2006 Monday

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Section: GUARDIAN LEADER PAGES; Pg. 33

Length: 194 words **Byline:** Joe Zacune

Body

The indiscriminate killing of Palestinians, including <u>women</u> and children, on a beach in Gaza that was "regretted" by the Israeli government, has led to the end of the 16-month truce by <u>Hamas</u> militants (Death on the beach, June 11). What would the international response have been to a Palestinian shell killing Israeli civilians picnicking on a beach in Tel Aviv? These killings come in the context of the brutal Israeli military occupation that has restricted food and medical supplies, relentlessly shelled the densely populated Gaza Strip, constructed a 450-mile separation wall and expanded the illegal settlements in the West Bank.

The UK has only worsened the suffering of Palestinians by backing the EU's suspension of vital aid to the Palestinian Authority in response to the democratic election of the <u>Hamas</u> government. Yet our government has strengthened diplomatic ties, continued its military aid and given Israel preferential trading access. Tomorrow Tony Blair will be giving the Israeli prime minister, Ehud Olmert, the red-carpet treatment during his London visit. Despite the killings in Gaza, Olmert can expect a very warm welcome.

Joe Zacune

London

Load-Date: June 12, 2006



Letter: Short ponts - IF blowing innocent

Liverpool Daily Echo
August 17, 2006, Thursday
Main Edition

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Section: LETTERS; Pg. 20

Length: 55 words

Body

IF blowing innocent <u>women</u> and children to bits is not an act of terrorism, then I don't know what is. It is no different to Hezbollah and <u>Hamas</u>. It is all evil and Judgement Day is yet to come.

It is always the innocent that pay the price for the evil-doers at the top, who make sure that they are well protected. D J Jones, Belle Vale

Load-Date: August 17, 2006



NEWSTRACKER | UPDATES ON CONTINUING STORIES

St. Louis Post-Dispatch (Missouri)

June 16, 2006 Friday

THIRD EDITION

Copyright 2006 St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Inc.

Section: NEWS; Pg. A1

Length: 76 words

Body

NOW HEAR THIS New study finds that blacks and <u>women</u> have keener sense of hearing. Nation | A2 BRIBERY INVESTIGATION Democrats vote to strip Rep. Jefferson of committee post. Nation | A3 MINE SAFETY As accident survivor watches, President Bush signs overhaul measure. Nation | A3 <u>HAMAS</u> OFFER Palestinian group says it is willing to resume cease-fire with Israel. World | A10 CAROLINA ROOTS Michael Jordan returns as part owner of the Charlotte Bobcats. Sports | D7

Load-Date: June 16, 2006



Exchange prisoners

The Gazette (Montreal)

June 29, 2006 Thursday

Final Edition

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Section: EDITORIAL / OP-ED; Pg. A22

Length: 88 words

Byline: The Gazette

Body

Re: "Israel readies troops," (Gazette, June 27.)

What is stopping Israel from releasing Palestinian <u>female</u> and underage prisoners held in Israeli jails, in exchange for Cpl. Gilad Shalit, a captured 19-year-old tank gunner.

It would be great if the release on both sides were followed by the recognition of Israel by the democratically elected <u>Hamas</u> government.

The lifting of economic sanctions against the Palestinian Authority and restarting peace talks between Israel and Palestine should follow immediately.

Hussain Syed

Brossard

Load-Date: June 29, 2006



PALESTINIANS FLATTENED

Daily Record
July 1, 2006, Saturday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 2

Length: 98 words

Body

PALESTINE'S interior ministry lay in ruins yesterday after Israel intensified its bombing campaign.

More than 30 targets were hit in 24 hours, forcing the Palestinian government to stay indoors or send decoy convoys before travelling by car.

Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh and other ministers fear they will be assassinated.

The bombings were part of Israel's campaign to force the release of Corporal Gilad Shalit, kidnapped by <u>Hamas</u>-linked militants six days ago.

They have refused a Palestinian offer to exchange Shalit for <u>women</u> prisoners, instead pouring tanks and troops into southern Gaza.

Load-Date: July 1, 2006



Israel shuns soldier deal

The Sun (England)
June 27, 2006 Tuesday

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Length: 104 words

Body

ISRAEL has rejected demands by militants that it free Palestinian <u>women</u> and children from jail in exchange for information on a kidnapped soldier.

PM Ehud Olmert also threatened a "severe" retaliation unless Cpl Gilad Shalit, 19, is returned.

The tank gunner was captured on Sunday in a raid by militants on the Gaza border.

The armed wing of Palestine's ruling <u>Hamas</u> party refused to help Israel find him unless 400 <u>women</u> and children are freed.

But Olmert said: "We won't be a target of terrorist blackmail."

Israel's retaliation could include a re-invasion of Gaza, which it withdrew from last year after a 38-year occupation.

Load-Date: June 27, 2006



Isn't retaliation justified?

UK Newsquest Regional Press - This is Lancashire

August 31, 2006 Thursday

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Section: LETTERS Length: 107 words

Byline: Telegraph letters

Dateline: Lancashire Evening Telegraph

Body

A LETTER in the LT (July 27) said: "Israel didn't start this conflict.

Hezbollah and *Hamas* did by capturing Israeli soldiers."

Israel has been capturing hundreds of Palestinian and Lebanese civilians over the lat few years, including many **women** and children, and keeping them in prison without trial.

So surely if your letter writer can justify Israel bombing Lebanon and Gaza in response to three of their nationals being kidnapped, you can't argue against the other side doing the same when hundreds of civilians are captured.

Or is an Arab civilian's life worth a lot less than an Israeli soldiers?

ERSKINE MORRIS, Pleckgate Road, Blackburn.

Load-Date: August 31, 2006



Saudis are in no position to preach

National Post (f/k/a The Financial Post) (Canada)

January 31, 2006 Tuesday

National Edition

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Section: LETTERS; Pg. A13

Length: 87 words

Byline: Adam Green, National Post

Body

Re: Hamas Faces The Task Of Governing, Jan. 28.

I find it quite curious that Saudi Arabia feels it has a say on the practices of democracy in Europe and North America. Whether it is protesting the content of a newspaper in Denmark, or else demanding recognition of "the will of the people" in the Palestinian territories, I suggest Saudi Arabia stop offering its opinion on what is appropriate. Instead, let's ask the *women* and minorities who live and work in Saudi Arabia if their will is heard.

Adam Green, Sherbrooke, Que.

Load-Date: January 31, 2006



Isn't retaliation justified?

UK Newsquest Regional Press - This is Lancashire

August 5, 2006 Saturday

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Section: LETTERS Length: 107 words

Byline: Telegraph letters

Dateline: Lancashire Evening Telegraph

Body

A LETTER in the LT (July 27) said: "Israel didn't start this conflict.

Hezbollah and *Hamas* did by capturing Israeli soldiers."

Israel has been capturing hundreds of Palestinian and Lebanese civilians over the lat few years, including many **women** and children, and keeping them in prison without trial.

So surely if your letter writer can justify Israel bombing Lebanon and Gaza in response to three of their nationals being kidnapped, you can't argue against the other side doing the same when hundreds of civilians are captured.

Or is an Arab civilian's life worth a lot less than an Israeli soldiers?

ERSKINE MORRIS, Pleckgate Road, Blackburn.

Load-Date: August 5, 2006



Letter: Briefly ... - Different song

The Independent (London)

April 17, 2006 Monday

First Edition

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Section: LETTERS; Pg. 28

Length: 113 words **Byline:** P J LYNCH

Body

Sir: If it is true that belly-dancing has been taken up with such gusto in the West by "feminists who love its celebration of the natural <u>female</u> body", as Joan Smith says ("<u>Hamas</u>, and the sexual power of real <u>women</u>", 7 April), then can we also expect a revival of "The Birdy Song" with flocks of old birds collectively jerking their turkey necks and flapping their bingo wings, complete with hairy armpits and unshaven legs? And will these same feminists, who love the natural <u>female</u> body so much, also make it a principle to boycott makeup and perfume? Or is this feminist celebration conditional on them making themselves sexually attractive to superficial men?

P J LYNCH

SWANSEA

Load-Date: April 17, 2006



<u>Israelis snub ultimatum</u>

Daily Mail (London)
July 4, 2006 Tuesday

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Section: 1ST; Pg. 8 Length: 138 words

Body

PALESTINIAN militants who abducted an Israeli soldier yesterday gave Israel less than 24 hours to release prisoners.

Israeli prime minister Ehud Olmert rejected the ultimatum and his defence chief said Israel would 'know how to reach everyone responsible' if Corporal Gilad Shalit was harmed.

Three factions previously demanded Israel free 400 Palestinian <u>women</u> and youths in return for information about Cpl Shalit, who was abducted on June 25. The groups subsequently demanded Israel free 1,000 Palestinian prisoners.

The militants warned that 'the enemy will bear full responsibility for future consequences' if the demands were not met.

Mr Olmert's spokesman said: 'The government of Israel will not yield to the extortion of the Palestinian Authority and the *Hamas* government, which are led by murderous terrorist organisations.'

Load-Date: July 4, 2006



Militants issue new demands

Telegraph Herald (Dubuque, IA)

July 1, 2006 Saturday

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Section: BUSINESS; Pg. c10

Length: 132 words

Byline: ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dateline: GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip

Body

The Palestinian militants holding an abducted Israeli soldier issued new demands early today, calling for a halt in Israel's military offensive in Gaza and the release of 1,000 prisoners from Israeli jails.

The demands were laid out in a joint statement by the militant wing of the ruling <u>Hamas</u> party, and two smaller militant groups, the Popular Resistance Committees and the Army of Islam. The three groups have claimed responsibility for Sunday's abduction of Cpl. Gilad Shalit in a cross-border raid.

The statement also repeated an earlier demand for the release of all Palestinian <u>women</u> and minors held in Israeli prisons in exchange for information about Shalit.

As with its earlier demand, Saturday's statement did not promise to release the soldier. Israel has ruled out any prisoner swap.

Load-Date: July 1, 2006



Gaza strike is imminent warns Israel

The Evening Standard (London)
June 27, 2006 Tuesday

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Section: A MERGE; Pg. 17

Length: 145 words

Byline: KIRAN RANDHAWA

Body

ISRAEL have threatened a punishing offensive in the Gaza Strip after rejecting demands by Palestinian militants to release Palestinian prisoners in return for information on an abducted Israeli soldier.

Palestinian militants called on Israel to release Palestinian <u>women</u> and youths in return for information about Corporal Gilad Shalit, kidnapped by gunmen on Sunday.

With tensions on the Israel-Gaza frontier rising, militants fired rockets into southern Israel late on yesterday, wounding four people, the Israeli army said.

In northern Gaza, Palestinians began blocking roads with mounds of earth as Israeli armour massed on the other side of the border.

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert warned: "The time is approaching for a comprehensive, sharp and severe Israeli operation. We will not wait forever."

"We will not become a target of *Hamas*-terrorist blackmail," he said.

Load-Date: June 27, 2006



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR; Lebanon and Israel

The International Herald Tribune July 27, 2006 Thursday

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Section: OPINION; Pg. 7

Length: 150 words

Body

The writer of the editorial, "Playing <u>Hamas</u>' game" (July 18), sitting in the comfort of New York, has all the good theories. But if that writer sat here in my town, Haifa, under constant threat of terrorist attacks, the editorial would probably have more reasonable ideas and less theory.

If we look back in history, when the Nazis sent rockets into London and other British cities, Churchill sent the RAF to obliterate German cities. German television still often shows the state of the devastation while claiming that mostly innocent <u>women</u> and children were killed. When the World Trade Center was attacked, the United States obliterated Afghanistan, killing many terrorists. And the United States was ready for world war three when the Cuban missile crisis erupted.

When Israel tries to defend itself by attacking the towns that hide terrorists and their missiles, why is it a crime?

Ari Sperling, Haifa

Load-Date: July 27, 2006



Olmert promises 'broad' offensive after kidnapping

The Guardian (Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island)

June 27, 2006 Tuesday

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Section: WORLD; Pg. B9

Length: 161 words

Byline: AP

Body

With troops poised to invade Gaza, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert on Monday ruled out bargaining with the captors of an Israeli soldier and promised a "broad and ongoing" military offensive.

But large-scale army action appeared unlikely. Officials said they were pursuing a diplomatic solution and conceded that a broad attack would threaten the life of the 19-year-old hostage captured Sunday.

After more than 24 hours of silence, the militants claiming to hold Cpl. Gilad Shalit issued their first demands Monday. The groups, linked to the <u>Hamas</u>-led Palestinian government, said Israel should release all imprisoned Palestinian <u>women</u> and children under 18 in return for information about Shalit.

Olmert rejected the demand. Addressing Jewish leaders in Jerusalem, he charged that the Palestinian attack on an army post at a Gaza crossing and the abduction of the soldier were part of a "murderous, hateful, fanatical Islamic extremist desire to destroy the state of Israel."

Load-Date: June 27, 2006



PICK OF THE DAY

The Independent (London)
September 30, 2006 Saturday
Final Edition

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Section: FEATURES; Pg. 56

Length: 165 words

Body

The Amazing Mrs Pritchard 9pm BBC1

Jane Horrocks stars as a supermarket manager who decides to become an MP after a number of less than impressive performances outside her shop by local politicians.

Steven Mackintosh and Jodhi May co-star in this comedy-drama.

Horizon 9pm BBC2

Anew run of the science documentary series begins with an investigation into how to survive a plane crash, and reveals that improvements in science and technology now mean that the majority of crash victims live to tell the tale.

This World 9.50pm BBC2

An examination of life under Palestine's <u>Hamas</u> government as seen through the eyes of Mahmood, a charming and enterprising 12-year-old boy who supports his family by selling tea in Gaza's biggest hospital.

Diary of a Mail-order Bride 10pm C4

Adocumentary following Russian <u>women</u> seeking foreign husbands, and vice versa. Among their slightly sad number are a 22-year-old from Siberia who speaks no English, engaged to a 46-year-old London man who speaks no Russian. PCo

Load-Date: September 30, 2006



Israeli forces renew attacks in Gaza Strip

St. Louis Post-Dispatch (Missouri)

July 29, 2006 Saturday

THIRD EDITION

Copyright 2006 St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Inc.

Section: NEWS; Pg. A27

Length: 170 words

Byline: THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dateline: GAZA CITY, GAZA STRIP

Body

Israeli tanks pushed back into the Gaza Strip before dawn today, a day after ending a military operation that killed 30 Palestinians over three days.

Seven tanks crossed just over Gaza's northern border, Palestinian security officials said.

The Israeli army had said its withdrawal Friday was temporary and did not mean its monthlong offensive in the Gaza Strip was over.

Israeli forces today also attacked a site on the Gaza-Egypt border where militants had been tunneling, the army said. Palestinian officials said electric cables had been destroyed in the attack, knocking out power to the nearby town of Rafah.

Palestinian officials said they had not received a response to their demand that Israel guarantee that it will free <u>women</u>, children and long-serving Palestinian prisoners before an Israeli soldier seized by Gaza militants is released.

The Israeli, Cpl. Gilad Shalit, 19, was captured by <u>Hamas</u>-linked guerrillas in a raid into Israel on June 25. The attack prompted the latest Israeli attacks in the Gaza Strip.

Load-Date: July 29, 2006



Reply: Letters and emails: Little space left for Israels critical friends

The Guardian - Final Edition
July 28, 2006 Friday

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Section: GUARDIAN LEADER PAGES; Pg. 35

Length: 184 words **Byline:** Paul Usiskin

Body

The response to your poll on Israel's overreaction (July 25) was predictable: champions for or against Israel, some reasoned, some hysterical. It seems there is hardly anywhere for moderates - critical supporters of Israel - to go. Israel is a democracy and is measured as such, but the same measure is not applied to Hizbullah and <u>Hamas</u> as terrorist organisations. But the evidence grows daily that too many innocent Lebanese have suffered the consequence of Israel's reply to Hizbullah's attack. And Israel bears the brunt of your poll, even though Israel's citizens too are targets. Israeli deaths are still deaths, even though their numbers are less. There is no question that the whole of civilian north Israel is under daily attack and there are fears that Hizbullah has the ability to strike deeper.

Hizbullah calculated the martyrdom of <u>women</u> and children and increased its likelihood by apparently placing weapons and caches in civilian concentrations. Where is the poll that condemns Hizbullah? As the Israeli song puts it: "Things you see from there you can't see from here."

Paul Usiskin

Peace Now UK

Load-Date: July 28, 2006



Begin freeing Palestinians prisoners

The Vancouver Province (British Columbia)

July 4, 2006 Tuesday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A9

Length: 197 words

Byline: The Associated Press

Dateline: GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip

Body

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip -- Militants gave Israel 24 hours to begin releasing hundreds of Palestinian detainees, implying they would kill an abducted Israeli soldier if their demands were not met.

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert rejected any negotiations with the militants, and the army pressed ahead with its Gaza offensive. Privately, though, some Israeli officials said the government had not ruled out any options to win Cpl. Gilad Shalit's freedom.

Israel has pounded Gaza with air strikes and artillery shells for nearly a week in an unsuccessful effort to force the militants to release Shalit. Israel sent a small force of tanks into northern Gaza yesterday, raising fears it was gearing up for a large invasion.

After Shalit was seized in a June 25 raid on an army post that left two comrades dead, his captors demanded Israel free all imprisoned Palestinian **women** and minors. They later demanded the release of a further 1,000 prisoners.

If Israel doesn't comply, "we will consider the soldier's case to be closed," a Hamas military wing statement said.

Killing Shalit, however, would remove their only leverage against Israel and would invite far harsher reprisals against Gaza.

Load-Date: July 4, 2006



Letter: YourSay - Karren's views so naive

Birmingham Evening Mail August 7, 2006, Monday Worcs Edition

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Section: LETTERS; Pg. 46

Length: 187 words **Byline:** Carol Yarm

Body

I AM appalled by what I feel is a biased column by Karren Brady about the Middle East (Mail, July 30).

Karren's little knowledge is a dangerous tool and she should not comment without knowing her facts, not the truth according to Hezbollah.

Unfortunately, innocents do get caught up in conflict and there are plenty of Israeli children who have suffered over a number of years from rockets aimed at their homes, over 300,000 families have had to move from their homes in the Northern part of Israel.

I do not hear that Hezbollah drop leaflets to warn Israelis to leave before they fire their missiles.

There is more to Qana than we know. Why were <u>women</u> and children left there? Where were their husbands, firing missiles at Israel perhaps?

Hezbollah work in wicked ways and Karren should not be hoodwinked into their convincing propaganda.

Hezbollah and <u>Hamas</u> are terrorists, they indoctrinate their children with hate, unless this is changed, the next generation fights on, they do not want peace only conflict.

Israel has a difficult job and Karren's comments are naive given the complexity of the politics.

Carol Yarm, Edgbaston

Graphic

INNOCENT VICTIM... a civil defence worker carries a child's body from the rubble of Qana.

Load-Date: August 7, 2006

Letter: YourSay - Karren's views so naive



The New York Times
June 30, 2006 Friday
Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2006 The New York Times Company

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

Length: 880 words

Body

INTERNATIONAL A3-11

Hamas Leaders Are Seized As Israel Hits Gaza From Air

Israeli troops seized 64 members of <u>Hamas</u> in the West Bank, including a third of the Palestinian cabinet and 23 legislators, a move that Israeli officials said marked a significant change in Israel's policy toward the <u>Hamas</u> government. A1

With the seizure of senior <u>Hamas</u> officials and its military hunkered down, Israel appeared to delay a ground incursion into Gaza, but it continued to hit Palestinian territory with artillery fire.

Α8

Shanghai's Graying Population

Shanghai, while known as youthful and vigorous, also has the oldest population in China, and it is getting older. Experts say the city is leading one of the greatest demographic changes in history. A1

Bush Warns North Korea

President Bush, after meeting with Japan's prime minister, warned North Korea that Japan would not be "held hostage to rockets" and called it "unacceptable" for the North to test a long-range missile. A6

U.S. to Support Exiled Somalis

The Bush administration will work to bolster the security troops of Somalia's government in exile in the hope of marginalizing the Islamic militias now controlling much of the country, an American official said. A10

New Bin Laden Tape

A new recording purportedly of Osama bin Laden tells President Bush that "we will continue to fight you and your allies everywhere" and warns Iraqi civilians that they may be killed if they support the Americans. A9

Congress Condemns Data Leak

The House of Representatives condemned the recent disclosure of a classified program to track financial transactions and called on the media to help keep such efforts secret. A4

NATIONAL A12-21

Plan for Military Tribunals Is Rejected By Justices

The Supreme Court repudiated the Bush administration's plan to put Guantanamo detainees on trial before military commissions, ruling broadly that the commissions were unauthorized by federal statute and violated international law. A1

The Supreme Court upheld Arizona's limited approach to the insanity defense, ruling that states are not obliged to permit a defendant to argue that mental illness prevented him from forming the requisite intent to commit a crime. A19

Lost Laptop Is Recovered

The government has recovered a stolen laptop and an hard drive that contains birthdates and Social Security numbers for millions of veterans and military personnel, the Department of Veterans Affairs said. A12

Ex-Governor of Alabama Guilty

A jury convicted the ex-governor of Alabama, Don E. Siegelman, and a former chief executive of HealthSouth, Richard M. Scrushy, of conspiracy in a bribery scheme. A14

EDUCATION

College Leader Remembered

Thousands remembered Denice D. Denton, the chancellor of the University of California, Santa Cruz, who shocked the university by apparently jumping to her death from a 43-story building in San Francisco. A14

SCIENCE/HEALTH

Panel Backs Vaccine for Girls

A federal vaccine advisory panel voted unanimously to recommend that all girls and <u>women</u> ages 11 to 26 receive a new vaccine that prevents most cases of cervical cancer. A12

NEW YORK/REGION B1-6

Floodwaters Recede To Reveal Destruction

A day after a nexus of swollen rivers spilled their banks in some of the worst floods the Mid-Atlantic states have seen in nearly 50 years, the waters slowly started to recede. But trouble did not go with them. A1

City Graduation Rates Rise

Joel I. Klein, left, the New York City schools chancellor, reported strong graduation numbers at 15 of the new small high schools that are a centerpiece of Mayor Bloomberg's effort to revamp the school system. The chancellor also said last year's on-time graduation rate was the highest in more than two decades. B1

Freedom Tower Customs Office

Governor Pataki said the United States Customs and Border Protection agency intended to return to the World Trade Center and occupy nearly one-quarter of the Freedom Tower. B3

SPORTSFRIDAY D1-7

Tour Looks for New Champion

Not since Lance Armstrong emerged from cancer treatment in 1999 and embarked on a record-breaking string of seven straight victories has the Tour de France offered such a wide-open field of contenders, with increased intrigue over who might prevail rather than how Armstrong will make his opponents succumb. D1

OBITUARIES B9

Johnny Jenkins

A left-handed guitarist who influenced Jimi Hendrix, he was 67. B9

BUSINESS DAY C1-12

Fed Outlook Raises Stocks

The Federal Reserve raised interest rates for the 17th time in a row, but kicked off a powerful celebration in the stock market by lowering its alarms about inflation. A1

Questions on Apple Options

Apple Computer said that it had uncovered irregularities related to stock options awarded between 1997 and 2001, which raises questions about whether a grant made to Steven P. Jobs was properly disclosed. C1

Clearing the Air With Roses

In an experiment in the Netherlands involving millions of roses, Royal Dutch Shell is testing a new way to limit emissions of carbon dioxide, illustrating a shift in the oil industry's strategy. C1

Business Digest C2

EDITORIAL A22-23

Editorials: A victory for the rule of law; Africa must push on Darfur; the floods of June; Carolyn Curiel on the land of mermaids.

Columns: Thomas L. Friedman, Judith Warner.

Crossword: E23 TV Listings: E24 Weather: D8

http://www.nytimes.com

Graphic

Load-Date: June 30, 2006



Börsebericht; Warten auf die Zinsentscheidung

Die Presse

29. Juni 2006

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Length: 2982 words

Body

Im Vorfeld einer am Mittwoch begonnenen zweitägigen Sitzung der US-Notenbank Fed, in deren Verkauf es zu einer Erhöhung der US-Leitzinsen kommen könnte, machte sich an den Weltbörsen ziemliche Nervosität breit. Aber keine wirkliche Panik: Nach relativ starken Verlusten in Asien präsentierten sich die europäischen Börsen am Nachmittag freundlich. Die US-Märkte eröffneten am Nachmittag ebenfalls im Plus. Im Verlauf drehten dann freilich alle wichtigen Märkte ganz leicht ins Minus.

Nicht so gut halten konnte sich Wien, wo der ATX im Tagesverlauf unter der Wasserlinie unterwegs war. Daran war der einstige Börsenstar Betandwin nicht ganz unschuldig: Nachdem sich herumgesprochen hatte, dass Morgan Stanley 650.000 Aktien des Wettenanbieters platzieren will, sackte der Kurs um gut 6,5 Prozent ab. Auch Andritz-Papiere gaben deutlich nach, was Händler auf einen "technischen Schwächeanfall" zurück führten. Und während Ölwerte europaweit zulegten, kamen sie in Wien unter die Räder: OMV gab wegen Gewinnmitnahmen nach.

Die europäischen Börsen erhielten Auftrieb, nachdem positive Nachrichten über die Fusion der Stahlkonzerne Mittal und Arcelor verbreitet wurden.

RZB: Ein Kursrutsch steht noch bevor

Aktien. Im August könnte Einstieg günstig sein.

Wien (b. l.). Während der Kurskorrekturen an den internationalenBörsen in den vergangenen Wochen haben viele Anleger ihr Geld zurückgezogen und sitzen jetzt auf Barbeständen. Mit dem Wiedereinstieg in Aktien sollte man es aber noch nicht allzu zu eilig haben. Glaubt man dem Chefanalysten der Raiffeisen Zentralbank (RZB), Peter Brezinschek, dürften die Kurse im Sommer noch einmal einbrechen und möglicherweise die heurigen Tiefststände erreichen.

USA: Geringes Wachstum, hohe Inflation

Schuld ist die flauere US-Konjunktur. Wenn die US-Unternehmen ihreHalbjahreszahlen bekannt geben, hat das Einfluss auf die Börsen in aller Welt. In den vergangenen Jahren war es auch die gute US-Konjunktur, die den deutschen DAX in die Höhe getrieben hat. "Die deutsche Wirtschaft wurde ja krank gejammert", stellt Helge Rechberger, Leiter der RZB-Aktienanalyse, fest. Die Anzeichen, dass die US-Wirtschaft abflaut, mehren sich: Häuserpreise und Konsumnachfrage purzeln angesichts steigender Zinsen, ein Ende des Zinsanhebungszyklus ist

Börsebericht Warten auf die Zinsentscheidung

noch nicht in Sicht. Die Beschäftigung in den USA wächst kaum noch, die Unternehmensinvestitionen, die in den vergangenen Jahren jährlich um acht bis zehn Prozent gewachsen sind, können das nicht kompensieren. Ab dem dritten Quartal des heurigen Jahres dürfte in den USA die Kerninflation (Teuerung ohne Energie und Nahrungsmittel) mit drei Prozent über dem Wirtschaftswachstum von 2 bis 2,5 Prozent zu liegen kommen, fürchten die Analysten. Sie gehen daher davon aus, dass viele US-Unternehmen bei der Bekanntgabe ihrer Halbjahreszahlen, die in den kommenden Wochen anstehen, ihre derzeit sehr optimistischen Gewinnprognosen für die 2006 und 2007 revidieren. Die Börsen hätten das bereits zum Teil im Mai und im Juni vorweggenommen. Im August könnte es wieder gute Einstiegsgelegenheiten auf den Aktienmärkten geben: Zum einen sei dann absehbar, wie lange die US-Notenbank Fed noch an ihrer Zinserhöhungspolitik festhält. Zum anderen würden dann auch die wirtschaftliche Erholung in Europa und Japan spürbarer und die Anleger zuversichtlicher.

Kursschwankungen auch im Herbst

Weiter müsse man aber mit starken Kursschwankungen rechnen. Die RZBempfiehlt den Einstieg in "defensive" Werte (Konsumgüter, Gesundheit) sowie - wegen der steigenden Preise - in Energiewerte. Nach dem Sommer könnten auch Rohstoffe interessant werden. Eher die Finger lassen sollte man von Industrie-, Telekom- und Technologiewerten.

Zur PERSON und ZUM WERK. Dan Diner und das Sakrale

Der Historiker und Politologe Dan Diner (*20. 5. 1946 in München)leitet seit 1999 das Simon-Dubnow-Institut für Jüdische Geschichte und Kultur an der Uni Leipzig. Diner, der in Deutschland und Israel lebt, lehrt ferner Neuere Geschichte an der Hebräischen Universität Jerusalem und wurde durch sein Werk zu den Themen Nationalsozialismus, israelisch-palästinensische Beziehungen, jüdische und arabische Geschichte bekannt. Mitte Juni erhielt er den Ernst-Bloch-Preis der Stadt Ludwigshafen. Im aktuellen Werk "Versiegelte Zeit. Über den Stillstand in der islamischen Welt" (Propyläen-Verlag, Berlin) konstatiert er eine zivilisatorische Entwicklungsblockade der islamischen Welt, die er vor allem der Omnipräsenz von Religion, Sakralem und kulturell-theologischer Tabus zuschreibt. In Wien hielt Diner vorigen Mittwoch die Eröffnungsrede zur Konferenz "Europe and the Mediterranean - Inclusion and Diversity"; sie wurde vom Österreichischen Institut für Internationale Politik" in Kooperation mit der "Presse" organisiert.

"Es ist beides: Demütigung und Befreiung"

Von CHRISTIAN ULTSCH

Die Presse: Trotz Globalisierung wird der Graben zwischen dem Westen

und der islamischen Welt immer tiefer. Ist das, jetzt einmal abgesehen von der Aufregung um Terror und Anti-Terror, nicht erstaunlich bis absurd?

Dan Diner: Die wachsenden Antipathien sind eine Folge derGlobalisierung. Wenn Menschen aus verschiedenen Kulturen näher zusammenrücken, wird der Blick für Unterschiede größer. Das führt auch zu Verzerrungen, es verfestigt Vorurteile. Derlei Einstellungen haben einen langen kulturellen Vorlauf und waren in der Zeit des Kalten Krieges ruhig gestellt, wie alle Unterschiede damals neutralisiert waren, auch in Europa.

Wenn die wachsenden Konflikte mit Nähe zusammenhängen, dann müssten

sie in Migrationsgesellschaften besonders ausgeprägt sein.

Diner: Nicht jede Migrationsgesellschaft lässt sich mit eineranderen vergleichen. Es bestehen erhebliche Unterschiede zwischen den USA und Europa. Europa ist eine Traditionsgesellschaft, deren Gedächtnis historisch aufgeladen ist, während die USA ethnische und religiöse Herkünfte einebnen. Europa ist mehr Herkunft, Amerika mehr Zukunft. Europa fällt es schwerer, Einwanderer zu integrieren. Ein Grund ist die Diversität Europas selbst. Deshalb wird hier Identität groß geschrieben. Für Einwanderer ist das nicht unbedingt erbaulich.

Börsebericht Warten auf die Zinsentscheidung

Die Konfrontation der arabischen Welt mit dem Westen begann nicht erst gestern. Warum ist sie im Moment derart zugespitzt?

Diner: Das hat sowohl mit geschärfter Wahrnehmung als auch mitverschärften Umständen zu tun. Seit dem Zusammenbruch der Sowjetunion und dem Verfall des Kommunismus steht der Westen der islamisch-arabischen Welt direkt gegenüber. Die Sowjetunion hatte früher eine Rolle als Vermittler der Moderne eingenommen, sowohl organisatorisch als auch technologisch. Teile der arabischen Welt hatten in der ersten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts die Perspektive des klassischen Nationalismus, des Sozialismus. All das ist weggebrochen. Die Knautschfläche zwischen der Hyper-Moderne des Westens und der arabisch-islamischen Welt ist geringer geworden.

Islamismus war für viele die Alternative zum Sozialismus. Hat der

Westen versagt, weil er kein Ersatzangebot gestellt hat?

Diner: Der Westen hat den arabisch-islamischen Kulturraum langevernachlässigt, ihn nur unter dem Gesichtspunkt von Ressourcen betrachtet. Es stellt sich aber die Frage, ob die Friktionen, die sich heute offenbaren, früher eingetreten wären, wenn der Westen sich interessierter an der arabischen Welt gezeigt hätte. Denn es ist kaum möglich, westliche Vorstellungen von Moderne direkt zu übertragen. Die Menschen dort müssen schon ihre eigene Moderne entwickeln, und sie werden das unter Schmerzen kultureller Art zu ertragen haben.

Welche kulturellen Schmerzen meinen Sie da konkret?

Diner: Den Schmerz der Säkularisierung und der Profanisierung. DasSakrale ist ein Hemmnis für die Modernisierung der arabisch-islamischen Gesellschaften. Ich spreche hier nicht von Religion, Theologie oder Ritus. Unter dem Sakralen verstehe ich ein Tabu, das in fast in allen arabischen Lebensbereichen anzutreffen ist. Europa hat sich seit der frühen Neuzeit massiv mit dem Sakralen auseinander gesetzt. Ich erwähne da nur den Beginn der Renaissance, die Erfindung des Buchdrucks, die Reformation, schließlich die Entdeckung der Neuen Welt, die den Westen regelrecht revolutioniert hat. Die arabisch-islamische Welt hat diese Entwicklungen nicht nachvollzogen. Sehen Sie Anzeichen einer Ent-Sakralisierung in der arabischen Welt? Diner: Ich würde sagen, dass sogar der Fundamentalismus ein Ausdruck von Ent-Sakralisierung ist, insofern, als der Fundamentalismus ein modernes Phänomen ist, eine Reaktion auf die Moderne. Die arabischen Debatten haben, wenn auch sehr zaghaft, den Charakter dessen, was man in der Deutschen Geschichte unmittelbar nach der Reichsgründung 1871 durch Bismarck als Kulturkampf bezeichnet hat. Doch sehen wir viel zu stark nur die eine Seite, die das Sakrale noch verschärfen will, die Islamisten. Die andere Seite vergessen wir.

Könnte also der Islamismus bloß ein Übergangsphänomen auf dem Weg zu modernen Demokratien sein?

Diner: Islamismus ist ein Übergang, aber ein sehr gefährlicher,sowohl für den Westen als auch für die arabische Welt. Die Frage ist, wie lange man so ein Phänomen erträgt.

Sie sagten, die Araber müssten die Moderne schon aus eigener Kraft schaffen. Betrachten Sie das neokonservativleninistische Konzept einer kriegerischen Initialzündung für die Demokratisierung des Nahen Ostens als gescheitert?

Diner: Es ist vielleicht zu früh, das zu beurteilen. Es könntenämlich sein, dass ein Unternehmen, das von aller Welt befürwortet wurde, nämlich Afghanistan, scheitert, während die Intervention im Irak letztlich erfolgreich sein könnte. Wenn man Iraker fragen würde, ob sie für das Vorgehen der Amerikaner sind, würden sie sagen: Natürlich nicht. Wenn man sie dann fragt: Soll das alles ungeschehen gemacht werden, dann sagen sie: Nein, nein. Es gibt eine sehr starke Ambivalenz, die auch mit einem Element der Scham einhergeht, dass es nämlich eine westliche Macht war, die den Diktator gestürzt hat.

Der Irak-Krieg wirkte also demütigend und befreiend zugleich.

Diner: Er ist beides: kulturelle Demütigung und politischeBefreiung. Je stärker jemand säkularisiert ist, desto mehr wird er sich auf das Politische stützen. Die Ablehnung des Westens ist auch von hoher Ambivalenz geprägt, man möchte so leben wie im Westen, deswegen gibt es auch die Migration in den Westen hinein.

Die Skala des Islamismus ist breit. Wo ordnen Sie die palästinensische

Hamas ein?

Diner: Die <u>Hamas</u> ist im Wesentlichen eine nationalistischepalästinensische Bewegung mit einer starken islamistischen Orientierung. Sie ist nicht al-Qaida, die eine internationale muslimische oder islamistische Orientierung hat. Die <u>Hamas</u> ist territorial auf Palästina bezogen, und sie wird sich den Nöten und Bedürfnissen der Palästinenser zuwenden müssen.

Kann es ein Einvernehmen zwischen Israel und der *Hamas* geben?

Diner: Es gibt große Spannungen innerhalb der <u>Hamas</u>. Aber insgesamtglaube ich, dass es zwischen Israel und <u>Hamas</u> zu einer Regelung kommen kann. Die ausdrückliche Anerkennung Israels ist für die <u>Hamas</u> nicht verträglich. Für sie ist ganz Palästina "waqf" - heiliger Boden, der Staat Israel als solcher ist nicht legitim. Ich glaube aber nicht, dass Israel sich auf diese Frage kaprizieren sollte. Denn für Israel ist es wichtig, Ruhe zu haben. Ein langfristiger, über Generationen dauernder Waffenstillstand, ist für Israel ausreichend. Man muss ja nicht in die Seele des Partners hineinschauen, sondern wichtig ist, wie er handelt.

DEUTSCHE SYNCHRONISATION

26 Sprach-Fassungen gibt es von "Over the Hedge", zu den nach denOriginal-Sprechern animierten Figuren versuchen sich als deutsche Stimmen u. a. Götz Otto (als Waschbär Bruce Willis) und Ben Becker (als Bär Nick Nolte).

Schnell den Bären füttern!

Von CHRISTOPH HUBER

Gäbe es eine Quote für computergenerierte Filme über lustige Tiere

mit Stimmen und Gestik berühmter Schauspieler, dann hätte sie Hollywood allein in den letzten fünf Jahren überschritten. Dass sich Ab durch die Hecke, das neue einschlägige DreamWorks-Produkt, trotzdem als kleiner Freudenbringer qualifiziert, verdankt sich einer kleinen Verweigerung der Fließbandnatur des Genres.

Seit 2001 mit dem Welterfolg von Shrek klar wurde, dass es im Wesentlichen genügt, Popkultur-Zitate und Furzwitze aneinander zu hängen, solange man den sprechenden Esel nach Eddie Murphy modellieren kann, rief eine ganze Armada von animierten Familienfilmen eine Eiszeit der Erzählung aus: Zwischen dem Unterwasserreich von Finding Nemo und Madagascar regierte zwar sichtlicher technischer Fortschritt, aber auch Faulheit im Erzählen. Der typische Mix aus Filmreferenzen (für die Begleitpersonen) und Slapstick (für alle Altersklassen) funktionierte blendend als Gemeinschaftszeitvertreib, auch weil er die Gag-Dichte von Hollywoods Echtfilmen locker ausstach.

Die Geschichte vom Fast-Food-Raubzug

Insofern angenehm, als Ab durch die Hecke tatsächlich eine

Geschichte erzählen will. Genau genommen zwar zweimal dieselbe, aber immerhin: Ein verschlagener Waschbär hat den Essensvorrat eines winterschlafenden Bären zerstört und muss ihn unter Todesandrohung ersetzen. Also wird eine Gemeinschaft argloser Parktiere motiviert, in der menschlichen Siedlung rundherum auf Fast-Food-Raubzug zu gehen. (Und noch einmal, als die Beute zerstört wird.)

Die Grundsituation ist wie im Pixar-Klassiker Toy Story, der 1995 eine tatsächlich dreidimensionale Animations-Renaissance versprach, die nur in Ansätzen (von Toy Story 2 und den Filmen von Incredibles-Regisseur Brad Bird) eingelöst wurde: Der Waschbär als frecher Neuling wie einst Buzz Lightyear, eine vorsichtige Schildkröte als Parktier-Anführer, quasi Cowboy Woody.

Börsebericht Warten auf die Zinsentscheidung

Rundherum hat sich das Regieduo Tim Johnson und Karey Kirkpatrick ausnahmsweise Mühe gegeben, Standardsituationen wirklich zu parodieren und nicht nur nachzustellen, dazu clevere, wenn auch nicht immer originelle Witz-Nebensachen eingestreut: Die Vorbereitung eines Raubs wird zur absurd endlosen Fallen-Litanei, ein zufällig vorbeifliegendes Glühwürmchen leuchtet als Ideen-Glühbirne über dem Kopf. Die besten Gags sind so gleichmäßig verteilt, dass es den Eindruck durchgehender Erheiterung weckt. Sogar die zwei großen Filmzitate sind so klassisch - Endstation Sehnsucht, Citizen Kane - , dass man sich fast im Bildungsbürgertum wähnt.

Shatners Shakespeare-Scheintode

Dass der Film auf einem populären Zeitungscartoon basiert, in dem auch

schon die Relativitätstheorie diskutiert wurde, merkt man aber nur daran, dass die Aussage letztlich relativ wurscht ist: Antikonformistische und Öko-Botschaft-Ansätze werden schließlich vom unvermeidlichen Bekenntnis zum (Ersatz-)Familienglück geschluckt.

Verstärkt ist dafür die Annäherung an den Echtfilm, in den Figuren wie im Visuellen. Der Waschbär ist zuallererst ein spitzbübischer Bruce Willis, der Bär ein mürrischer Nick Nolte und William Shatner spielt als viele Shakespeare-Scheintode sterbendes Opossum alles in Grund und Boden, jedenfalls im Original Over the Hedge, das auch die Schauspieler bezeichnenderweise nicht mehr nur als Stimmen ankündigt. Und für den mit animierten Schärfenwechseln und Traumsequenzen garnierten Blick über die Hecke braucht es dann nichts weniger als die große Kamera-"Kranfahrt" in die Höh'.

Ashton Kutchers Unterwäsche

Bruce Willis und Jeffrey Katzenberg hetzen auf PR-Tour durch Europa.

Vom absurden Gastspiel in Wien.

Bruce Willis sei kein Frühaufsteher, hieß es. Also: erst nach MittagGroßgruppen-Interviews mit dem Hollywood-Star und DreamWorks-Animation-Chef Jeffrey Katzenberg vorm gemeinsamen Auftritt zur Wien-Premiere von Over the Hedge am Dienstagabend. Gegen 15 Uhr hat es Willis dann (eine Stunde Verspätung!) aber schon eilig. Forsch grüßt er: "Fragen Sie im Reinkommen, wir wollen noch die Stadt sehen!"

Was ist jetzt mit Sex ab 50?

"Welche Tiere haben Sie in der Hecke?", stößt ein Kollegegeistesgegenwärtig hervor. Willis zählt wahllos auf: Elch, Igel, . . . Beim Eichhörnchen freut er sich, kichert, sagt es noch einmal. Eine Dame nutzt die Atempause: "Ich bin von einem Frauenmagazin . . . - "Fantastisch!", kontert Willis, vergebens. "In der Zeitung haben Sie gesagt, dass Sex ab 50 besser wird, weil man es nicht mehr so eilig hat. Willis: "Das habe ich gesagt?" Sie nickt hoffnungsvoll. Willis verneint: "Ein Gerücht. Gleich die Nächste: "Ist es wahr, dass Sie Ashton Kutchers Unterwäsche tragen?" Willis schüttelt resigniert den Kopf, Katzenberg lenkt ein: "Wie wär's, wenn wir über den Film reden, meine Damen?" Sofort hält Routine Einzug. Willis: "Ich wollte immer einen Animationsfilm machen, etwas, das meine Kinder auch sehen können. Katzenberg: "Wir brauchen gute Schauspieler, stark im Improvisieren. Bruce ist einer der besten. Er erklärt: Die Sprecher werden bei der Aufnahme gefilmt - als Basis fürs Animieren. "Die Technologie ist der größte Freund des Künstlers geworden. Ein Dutzend Spezialisten bei DreamWorks arbeitet bis 2009 buchstäblich nur am Entwickeln der Technik für den Film How to Train Your Dragon. Einige Reporter sind abgelenkt: Willis ist kurz draußen. Aber: "Keine Sorge, Bruce ist zurück, um noch Fragen über Unterwäsche zu beantworten!" Themenwechsel scheint angeraten: Wie gefällt Willis Wien? Weiß er noch nicht, er muss ja erst die Interviews geben. Seine Patchwork-Familie? Läuft alles super. Hat Over the Hedge eine Botschaft? Katzenberg verneint rasch: "Wir wollen nur eine gute Geschichte erzählen!" (Willis nickt.) "Besonders in Europa fragt man das immer wieder, aber wir wollen nur Leute zum Lachen bringen. (Willis murmelt einmütig mit.) Schnell, letzte Frage! Das Frauenmagazin: "Welchen Frauentyp finden Sie heiß?" Da freuen sich Willis und Katzenberg einmütig: "Sehr konsistent, fragt immer nach Sex!" "Das Magazin heißt sicher Sex for Women!", meint Willis, antwortet aber brav: "Sie muss Sinn für Humor haben. Dann droht er seinen zu verlieren, als neue Frager hereinströmen: "Das kann doch nicht wahr sein, noch zwei Gruppen, es hieß, das sei die letzte!"hub

Load-Date: June 28, 2006



Canberra Times (Australia)
July 27, 2006 Thursday
Final Edition

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Section: A; Pg. 16 Length: 985 words

Byline: The Canberra Times

Body

Hard to be unbiased Those criticising Robert Fisk's reports on Lebanon might not know that he walked through the Shatila and Sabra Palestinian refugee camps in 1982.

Fisk saw what the Israeli Army's ally, the Lebanese Christian Phalange, had done while the army looked on.

I defy anyone to be totally unbiased after walking among hundreds of dead women and children.

There will be no peace until voters force politicians to accept killing civilians is always a war crime, whether you do it with a suicide belt or by pulling the trigger of your F16 jet, Apache helicopter or M16 rifle.

It is a war crime when you order civilians to flee then blow up the roads and bridges they try to escape on or you target their minibus which is their only means of escape.

It is not anti any religion to discuss the war crimes committed in the name of that religion - be it Christian, Jewish, Muslim or other.

The Middle East tragedy is endless because extremists and key leadership figures on both sides refuse to accept the right of the other to live. Rod Olsen, Flynn As far wrong Hezbollah is in killing civilian Israelis, equally distant is Israel from having right on its side.

Peace will not come to the Middle East until enough are blind toothless and have no choice left other than to put down their gun. David Grant, Murrumbateman, NSW The United Nations finally got it right.

Hezbollah are cowards who hide among civilians and it is they, and only they, who are responsible for all civilian deaths on both sides of the border. I just wish the "peace" protesters could get it right also.

Mike Lankuts, Gilmore Australia's silence on the destruction of Lebanon and Gaza is a disgrace.

Along with the international community, Australia has a responsibility to protect civilians of whatever nationality caught up in the conflict.

The Federal Government must find its voice in support of an immediate ceasefire by Israel, Hezbollah and *Hamas*, and UN brokered negotiations.

Intensive bombing and rocketing of civilian areas and the rapidly rising death toll of <u>women</u> and children on both sides is no recipe for peace.

More likely it will breed another generation of hatred and retribution.

Australia must support for UN intervention and a negotiated settlement.

Action on UN Security Council resolution 1559 (2004) calling for disarming of Hezbollah and <u>Hamas</u> is urgent but so too is long overdue action on UNSC resolution 242 (1967) which remains "the basis for every state in the region to live in peace".

The root cause of today's conflict lay in the failure of the international community to implement resolution 242. Israel's continued occupation of territories won in conflict, expansion of settlements on Palestinian land, the erection of the apartheid wall in the West Bank and recognition of the democratically elected Palestinian Government (with time for *Hamas* to review its policy on Israel) must all be addressed if a just and lasting peace is to be achieved.

Russell Rollason, president, United Nations Association of Australia (ACT) Clive Williams claims ("Hezbollah cannot be destroyed", July 25, p13) that, since 2000, Hezbollah has been attacking Israel to pressure Israel into giving up occupied Lebanese territory, and that Israel will eventually have to negotiate on the issue of occupied Lebanese land.

In fact, as the United Nations has certified, Israel withdrew from all Lebanese land in 2000.

The so-called disputed area, the Sheba'a farms, was part of Syria before Syria lost it, together with the Golan Heights, in Israel's defensive war in 1967.

Only Hezbollah, Syria and Lebanon maintain it is Lebanese land, so Hezbollah has a pretext for continuing to attack Israel.

Mr Williams also accuses both sides of war crimes.

While Hezbollah targets civilians, Israel targets Hezbollah and tries to avoid civilian casualties.

These casualties happen largely because Hezbollah shelters itself among the civilians, but this is a war crime by Hezbollah, not by Israel.

Alan D. Shroot, Forrest 'Surplus' humans According to new reports, Germany is seeking an EU ban on stem-cell research funding.

Germany's memory of genetic experimentation, all in the name of medical research of course, during the dark days of the Nazi regime, is one reason it opposes embryonic stem-cell research.

Then, as now, those killed during those medical experiments were considered useless/surplus humans, so let them be put to some useful purpose before they die. As a result the world rose as one to condemn those responsible for this disregard of human life.

Maybe Brent Howard (Letters, July 23) would subscribe to the idea of making use of all those prisoners in our gaols deemed "never to be released".

They are useless/surplus so why not put them to some use, all in the name of medical research of course, with the additional benefit of saving the taxpayer money for their life-long upkeep.

P. Robinson, Holt Brent Howard (Letters, July 24) suggests that "destructive embryonic research", involving the killing of embryos, does not harm them.

A reasonable question in response to that proposition would be: "What kind of harm is greater than killing?"

It is a reminder that what is being killed is full of inherent potential by virtue of its being, and that the potential to live, grow and develop is part of what it means to be a living human being.

The argument that embryos "have never been sentient" would, if accepted by society, not augur well for adults and children who, because of serious accidents or genetic predispositions, have a much- decreased level of sentiency, or would be - like persons in a coma - not sentient at all.

In view of the scientific fact that stem cells can be harvested in a non- destructive fashion from adults, a preoccupation with destructive embryonic research makes no sense.

Last but not least: it's a scientific fact, not religious dogma, that embryonic beings are human beings. Henk Verhoeven, Beacon Hill, NSW

Load-Date: July 26, 2006



The Advertiser (Australia)

August 1, 2006 Tuesday

State Edition

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Section: OPINION; Pg. 17

Length: 667 words

Body

QUESTION:

Israel's killing of 54 Lebanese civilians, including 37 children, in a single airstrike has brought criticism from within and outside the Arab world. What are your views of the conflict?

Israel's WMD

IT seems as if the weapons of mass destruction which George Bush, Tony Blair and John Howard could not find in the Middle East were really there. Israel had them all, including a host of nuclear weapons, most with "Made in USA" stamped on them.

I was disgusted to see Jewish children writing messages of hate on the huge cannon shells which were being fired indiscriminately into Lebanon.

It is no wonder that the Israelis are so hated in the region when they drive their armoured Caterpillar D9 dozers across the borders of their neighbours and raze the houses of mostly innocent people, while their troops shoot innocent **women**, children and men working in the fields.

How would we feel if that happened in our country? I think even the most peace-loving of us would want to retaliate in some way.

The United States, which appears to be controlled by a pro-Israeli lobby, seems hell-bent on controlling the buildup of arms in other countries in the vicinity of Israel.

* JAMES CALDERWOOD,

Port Lincoln.

Kind people

I THINK people are basically the same the world over. That is, reasonably respectful and kindly disposed towards those around them.

Four months ago, while at a bus stop in Jerusalem, I got talking with an Israeli woman. When I told her I was from Australia, she said her parents lived in the northern city of Haifa (now besieged by Hezbollah), and I would be welcome to visit and stay with them for a few days if I liked.

Although I wasn't able to take up the offer, my point is that it would be a pity if the average Israeli citizen was seen in the same light as the country's impatient and impulsive military leaders.

* ROGER SIMPSON,

Vista.

Real problem

IT is regrettable that more countries (and the United Nations) do not have the courage and resolve of Israel to deal with terrorist groups, such as Hezbollah and <u>Hamas</u>.

If that were the case, maybe we would not live in fear of events such as 9/11, Bali, London, Madrid and Beslan.

I sincerely hope the rest of the world can wake up some time soon and not be misguided by propaganda of the terrorist groups and their self-interested sponsors.

The events mentioned above have a common theme. Can you guess? The problem is not Israel.

* GIOVANNI ZOANETTI,

North Adelaide.

No viable solution

ISRAEL continues to receive much condemnation and yet no viable offer of an alternative solution for the way it tackles terrorism in its own backyard.

Placing disproportionate blame on Israel continues to be the popular path to take, including by some (who should know better) seeking to establish their left-wing credentials.

Many have called for an unconditional ceasefire, but this would only be a prelude to the next war, since militarised groups such as Hezbollah and *Hamas* have vowed to annihilate Israel, even if any occupation of land were to end.

Unfortunately, Israel's critics seem unable to distinguish between those who deliberately target innocent civilians and those who inadvertently kill civilians in the process of trying to prevent more terrorist attacks. While both acts are wrong, they are not morally equivalent and to not distinguish between the two is to live in a world of moral nihilism.

Israel is damned if it does and will be destroyed if it doesn't.

* SERGEI SAVENKOFF,

Parkside.

Innocent victims

THE horror now being inflicted on the innocent people of Lebanon cannot be called "self-defence", not when one bomb dropped on one house can wipe out more than 54 civilians, 37 of them children.

Let us not forget that the entire casualty toll for Israel is 51 and only 18 of them are civilians.

While we whine about the price of bloody bananas, interest rate rises and whether or not eggs are really free-range, people, just like us, are being murdered by other people with no discernible cause or motive.

* MARILYN SHEPHERD,

Kensington.

Load-Date: July 31, 2006



Canberra Times (Australia)

July 18, 2006 Tuesday

Final Edition

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Section: A; Pg. 8

Length: 1197 words

Byline: The Canberra Times

Body

Proportion relative Your criticism of Israel's so called "disproportionate response" (Editorial, July 17) is what I'd expect of an armchair critic living in comfortable middle class Canberra - probably one of the most peaceful capitals on the planet.

Imagine then, cowering in your north Canberra lounge room with your children while Kassam rockets landed about you at random and without warning, fired by an implacable foe in Bungendore who is dedicated to your destruction. And that this practice would continue relentlessly regardless of what you do or say. I doubt you would stop to consider what might be a "proportionate" response.

Israel has shown incredible restraint against an enemy which says it does not want peace at all if it means living with a Jewish state.

Despite this, Israel drops leaflets warning civilians as well as the enemy to take cover before it bombs.

Those who died after a missile attack in Haifa were never given a warning and are not likely to get them. Israel's response has been exceptionally restrained compared to what it could do.

Hezbollah and <u>Hamas</u> have declared war, so why should Israel be proportionate just because the maniacs who have declared war on them don't possess the same military might?

If the shoe was on the other foot, do you think Hezbollah and *Hamas* would be proportionate?

Will you consider it proportionate if Hezbollah and <u>Hamas</u> actually manage to kill just as many Israelis with a direct hit in high population centres?

This will finish when no more rockets are being fired across the border into Israel and when the terrorists hand back the soldiers they kidnapped.

Stuart Cohen, Watson No, Brent Howard (Letters, July 17), police in Australia would not blow up an entire street to block a dangerous criminal gang.

However, if the latter had access to bazookas and other rocket-type destructive gadgets, it would be reasonable for the police to demand assistance from the air; while nearby buildings and innocent citizens could be affected, such outcome would not be the intent.

In December 1942, about 100 British bombers were deployed to destroy part of the Philips works in the Dutch city of Eindhoven. Many bombs missed their targets and destroyed the city's oldest shopping street, and partly destroyed a hospital and a church; well over 100 Eindhoven citizens lost their lives.

The bombardment did not result in a hate or smear campaign against the Brits. However, the German bombardment of Eindhoven on September 19, 1944, the day after it had been liberated, was a different kettle of fish: for several hours, Luftwaffe Heinkel bombers were able to drop bombs virtually unassailed, the obvious aim being to destroy as much of the city and kill as many citizens as possible.

Reasonable people will see the bombardments by Israeli planes as being directed at "enemy targets", and at installations which are of strategic interest to the Hezbollah and similar groups. Israel is not at war with the people of Palestine and Lebanon.

Henk Verhoeven, Beacon Hill, NSW Keep TV ad-free Re Jack Waterford's thoughtful article ("Media and markets", Panorama, July 15) most people I talk to in my rather elderly age group watch commercial TV sparingly or not at all.

It is produced mostly for the young in mind and apart from its excellent sporting coverage has little to recommend it. The incessant advertising is self-defeating and a reason why DVD's are getting such a market share.

What sends shivers up our collective spines is the commercialisation by stealth of SBS and most probably the ABC.

As an instance I would select SBS's The Cutting Edge. It gains its impact from developing themes. This loses its effectiveness with commercial breaks.

The Government should use its surplus to keep our funded television free from advertising and preserve its excellence.

Howard Carew, Curtin Treasury design It was heartening to read the report ("Treasury chief urges cautious approach to current account deficit policy", July 12, p15) that Dr Ken Henry had acknowledged the three policy levers of fiscal, monetary and wages policy had failed in cutting the current account deficit and any government wanting to use such policies should be aware that "they might fail, or worse, dramatically slow the economy". His observation assumes that these policy instruments are used to slow the economy. But the current account deficit could be eliminated if 6 per cent of national spending were shifted from imports to domestic products.

Such a shift would not only eliminate the current account deficit, it would raise incomes and increase the rate of economic growth.

Engineering such an outcome does require more than simplistic text book solutions. However, it should be within the design capability of the Treasury.

Leigh Harkness, Queanbeyan RU-486 debate Penelope Gosling appears to have a problem with open debate and informed choice in relation to the abortion drug RU-486 ("Despite progress there's still a way to go", July 17, p9).

Although Parliament decided in February that any decision about its importation should be made by the Therapeutic Goods Administration rather than the health minister, no application has been made to the TGA for its general distribution in Australia.

Ms Gosling puts this down to her usual suspects: the health minister, myself as president of the ACT Right to Life Association, and any others who might vilify the use of the abortion drug RU-486.

She is obviously annoyed that Australia is still well behind in the provision of medical abortion services.

What is not said is that Australia is also fortunate in that the wide community debate preceding Parliament's decision, including Senate committee hearings, made available to the community well-documented information on the growing number of deaths and emergency hospital admissions attributable to this drug in other countries.

In particular, Australian <u>women</u> won the opportunity to look critically at this so-called safe, easy way to abort themselves.

Moves by the US Congress to ban the drug, for example, have made doctors less ideologically committed than Professor Caroline Da Costa rightly wary of prescribing it.

Ms Gosling imagines all sorts of demons blocking any applications to the TGA for the approval of RU-486 for general distribution. Why does she not ask the drug companies to explain their failure to make applications? Is she reluctant to expose their probable answer? Perhaps they believe in informed choice: the growing body of adverse information about the drug is a distinct disincentive for those who would invest in it.

The debate is not over and it was never framed to publicise the Right to Life argument. As a medical student you would be well advised to study the literature.

Kath Woolf, president, ACT Right to Life Association Sun smart at last Yay, finally the Government is making a good decision even if it is riding on the other states' coat tails, bringing daylight saving forward to the start of October. This gives the kids the school holidays to get used to the changes and it stops them from rising with the sun at 5.30. Mr Stanhope may win back some support from families if he goes with the other states.

Karen Coleman, Kambah

Load-Date: October 11, 2011



Meldungen

SonntagsZeitung

5. Februar 2006

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SonntagsZeitung

Section: Nachrichten; Wie bitte?; S. 11

Length: 391 words

Body

Hoffnung auf Glückslos brachte den Tod

MANILA · Eine Massenpanik vor einem Stadion in der philippinischen Hauptstadt hat gestern mindestens 74 Menschen das Leben gekostet. Auf dem Gelände hatten rund 30 000 Menschen darauf gewartet, Karten und Lose für eine TV-Gewinnshow zu ergattern. Als aus noch ungeklärten Gründen Panik ausbrach, wurden viele am geschlossenen Tor erdrückt.

Massendemonstration gegen Shinawatra

BANGKOK · In der Hauptstadt Thailands haben gestern mindestens 60 000 Menschen gegen Ministerpräsident Thaksin Shinawatra demonstriert. Thaksins Familie hatte vergangene Woche ihre Mehrheitsbeteiligung am Telekommunikationskonzern Shin an eine staatliche Gesellschaft aus Singapur verkauft und sich Steuerfreiheit für den Erlös «organisiert».

Erste Gespräche über Regierungsbildung

GAZA CITY · Der palästinensische Präsident Mahmoud Abbas hat gestern erstmals seit ihrem Wahlsieg mit der <u>Hamas</u> über die Bildung einer neuen Regierung gesprochen. Es wurde vereinbart, dass das neue palästinensische Parlament am 16. Februar zum ersten Mal zusammentreten soll.

Ikone des Feminismus gestorben

WASHINGTON · Im Alter von 85 Jahren ist Betty Friedan, eine Pionierin des Feminismus, gestorben. Ihr Buch «Der Weiblichkeitswahn», 1966 auf Deutsch erschienen, war für die Frauenbewegung der späten Sechziger- und der Siebzigerjahre in den USA und Europa wegweisend. Friedan war Mitgründerin der National Organization of *Women* in den USA.

Polizei verhaftet Schatzräuber

MADRID · Die spanische Polizei hat drei mutmassliche Unterwasser-Schatzräuber verhaftet. Wie gestern mitgeteilt wurde, waren die zwei Ungarn und eine Amerikanerin schwer bewaffnet und mit modernstem Hightechgerät ausgerüstet, darunter ein Unterwasserroboter im Wert von rund 600 000 Euro.

Meldungen

«Do Swidanje, Mister Smith»

CAPE CANAVERAL · Die Besatzung der Internationalen Raumstation ISS hat einen alten Raumanzug entsorgt, indem sie ihn mit andern nutzlos gewordenen Sachen ausstopfte und ins All stiess. «Auf Wiedersehen, Herr Smith», verabschiedete der russische Kosmonaut Waleri Tokarew den Anzug, der in eine Erdumlaufbahn einschwebte und verglühen wird.

Raser kam leicht verletzt davon

LOS ANGELES · 13 Menschen wurden verletzt, als ein Sportwagen mit Tempo 145 in den Eingang einer Klinik in Los Angeles schleuderte. Der 33-jährige Fahrer des Wagens wurde leicht verletzt.

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The New York Times
February 27, 2006 Monday
Late Edition - Final

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Section: Section E; Column 6; The Arts/Cultural Desk; Pg. 8; WHAT'S ON TONIGHT

Length: 390 words

Body

9 P.M. (NBC) THE APPRENTICE -- Season premiere. While Donald Trump's epistolary exchange with Martha Stewart (she blamed him for her "Apprentice" spinoff's failure; he said the show was dreadful) is in the news, Mr. Trump brings 18 shiny new job candidates together. Their 15-week competition begins with a marketing project for Sam's, the members-only warehouse business. This season Mr. Trump's children Donald Jr. and Ivanka (above, with their father, at an awards ceremony in October) get into the act.

8 P.M. (Discovery Times) <u>HAMAS</u>: BEHIND THE MASK -- This documentary looks into the history and long-term goals of the radical Islamic political party that won the recent Palestinian elections.

9 P.M. (CBS) TWO AND A HALF MEN -- Mia (Emmanuelle Vaugier) has been around for four episodes now as the notorious womanizer Charlie's girlfriend. But Charlie (Charlie Sheen) is growing tired of all the healthy habits she's brought into his life. Time for cigars, beer and burgers in the garage.

9 P.M. (Fox) 24 -- "Day 5: 4 P.M.-5 P.M." The first lady (Jean Smart, left), who has a history of mental instability, decides to take matters into her own hands. Jack (Kiefer Sutherland), our counterterrorist hero, comes face to face with the federal agent (Peter Weller) who got him into this line of work.

9 P.M. (ABC) THE BACHELOR: PARIS -- Season finale. The two <u>women</u> still being considered by Dr. Travis Stork go shopping (gowns at Escada, engagement rings at Chopard) with their mothers, who have flown over for the big announcement. Six of Dr. Stork's relatives have come to Paris to meet the two remaining candidates, Moana and Sarah S., and they seem to have a preference.

10 P.M. (NBC) MEDIUM -- Little Bridget (Maria Lark) is having talks with her favorite author, who is dead. Her mother, Allison (Patricia Arquette), the increasingly troubled psychic, turns paranoid and begins imagining meetings with government agents.

Didn't "A Beautiful Mind" do this?

10 P.M. (13) PAUL McCARTNEY: CHAOS AND CREATION AT ABBEY ROAD -- Sir Paul (below), 63, goes back to the London

recording studio that the Beatles made famous and does a "Great Performances" concert for a small audience. The old stuff

includes "Blackbird" and "Band on the Run." The really old stuff includes "Twenty Flight Rock" and "Heartbreak Hotel." ANITA GATES

http://www.nytimes.com

Graphic

Photos (Photo by Evan Agostini/Getty Images)

(Photo by Joe Viles/Fox)

(Photo by Richard Haughton)

Load-Date: February 27, 2006



Canberra Times (Australia)
July 19, 2006 Wednesday
Final Edition

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Section: A; Pg. 10 Length: 1130 words

Byline: The Canberra Times

Body

Enough of blood We "show restraint", it seems, by killing 10 children, not 100. We "minimise civilian casualties" by killing 100 children, not 1000. We "make a disproportionate response" by bombing the generators that power the humidicribs that keep scores of infants breathing, and the bridges over which the ambulances bring pregnant <u>women</u> to hospital.

We don't call it "mass murder", "massacre", "serial killing" or "the slaughter of the innocents" though this is what Israel is up to, surely, in the Gaza and Lebanon.

For approving the killing of 142 innocent people, Saddam Hussein and others will hang. Ehud Olmert's total of innocent dead has this last week passed 170. When it reaches 200 will he, and Peres and Peretz hang? Or would that be "disproportionate"?

A crime as large as the Beslan massacre, or the Bali bombing, and three times as large as the London underground bombings, is being applauded by George W. Bush's UN bully John Bolton and his roving blitherer Condoleezza Rice, and a billion Muslims, including those who were lately "responded" into chunks of meat, are taking note of their arrogant stupidity.

"Enough of blood, enough," Yitzak Rabin roared 10 years ago. The kidnappings, murders, torture cells, big lies and biblical bombast of his successors shame his people. A just UN would try them in The Hague.

How many hundred dead children is "disproportionate response"? How many dead children a war crime? And who gets the naming rights?

We should think of these things.

Bob Ellis, Palm Beach, NSW Henk Verhoeven (Letters, July 18) defends Israel's recent military action by implying that it is not intended to harm civilians.

However, what matters is not intentions but the suffering inevitably being caused.

The reported death toll among Palestinians and Lebanese is already over 250, with at least a third being non-militants. This compares with aggregate Israeli deaths of about 25.

The Israeli Government's disproportionate actions have caused more hardship in three weeks than terrorist attacks have produced in Israel over a much longer period.

The destruction of transport links, power supplies, fuel deposits, offices and homes has impacted on numerous ordinary citizens. The mass exodus from Beirut and other areas illustrates the fear and distress being experienced by the regular population.

Brent Howard, Rydalmere, NSW Paul Rodgers (Opinion, July 15) asks why Israel acts as a "law" unto itself.

As a former diplomat to that country, I thought he would have known that after serving there, the Jewish State has been dealing with Arab terrorism from its inception.

Israel didn't ask Hezbollah, or even <u>Hamas</u> (or should we say a collective of Iran/Syria) to kidnap any of its soldiers, but as always it is seen as the aggressor. It is amazing how the world sees Israel when all it is doing is defending its people.

Jonathan Swimmer, Queens Park If Israel's occupation is the root cause of the current Middle East violence, as Kathryn Kelly argues (Letters, July 17), why is it that the attacks from Gaza and Lebanon happened after Israel ended its occupation of these areas?

The violence isn't because <u>Hamas</u>, Hezbollah and their allies object to Israel's "occupation"; they object to Israel's existence in any shape.

Kathryn may be interested in the following: for the millions of Christian Lebanese, driven out of our homeland, "Thank you Israel," is the sentiment echoing from around the world.

The Lebanese Foundation for Peace, an international group of Lebanese Christians, made the following statement in a press release to Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert concerning the latest Israeli attacks against Hezbollah: "We urge you to hit them hard and destroy their terror infrastructure.

"It is not [only] Israel who is fed up with this situation, but the majority of the silent Lebanese in Lebanon who are fed up with Hezbollah and are powerless to do anything out of fear of terror retaliation.

"On behalf of thousands of Lebanese, we ask you to open the doors of Tel Aviv's Ben Gurion Airport to thousands of volunteers in the Diaspora willing to bear arms and liberate their homeland from [Islamic] fundamentalism.

"We ask you for support, facilitation and logistics in order to win this struggle and achieve together the same objectives: Peace and Security for Lebanon and Israel and our future generations to come."

Bill Arnold, Chifley Artists need help The resignation of Sydney Dance Company directors Graeme Murphy and Janet Vernon reflects a peculiar mix of success and failure - while Australia has produced a number of incredibly exciting and innovative dance creators, the art form itself remains severely under-resourced.

The departure of Murphy and Vernon simply underlines the unsustainable nature of trying to survive as a creative artist in this country.

As smaller dance companies disappear and independent choreographers struggle to make a living, there has still been no action taken by the Federal Government to address the recommendations in the 2004 report Resourcing Dance: an analysis of the subsidised Australian dance sector.

Unsustainable funding models lead to the inevitable - a lack of capacity to support development, and burnout and frustration in some of our most talented creators, many of whom live well below the poverty line.

Australia can ill afford to lose the immense contribution these artists make to our lives, to our economy and to our identity.

Australian dance - at all levels of creation and performance - will never be able to sustain the talents of its artists unless there is the political will to address these issues, and soon. Julie Dyson, national executive officer, Australian Dance Council - Ausdance Inc, Braddon Playing monopoly In Jack Kershaw's expected brave new world he laments the prospect of Terry Snow and Bob Winnel building extravagant housing developments in future (Letters, July 18).

Of course there's only one reason Terry, Bob and the Queanbeyan Council are so interested in suburban development now. It is because the Stanhope Government has for years been trying to maintain its monopoly over land availability in the ACT, in order to maximise its land sale prices.

By expensively trickling land onto the ACT market, it got the high prices but produced those tiny streets and blocks in Gungahlin and a Canberra- wide housing boom that saw prices rise like Sydney waterfront.

So now parts of Gungahlin are destined to become ghettos and our kids have no chance of affording housing (or even rent, when it catches up fully) for the foreseeable future.

Oh, and Terry and Bob and the Queanbeyan Council will keep trying to make a quid undermining the ACT land monopolist. In response Stanhope is turning regional water powers into the stick to bash Queanbeyan into submission.

Hugh Thomas, Reid

Load-Date: October 11, 2011



The New York Times

January 19, 2006 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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

Length: 1173 words

Body

INTERNATIONAL A3-12

Top Qaeda Members Said Killed in U.S. Airstrikes

Two senior Qaeda trainers and the son-in-law of Al Qaeda's No. 2 leader, Ayman al-Zawahiri, were among those killed in the American airstrikes in remote northeastern Pakistan last week, two Pakistani officials said. A1

36 Bodies Found in Iraq

The bodies of 36 massacred Iraqis were found in two villages north of Baghdad, Iraqi officials said. Many of the dead were identified as police recruits from the largely Sunni Arab city of Samarra. A3

Nod to Darwin From Vatican City

The official Vatican newspaper published an article this week labeling as "correct" the recent decision by a judge in Pennsylvania that intelligent design should not be taught as a scientific alternative to evolution. A12

Kim Jong II Traveled to China

Chinese and North Korean state media simultaneously announced that the North Korean leader, Kim Jong II, had completed an eight-day clandestine visit to China that was notable for his focus on China's booming economy and for the enigmatic air of secrecy that enshrouded his every move. A8

U.S. Abuse Is Called Deliberate

Human Rights Watch asserted that the Bush administration had undertaken a deliberate strategy of abusing terror suspects during interrogations, in ways the advocacy group said had undercut broader American interests. A5

West Assures Russia on Iran

The United States and Europe, seeking Russia's help in bringing Iran's nuclear activities before the United Nations Security Council for review, have assured Russian officials that they are not pressing for sanctions against Iran right now. A8

Syria Frees Political Prisoners

Two of Syria's most prominent political prisoners have been freed after five years behind bars, another signal that President Bashar al-Assad is trying to mollify domestic critics as he faces increased pressure from a United Nations investigation into the assassination of the former prime minister of Lebanon. A3

Abbas Defends *Hamas* Inclusion

The Palestinian president, Mahmoud Abbas, said if he was unable to carry out his program after the legislative elections, he would resign. Mr. Abbas also, defended the inclusion in the election of the militant Islamic faction *Hamas*, which refuses to give up its armed wing. A10

Rice Shakes Up Foreign Aid

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice plans to set up a new office under her direct supervision to oversee the disparate agencies and bureaus that dispense \$19 billion in foreign aid each year. A10

U.N. Clash Kills 4 in Ivory Coast

Clashes between protesters and United Nations peacekeepers left four people dead in western Ivory Coast as tensions mounted and youth leaders called for mass protests to push the United Nations and French peacekeepers from the country. A10

NATIONAL A14-20

Exception Needed in Laws On Abortion, Justices Say

The Supreme Court reaffirmed the need to include an exception for medical emergencies in a law that restricts teenagers' access to abortion and told a lower court to reconsider its ruling that struck down a New Hampshire law that failed to include such an exception. A1

Cisneros Investigation to Close

After more than a decade, the prosecutor in the case of former Housing Secretary Henry G. Cisneros is finally closing his operation with a report accusing Clinton administration officials of thwarting an investigation into whether Mr. Cisneros evaded income taxes. A1

Bombing Witness to Be Freed

The planned release of Michael J. Fortier, who played a role in the Oklahoma City bombing but testified against Timothy J. McVeigh and Terry L. Nichols, has raised concerns in Oklahoma about any future threats he might pose. A16

Briefings Unlawful, Report Says

A legal analysis by the nonpartisan Congressional Research Service concludes that the Bush administration's limited briefings for Congress on the National Security Agency's domestic eavesdropping program are "inconsistent with the law." A19

Democrats Work Against Alito

With little chance of stopping Judge Samuel A. Alito Jr.'s confirmation to the Supreme Court, Senate Democratic leaders urged their members to vote against him in an effort to lay the groundwork to campaign against his decisions on the court. A19

Congressional Democrats introduced a lobbying overhaul that they said exceeds Republican proposals. A19

SCIENCE/HEALTH

Drug Labels Face Overhaul

Prescription drug labels will soon undergo a major revision, a move drug regulators hope will reduce the number of injuries and deaths caused by medical errors. A20

NEW YORK/REGION B1-8

Child Welfare Leader Disciplines Six Workers

Six New York City child welfare workers were suspended or reassigned for their roles in the failed investigations that led to the death of 7-year-old Nixzmary Brown. The head of the city's child welfare agency also announced a reorganization aimed at improving the oversight of frontline abuse investigators. A1

Tax Cuts Help the Well-Off

Governor Pataki says his budget proposal would bring relief across the economic spectrum. But the fine print shows that 24 percent of his tax cuts, credits and rebates would go to New Yorkers who earn \$200,000 or more, while more than half would go to the roughly 10 percent who earn more than \$100,000. B1

Restaurant Catalog Updated

The New York City health department began offering a more detailed and easily searchable Web site cataloging the results of thousands of restaurant inspections, available at www.nyc.gov/html/doh. B2

Brooklyn Plan Prompts Suit

A coalition of community groups sued the Empire State Development Corporation, charging that it wrongfully approved the demolition of six buildings on the site of the proposed Atlantic Yards development in Brooklyn. B1

Neediest Cases B6

SPORTSTHURSDAY D1-6 HOUSE & HOME F1-10 THURSDAY STYLES G1-8 ARTS E1-10

OBITUARIES A21

Jim Gary

An internationally noted sculptor in metal, he was 66. A21

BUSINESS DAY C1-26

Market Turmoil in Japan

A securities fraud investigation of Livedoor, a Japanese Internet services company, resulted in a near-national panic as investors have collectively withdrawn billions of dollars of their money from the Tokyo stock market over the last two days. A1

Livedoor has made headlines in Japan in recent years for its attempts at hostile takeovers and its aggressive expansion through acquisitions. C1

Outlook Hurts Apple's Stock

Apple Computer reported that its profit nearly doubled in the first quarter, thanks to brisk holiday sales of iPod music players. But its outlook for the second quarter fell well below Wall Street's expectations, causing its stock to fall as much as 7 percent in after-hours trading. C1

Changes in Pay Disclosure

Under a proposal by the Securities and Exchange Commission, companies would have to make more of their executives' pay packages public. C1

Business Digest C2

EDITORIAL A22-23

Editorials: The assisted-suicide decision; Alice in Lobbyland; women's place, revisited; New Jersey's new governor.

Columns: David Brooks, Bob Herbert.

Bridge E8 Crossword E4 Public Lives E10 Weather D8

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The Advertiser (Australia)
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Section: OPINION; Pg. 17

Length: 701 words

Body

QUESTION:

The Israeli offensive against Lebanon shows no sign of letting up. What are your views?

Scar on humanity

THE U.S. and Israel are trying to tell the rest of the world that the current Mid East crises are the results of the kidnapping of three Israeli soldiers.

The Middle East conflict began in 1948 and remains unresolved to date.

The real causes of the conflict are the continued occupation by Israel of Palestinian and Lebanese lands, daily humiliation of the entire Palestinian population, targeted killings including civilians, demolition of Palestinian homes and the deprivation of the Palestinians from their basic human rights. There are 10,000 Palestinians in Israeli jails including **women** and children - most have been imprisoned for more than 20 years.

Israel is continuing to build a new Berlin Wall around the Palestinian populated areas and has rejected all United Nations resolutions while demanding from the rest of the Arab world to comply with UN demands.

Peace in the Middle East will remain an illusion unless the rights of the Palestinian people are recognised and delivered. Until such time, the suffering of the Palestinians will remain a scar on humanity.

* KHALDEH ZUYUD,

Windsor Gardens.

Oil's heavy toll

A DISTURBING aspect of the Lebanese crisis is the role of Australian motorists in the funding of Hezbollah terrorists by Iranian authorities.

Some of the money we pay at the pump is going to trickle all the way back to Iran, a major oil supplier.

A percentage of our motoring dollar would therefore be going towards producing the Iranian missiles that are now raining down on Israeli civilians.

Lebanese civilians, the families and friends of Australian citizens, and Australian citizens on holiday and business in Lebanon, are being bombarded by Israeli firepower, in response to attacks partly funded by an Australian society addicted to a costly Iranian commodity. If this isn't a spur to find alternatives to oil, then I don't know what is.

* ALBERT GOODRIDGE,

Murray Bridge.

Don't excuse history

WITH regard to your editorial (The Advertiser, 21/7/06), what a load of rubbish. The Israelis were terrorists before World War II and took the land in 1948. Hezbollah and their supporters are only trying to take back what was taken from them. Read your history books before you try and make excuses for the Israeli terrorists.

I do not support either side, I'm a third generation Australian with six children and I am well informed. I deplore our Government's illegal actions in Iraq.

* ROBERT LOW,

Happy Valley.

Give peace a chance

WE feel terrible for the Australians stranded in Beirut and the perilous time ahead for them. We also despair for those innocent civilians who have nowhere to go. Implicit in the Government pleading with other governments to cease fire until we get our people out, is the reality that, with no Australians to worry about, the subsequent death and destruction is none of our business. Peace and non-violent conflict resolution is everyone's business.

* SUE GILBEY.

for the Australian Peace Committee (SA branch),

Adelaide.

More detail needed

SO, the state of Israel was "democratically formed" in 1948 (The Advertiser editorial, 21/7/06). As my references to Middle Eastern affairs of this period provide no detail of such an event, would you please provide some background for your readers. Of particular interest would be the composition of the electorate involved. Who were the voters? How long had they lived in Palestine to qualify? What was the final count in this remarkable display of "democracy"?

* TED SCOTT,

Urrbrae.

Too many deaths

THE Palestinian death toll over the 58 years of Israeli occupation far exceeds that of the Israeli losses. With their superior firepower, Israel has destroyed Palestinian homes, seized their land, and killed many thousands. Palestinian children, growing up under the tyranny of death and destruction, are now part of *Hamas* and Hezbollah in retaliation and resistance.

Injustice will continue on all sides, until we are ready to acknowledge this tragedy by pressuring Israel to end the Palestinian occupation. Israel must be strongly condemned for extending its horrendous aggression into Lebanon.

* JOYCE SCOTT.

Urrbrae.

Load-Date: July 23, 2006



<u>Humus - gèèn homo's!; 'Arab-Americans' spotten met vooroordelen op</u> festival

NRC.NEXT
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Byline: Freek Staps

Dateline: NEW YORK

Body

SAMENVATTING

Sinds 9/11 kampen Arabieren in de VS met een slechte reputatie.

FULL TEXT

Twee mannen spelen vliegveldje. Links Ryan Shrime, in de rol van Israëlisch douanier, rechts Omar Koury, Palestijn op bezoek. "Wat komt u doen in Jeruzalem", vraagt de douanier.

"Mijn neefjes opzoeken."

"Namen."

"Mohammed, Mahmoud, Mustafa, Jihad, Osama, Saddam..."

"...meekomen. U bent uitgekozen voor een willekeurige controle. En wat is dit?"

"Mijn elektrische tandenborstel. Daarmee val ik zionistische tandplak aan."

De grappen, zoals deze week in New York te horen, zijn hard, zitten vol vooroordelen. En ze vallen goed bij de bezoekers van de eerste 'Arab-American Comedy Night', een avond voor Arabieren met gevoel voor humor en, vooral, zelfspot. Want Arabieren hebben harige benen, rijden op kamelen, dragen tentachtige jurken, zien echtgenoten een leven lang niet naakt, doen niets liever dan een rel maken over cartoons van de profeet Mohammed en dragen exploderende schoenen. Tenminste, als je de acteurs en komieken moet geloven.

Dean Obeidalla organiseerde de avond. Ooit was hij advocaat in New York. Maar na de aanslagen van 11 september kon hij maar moeilijk wennen aan het nieuwe beeld dat Amerikanen van Arabieren kregen. "We zijn terroristen, denken ze. En dus niet geestig." Dat moest veranderen. "Je kunt mèt ons lachen. Je kunt óm ons lachen. We zijn de vijand niet." Obeidalla ging in de tegenaanval en begon een comedyfestival, inclusief titel-meteen-knipoog 'The Arabs are coming!'. Het festival bestaat inmiddels drie jaar en groeit nog steeds. Begin dit jaar trokken 18 komieken naar Los Angeles om de sketches, liedjes en de stand-up-comedy daar ook op te voeren.

Nu dan voor het eerst een Idols-achtige avond waar bezoekers op verschillende voorgelezen uitvoeringen konden stemmen. De winnaar is verzekerd van een plaats op het festival, dit najaar. De enige reden dat Obeidalla vrienden, bekenden en andere - zoals ze zichzelf dan wel weer politiek-correct noemen - Arabische-Amerikanen optrommelde om nu al over hun stukken na te denken, is "dat deze groep een vroege deadline nodig heeft". De avond begon bijvoorbeeld om 7 uur, "Arab Standard Time". Lees: iedereen komt toch te laat, we beginnen niet eerder dan half acht. "Inshallah." Met gods wil.

In een van de zes inzendingen, 'Life with Saddam', is de rechtszaak tegen de Iraakse dictator relatief positief voor hem uitgevallen. Zijn straf is een huis in Californië, uitgerust met camera's, 24 uur per dag op tv. Saddam heeft er een homoseksuele buurman. "Mijn volk houdt van humus", zegt Saddam, gespeeld door Omar Koury. "Niet van homo's." De buurman nodigt hem uit voor een themafeestje: duizend-en-èèn-nacht. Versnaperingen zoals nacho's om mee te dippen zijn er in overvloed. Saddam: "Het enige waar ik jou in wil dopen is een vat vol olie, net als de Koerden."

De acteurs en komieken schakelen makkelijk over van de rol van ene Jennifer met een vet New Yorks accent die van het winkelcentrum houdt naar Layla die verliefd wordt op de man die haar een boottocht op de Nijl belooft. Of naar de Arabische kunstenares die zich op een feestje moet verantwoorden ten overstaan van Amerikaanse gasten: "Hoe ga je als Arabische om met de vrijheid van meningsuiting?" "President Bush zegt dat jullie niet van onze vrijheid houden. Waarom niet?" "Waarom reageren jullie zo sterk op vrolijke cartoons?" "Zijn je vrouwelijke familieleden besneden?"

"Mogen we je vagina zien?"

De toeschouwers zijn hoogopgeleid, goedgekleed, vaak niet ouder dan veertig en onder elkaar. Zonder een spoor van ironie vragen ze de minderheidsgroep van vanavond, de Nederlandse bezoeker, of hij kan bewijzen niet bij het Amerikaanse ministerie van Binnenlandse Veiligheid te werken.

Organisator Dean Obeidalla leeft in meer dan èèn wereld, vertelt hij graag. Zijn vader is Palestijn, wilde hem Salah Al-Deen noemen, naar een historische moslimfiguur. Zijn moeder is Italiaanse en wilde hem Dino noemen. Het werd een compromis: Dean. Obdeidalla: "Dat is wel zo makkelijk op het vliegveld."

Teksten van de winnaar

Amerikaanse meisjes pestende jonge half-Egyptische Layla: "I like peanut butter, I like jam. Layla can't eat anything especially ham/ We like cars, we ride bikes Layla just takes camels day and night/ We like the malls, we love the Gap; Layla's mom just sews her crap."

Layla richt dan de actiegroep 'Straight Arab <u>women</u> in support of <u>Hamas</u>' op: "Ridin' da train, you see a woman veiled/ Why you trippin' sayin' she don't wash her hair/ 'Course she do, Arabs are clean/ We the ones taught Europeans 'bout hygiene/ Humus ain't the only thing feeds my soul/ World peace and equality are my goal/ Don't want your CK or DKNY/ Just need to know that Arab girls are fly."

Andere moslimkomieken

De profeet Mohammed is heilig, maar verder zegeviert de zelfspot. Een paar bekende komieken op rij:

De Egyptenaar Shaban abdu Rahim. Maakt veel grappen over vrouwen in het Midden-Oosten.

Page 3 of 3

Humus - gèèn homo's! 'Arab-Americans' spotten met vooroordelen op festival

De LibaneesTony abu Judeh. Werd legendarisch op het Arabische tv-station MBC met zijn show over de 'Amerikanen in Irak.'

De 'Amerikaans/Arabische Palestijn' Dean Obdeidallah.

De Amerikaans-Arabische komieken Ramsey Faragallah en WaleedF. Zuaiter. Treden vaak op in shows van Obdeidallah, en zijn geliefd in de Arabische wereld.

Ook succesvol in de VS

In de VS wonen naar schatting vier miljoen mensen van Arabische afkomst. De meest succesvolle:

Consumentenactivist Ralph Nader (72). Van Syrische komaf.

Zangeres en jurylid American Idol

Paula Abdul (43). Syrische afkomst.

Actrice Salma Hayek (39). Libanees/Mexicaans.

John H. Sununu (66) en zijn zoon John E. Sununu (41), voormalig chef-staf Witte Huis en senator in Washington. Libanees/Palestijnse wortels.

Popidool Paul Anka (64). Libanese voorouders.

Load-Date: May 26, 2006



<u>DEBAT: FANGER: PALAESTINENSISKE KVINDER OG BOERN I ISRAELSKE</u> FAENGSLER

Politiken

July 23, 2006

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Section: Pg. 2

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Byline: Kirsten Grosen, human rights march, kvinder i dialog palaestina-israel-danmark

Body

I et laeserbrev(Pol. 10.7.) undrer Hedevig Bjerre sig over, at hun ikke ved daglig avislaesning har fundet information om de palaestinensiske kvinder og boern, som forlanges loesladt som betingelse for frigivelse af en israelsk soldat, der er taget til fange af en palaestinensisk milits. Undertegnede er medlem af en gruppe danske kvinder, som siden 2003 har samarbejdet med israelske og palaestinensiske menneskerettighedsorganisationer, der stoetter de politiske fanger i israelske faengsler. Derved har vi faaet en viden, som jeg gerne vil delagtiggoere Hedevig Bjerre og andre interesserede i. For kvindernes vedkommende bygger vi isaer vores viden paa rapporter fra israelske Women's Organization for Political Prisoners (WOFPP), mens Defence for Children International/PS (DCI), og Red Barnet, Sverige, er vores hovedkilder vedr. boernefanger. Andre kilder er Addameer og Mandela Institute for Human Rights. Det skal understreges, at vi ikke tager stilling til, om kvinder og boern er skyldige i det, de anklages for, men udelukkende til den umenneskelige behandling, de udsaettes for, og som er i strid med de internationale konventioner, Israel har tiltraadt, og som blandt andet siger, at en besaettelsesmagt ikke maa flytte fanger fra det besatte omraade til andre territorier. De israelskesikkerhedsstyrker arresterer jaevnligt palaestinensiske kvinder, hovedsageligt i alderen 18-30 aar. Kvinderne bliver brutalt behandlet under arrestation og afhoering, som foregaar i militaerlejre eller centre i israelske bosaettelser paa Vestbredden, hvor politistationerne normalt er placeret. For tiden sidder ca. 125 kvinder i israelske faengsler. Det anslaas, at halvdelen af kvinderne tilbageholdes administrativt - og uden at der rejses tiltale.

Ofte kan de heller ikke faa advokathjaelp. Disse fanger holdes indespaerret paa ubestemt tid, mange i to-tre aar og nogle endnu laengere. Naar de loeslades, faar de ingen undskyldning, endsige kompensation. Et eksempel er 42-aarige Etaf Alyan, der har et barn paa 18 maaneder. 22. december 2005 blev hun hentet af israelske soldater i sit hjem i Ramallah og foert til Hasharon faengslet. Det er her, de fleste kvindelige fanger sidder. En appel blev imoedekommet, og hendes tilbageholdelse paa seks maaneder blev aendret til fire maaneder. 23. februar 2006 blev hun flyttet til Neve Tirza faengslet, som er kendt som vaerre end Hasharon. En overfoersel hertil bruges som afstraffelse. 26. april, da hun skulle loeslades, gav forsvarsministeriet ordre til, at hendes administrative tilbageholdelse skulle forlaenges med seks maaneder. Etaf har tidligere vaeret langtidsfange. Hun har vaeret faengslet paa forskellige tidspunkter i sammenlagt 10 aar. Mellem arrestationerne har hun oprettet adskillige sociale projekter i Betlehem, blandt andet et center for kvinder og en boernehave. Da hun giftede sig, flyttede hun til Ramallah, hvor hun aabnede en internetcafe for kvinder.De oevrigekvinder er doemt ved israelske militaerdomstole, som foelger andre spilleregler end de civile domstole i Israel. For eksempel accepteres tilstaaelser, som er fremkommet under tortur, og forsvareren kan naegtes at foere vidner eller fremlaegge bevismateriale til fordel for den anklagede. Ofte anklages kvinderne for forbrydelser eller medvirken til planlaegning af forbrydelser mod

DEBAT: FANGER: PALAESTINENSISKE KVINDER OG BOERN I ISRAELSKE FAENGSLER

besaettelsesmagten, som kan medfoere op til livsvarigt faengsel. Hvis kvinden naegter alt, og der ikke er beviser, kan dommeren foreslaa, at kvinden tilstaar en mindre overtraedelse og dermed slipper med et par aars straf. Begrundelse for anholdelse af kvinder er i nogle tilfaelde, at der skal laegges pres paa aegtefaeller eller broedre. som er under mistanke og som tilbydes en 'handel' til fordel for kvinden. Hygiejne og kost i faengslet er under al kritik. Beretninger om forholdene i faengslerne er i det hele taget rystende. Cellerne er overfyldte og fugtige, plaget af mus og insekter. Der er slaaet metalplader for vinduerne, saa der ingen dagslys er. Om sommeren er der ulidelig varmt, og om vinteren meget koldt. Der er for faa taepper. Der er en kantine, hvor fangerne kan koebe toiletsager, supplerende kost og lignende. Hver fange har en kantinekonto knyttet til Israel Postal Bank, hvor det palaestinensiske selvstyre har indsat beloeb, men efter *Hamas*' valgsejr bliver mange af fangernes konti spaerret med begrundelsen, at det er ' finansiering af terror ' . Der anvendes disciplinaere straffe over for kvinderne, hvis de klager over forholdene eller sultestrejker. Straffene kan vaere boeder, isolationscelle og fratagelse af besoegsret. Taaregas og oversproeitning af cellerne med vand forekommer. Grov fysisk afstraffelse og seksuelle kraenkelser er ikke usaedvanlige. Laegelig behandling er mangelfuld. Eksempler paa behandlingen af de kvindelige fanger findes i rapporter fra ovennaevnte organisationer samt fra Amnesty og i en rapport fra The Public Committee Against Torture in Israel, som i 2005 blev afleveret til FN's komite for afskaffelse af diskrimination mod kvinder. Israelsretsvaesen har andre alderskriterier for palaestinensiske boern end for israelske boern. Israelske boern betragtes som boern, indtil de er 18 aar (i lighed med FN's boernekonvention). Palaestinensiske boern betragtes som boern, indtil de er 12 aar. I marts 2006 udsendte DCI/PS en beretning om situationen vedr. de israelske besaettelsesstyrkers tiltagende arrestationer af palaestinensiske boern. Det drejede sig om flere end 230 boern siden begyndelsen af 2006, hvilket bragte antallet af palaestinensiske boern i israelske faengsler op paa naesten 400. I interview med DCI/PS-advokater har boern fortalt om, hvordan de bliver lagt i haandjern og faar bind for oejnene, inden de bliver gennet ind i en militaerjeep og bragt til forhoerscentre. Mens de stadig er omtumlede og forvirrede, bliver de med det samme bragt til afhoering. Her bliver de overfuset, truet og nogle gange sparket og slaaet, for at man kan faa en eller anden form for tilstaaelse ud af dem. Tilstaaelser, der kommer frem under en saa raa proces, bliver af de israelske militaere myndigheder betragtet som tilstraekkeligt bevis til ikke blot at sigte barnet, men ogsaa at sigte andre, der bliver inddraget i tilstaaelsen. Efter afhoering bliver boernene indespaerret i overfyldte og usle tilbageholdelsescentre, hvor de venter paa at komme for retten. Kun en haandfuld bliver loesladt mod kaution. Der findes flere beretninger om voldsomme fysiske, ogsaa seksuelle, overgreb mod boern helt ned til 12-aars-alderen. Der er desuden kommet bemaerkelsesvaerdig dokumentation fra en forening af hiemsendte israelske soldater, Breaking the Silence, som har lavet en udstilling og en dvd om de overgreb, de har deltaget i, samt udgivet et haefte med mundtlige beretninger og oprettet en hjemmeside www.breakingthesilence.org .Israelskekvinder begyndte at stoette de palaestinensiske politiske fanger paa grund af en bemaerkelsesvaerdig kvinde, Hava Keller. Hun blev foedt i Polen i 1929 og kom i 1941 til Israel sammen med sine foraeldre. Hun sluttede sig til Haganah-militsen, som bekaempede briterne, og senere deltog hun i krigen mod araberne. I 1949, da krigen var slut, gik hun hver dag forbi en forladt arabisk landsby med smukke huse og traeer. Hun regnede med, at de flygtede beboere snart ville vende tilbage, men en dag var landsbyen var jaevnet med jorden af israelske soldater. Den dag ophoerte hun med at vaere zionist. I 1988 i begyndelsen af den foerste intifada deltog Hava Keller i et kvindemoede, hvor de fik at vide, at en kvinde fra Gaza var blevet anholdt, for at politiet kunne laegge pres paa hendes mand, og da retten gav ordre til at loeslade hende, kunne hun ikke skaffe kaution. Hava Keller og de andre kvinder skaffede pengene og fik hende loesladt. Saa hoerte de om den ene sag efter den anden og dannede WOFPP og soergede for, at loesladelse af alle palaestinensiske kvindefanger indgik i Osloaftalen. Lige nu overskygger de voldsomme militaere angreb med doed og oedelaeggelse i omraadet alt andet. Hvordan ville det vaere gaaet, hvis det palaestinensiske krav om loesladelse af faengslede kvinder og boern som betingelse for frigivelse af den israelske soldat var blevet imoedekommet?

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Byline: PETER HITCHENS

Body

Sevenwives?

What about Blair's armyof singlemothers WHY do we make so much fuss about one man with seven wives, and care hardly at all about hundreds of thousands of mothers who have no husbands?

Mr Phil Sharp's strange ideas about family life (and don't all those <u>women</u> look grumpy in their odd hats?) are unlikely to catch on widely, for lots of reasons.

But the equally bizarre practice of pregnant <u>women</u> spurning the child's father and instead getting married to the Government has now become so common that nobody is shocked by it. And eight per cent of British <u>women</u> between 18 and 35 are now bringing up children on their own.

Actually, they are not on their own at all. We, the taxpayers, are living with most of these lifestyle pioneers or at least our chequebooks are standing in for these missing family breadwinners, paying for the house and providing a frugal but bearable income.

And the more we do this, the more women adopt this way of life, and the worse it is for the country.

New research by Dr Libertad Gonzalez of Barcelona shows that Britain has higher benefit levels for lone mothers than almost any other European country and surprise, surprise has many more such mothers than its less generous neighbours.

A young woman who wants a home and income of her own acts quite reasonably when she gets pregnant. In short, our policies are actively encouraging the husband-free, taxfinanced household.

All of which flies in the face of mountain ranges of research showing that, despite the best efforts of the mothers concerned, the life chances of children in fatherless homes are far worse than those especially boys raised by two married parents.

NOW, to avoid about a million whingeing letters claiming to be 'insulted' or trying to change the subject by falsely accusing me of hating single mothers, I have to point out here that not all one-parent households choose their way of life, and

that not all children of such households turn out badly. Got that? Good.

All I am saying is that if you subsidise something, you will get more of it, and that, in general, this particular something is likely to be harmful.

In that case, you would have thought that our supposedly wise and loving rulers would be doing all they could to diminish it.

But those phoney Christians Mr Blair and Mr Brown continue to expand this sector. This is not because of kind-hearted generosity.

The Government's mean treatment of widows shows what it thinks of lone <u>women</u> who were foolish enough to devote their lives to home and family.

It is a deliberate policy, to create as much dependence on the State as possible, thus buying votes and keeping millions permanently on the public payroll.

Stable marriage, and the free independent households it creates, get in the way of this.

Now YOU pay for the privilege of complaining to the BBC THE BBC has now begun charging viewers and listeners to ring up and complain about its programmes.

If you telephone the switchboard and ask for the duty officer, you are told to call an 0870 number.

The longer your call takes, the more you help to pay Jonathan Ross's ridiculous wages. I discovered this the other day when I called to protest about a TV news report on the new British Securitate, Soca, a gullible, uncritical disgrace.

The outcome? You've guessed it, a call a few days later saying the report was just fine. Worth every penny.

THANK you, <u>Hamas</u>, for being truthful about the 'Palestinian' cause and refusing to condemn the latest murders in Tel Aviv. Those who think that the Arab world has any wish for a compromise, or that the fabled 'Two State Solution' will end violence in the region, delude themselves. They will compromise only when we in the West make it clear there will be no more rewards for terror.

A brave woman, but she can't stop child 'drugging'on her own BRAIN expert Susan Greenfield, right, deserves much praise for criticising the drugging of children 'diagnosed' with the invented complaint 'Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder' (ADHD). I know the postbag she will now get.

I know many scientists and doctors are dubious about giving powerful drugs to children who have nothing physically wrong, but know the pro-drug lobby will turn on them angrily if they speak out. But the more who do, the sooner this scandal will end.

A COUPLE of weeks after producing a fossil fish with shoulders, supposedly on the way to developing arms, the Evolutionist Ayatollahs have now come up with a fossil snake with hips, allegedly on the way to losing its legs. Ah.

There's something wrong here.

Can you work out what it is? I wouldn't mind, if these people weren't so furiously intolerant of anyone who laughs at their militant, unscientific faith.

IF you don't want to be fingerprinted and have your eyeballs registered by the state, renew your passport now. You don't have to wait for it to expire first, and ten years from now the plan to tag us all may well have been beaten.

If you linger, you'll find that you won't be able to travel abroad unless you attend a humiliating session at a state registration centre, where you will be docketed as if you were a sex offender. Avoid this nasty surprise and stay unregistered.

After all, Princess Tony says it's voluntary.

EVEN on the Queen's birthday, the dreary Guardian republicans will not shut up. What is it that people such as Jonathan Freedland think is so good about republics?

Most of the worst tyrannies in history, from South Africa to North Korea, have been republics. Of the six longest-lasting free and lawful nations on the planet, four are monarchies.

Does Jonathan think George W. Bush is an enviable head of state? Or Jacques Chirac? Why spit on your luck?

Proof that mushy Dave has already gone to the dogs I CAN see a spectral baseball cap beginning to form on top of Dave Cameron's strange, waxy locks. His decision to pose with a dog team in the snow provides us all with unending opportunities for lots of Scott of the Antarctic jokes about doomed expeditions and Captain Oates.

Now, if the lovely tattooed Samantha can only manage to shove him into the ocean at Brighton or Blackpool next autumn, Dave's descent into comedy and oblivion will be complete. Perhaps that is why his lieutenants are talking about cancelling future seaside conferences and holding fiercely disciplined rallies well inland instead.

As for Labour's 'Dave the Chameleon' video, two things struck me about it.

One, it was all true, except the bit about him being blue really. Second, why did so many journalists, normally happy to jeer at all politicians, get so defensive about this rather mild attack?

Have they invested their life savings in Dave? Are they fretting about losing them?

Proof that mushy Dave has already gone to the dogs END

Load-Date: April 23, 2006



UMFRAGE; Mehr als zwei Drittel gegen Gesamtschule

Die Presse

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Length: 7914 words

Body

WIEN (red.). Die Österreicher stehen einer Gesamtschule skeptisch gegenüber. Wie eine Fessel-GfK-Umfrage (500 Telefon-Interviews) im Mai 2006 ergab, sprechen sich nur 24 Prozent für eine Gesamtschule aus. 73 Prozent wollen das derzeit geltende differenzierte Schulsystem beibehalten. Vor einem Jahr gab es noch 43 Prozent Befürworter für eine Gesamtschule, nur 54 Prozent waren Anhänger des differenzierten Schulsystems.

Gefragt wurde auch nach der Zufriedenheit mit dem Schulsystem: 53 Prozent der Eltern sind sehr, 37 Prozent eher zufrieden, sehr unzufrieden sind nur zwei Prozent, acht Prozent eher unzufrieden. Frauen stellen dem System ein besseres Zeugnis aus als Männer.

Funktionäre mit Mandat

SP-Gewerkschafter im Parlament sind unter anderem GPA-Chef Wolfgang Katzian, ÖGB-Frauenvorsitzende Renate Csörgits, der Leitende ÖGB-Sekretär Richard Leutner sowie Metaller-Gewerkschafter Franz Riepl.

SPÖ auf Konfrontation mit der Gewerkschaft

Streit um ersten Platz auf Wiener Liste für die Wahl: Bekommt ihn ÖGB-Chef Hundstorfer?Seite 13

Portugal Gruppensieger: Durch 2:1-Sieg gegen Mexiko. S. 12Argentinien Gruppensieger: Durch 0:0 gegen Holland. S. 12 Mexiko im Achtelfinale: Angola mit 1:1 gegen Iran out. S. 12

"Will Guantßnamo schließen"

Spaß und Spannung

Franzobel und andere

Autoren, Juroren: Stim-

men zum Wettlesen in

Klagenfurt Seite 31

Bush zu Schüssel. "Österreich und

die EU spielen eine essenzielle

Rolle auf dem Balkan.

WIEN (red.). "Auch wir wollen das beenden. US-Präsident George W.Bush tat, was Europa erhofft hatte. Er kündigte beim EU-USA-Gipfel in der Wiener Hofburg an, das umstrittene US-Gefangenenlager auf Guantßnamo zu schließen. Er wolle lediglich die Entscheidung des Obersten Gerichtshofs der USA abwarten. Wie "Die Presse" in Erfahrung bringen konnte, werden im Hintergrund von den USA und einigen EU-Regierungen bereits rechtliche Alternativen überlegt. Sie sollen den künftigen Umgang mit gefährlichen Terrorverdächtigen, die nicht als Kriegsgefangene zu behandeln sind, regeln. Der Konflikt um Guantßnamo könnte langfristige Auswirkungen auf die Auslegung des Völkerrechts haben, bestätigen EU-Kreise. Auch in Europa steige nämlich das Bedürfnis, gewisse "Grauzonen", die der Kampf gegen Terrorismus an die Oberfläche gebracht hat, künftig rechtlich auszuleuchten. Fälle in Spanien und Großbritannien, wo nach den Anschlägen der al-Qaida Verdächtige unter großzügiger Auslegung des bestehenden Rechts in "dauerhafte Verwahrung" genommen wurden, schrammten hart an der Grenze der Illegalität vorbei. "Wir müssen die Regeln für die Zukunft klarer definieren", verlautete am Rande des EU-USA-Gipfels in Wien. Rechtsberater loten derzeit auf beiden Seiten des Atlantiks auch mögliche Freiräume in der Interpretation des bestehenden Rechts aus. Die Gefahr liegt allerdings in einer Aufweichung europäischer Standards. Derzeit wäre ein Festhalten von Verdächtigen ohne Verfahren wie auf Guantßnamo laut der Europäischen Menschenrechtskonvention unmöglich. "Eine Neuauslegung des Völkerrechts war bisher ein absolutes Tabuthema", heißt es in Expertenkreisen. Sie verweisen darauf, dass Gefangenen anders als in Guantßnamo zumindest ein geordnetes Verfahren und ein Besuchsrecht zugestanden werden müssten.

Kommentare Seiten 34/35

1.000.000Euro betrugen die Kosten für den Schutz des US-Präsidenten, der First Lady sowie der US-Außenministerin.15.000Demonstranten wurden bei der großen Anti-Bush-Kundgebung am Nachmittag erwartet. 1200 Schüler protestierten nach Angaben der Polizei am Vormittag gegen die Politik der US-Regierung.3000 österreichische Polizisten - darunter 200 Beamte der Spezialeinheit Cobra - sowie 500 eigens aus den USA angereiste Sicherheitsbeamte sorgten für die Sicherheit des Präsidenten und seiner Begleiter. 1000 Sperrgitter und 1000 Halte- und Verbotsschilder wurden aufgestellt. 300Geschäfte und Lokale waren in der Wiener Innenstadt von der Sperrzone betroffen. Museen in der Hofburg - etwa die Schatzkammer und die Albertina - blieben geschlossen. 108 Fahrzeuge wurden innerhalb der Halteverbotszone der Wiener Innenstadt abgeschleppt. 53 Fahrzeuge umfasste der Konvoi des US-Präsidenten: 35 Autos und 18 Motorräder. In der Wagenkolonne befand sich auch ein Spezialfahrzeug der Sondereinheit Observation (SEO), von dem aus Frequenzen erkannt werden können, über die Bomben ferngezündet werden. 21Stunden hielten sich der amerikanische Präsident George W. Bush, First Lady Laura und US-Außenministerin Condoleezza Rice insgesamt in Wien auf.9Meter lang ist die Ford-Stretch-Limousine des Präsidenten.8Themenbereiche umfasste die Agenda, über die der US-Präsident mit den EU-Spitzen (Kommissionspräsident Barroso, Ratsvorsitzender Schüssel, Außenbeauftragter Javier Solana, Außenkommissarin Ferrero-Waldner und Ratspräsidentin Plassnik) sprachen.3 zusätzliche Operationsteams standen in drei Wiener Spitälern - dem AKH, Donau- und Wilhelminenspital - für Notfälle zur Verfügung.

Der Bush-Besuch in Zahlen

Amerikaner in Wien: "Die Chemie hatvon A bis Z gestimmt"

@J8 Er. Der mächtigste Mann der Welt beeindruckte in Österreich mit

seinem lockeren Auftreten. @J8 Sie. Damenprogramm mit Mann. Botschaftergatte McCaw an Laura Bushs Seite.

Von Eva Male und Christian Ultsch

Amerikanisches Hurra!

UMFRAGE Mehr als zwei Drittel gegen Gesamtschule

Buntes Treiben im prall gefüllten Festsaal des Hotel Intercontinental. Party-Gemurmel, dazwischen spitze Kinderschreie. Mehr als 400 Mitarbeiter der US-Botschaften in Wien warten, samt ihren Familien (aber ohne die österreichischen Angehörigen!), schon seit mindestens einer halben Stunde auf ihren Präsidenten. Wer nicht schon am Vorabend bei der Landung am Rollfeld zum Zug kam, kann Bush heute aus der Nähe sehen.

Grauer Anzug, rote Krawatte, ein Lächeln. Als er den Raum betritt, ertönen erste "Hurra-Rufe" an. Der Präsident hebt zu seinem Statement an, bedankt sich bei den Diplomaten an der Wiener Front. Die Chefdiplomatin ist auch mit dabei. US-Außenministerin Condoleezza Rice, elegant in grauem Kostüm. Nach der kurzen Ansprache folgt das lange Händeschütteln. Bush scheint gut aufgelegt zu sein an diesem Tag.

LobbyingReges Treiben in der Lobby des Intercontinental. Zahllose Sicherheitsbeamte mit "Knopf im Ohr". Dazwischen ein paar einsame Hotelgäste. Journalisten und Fotografen in Warteposition vertreiben sich im Café die Zeit. Ob die Kellnerin den US-Präsidenten schon gesehen habe? "Keine Zeit dafür", entgegnet sie knapp. Der Secret-Service-Mann aus Alabama zeigt sich gesprächiger und schenkt den Damen sogar Anstecknadeln. Musik von Pachelbel durchströmt sanft die Empfangshalle. Und die armen Amerikaner schwitzen - sie sind stärkere Klimaanlagen gewohnt: "Kühler wird's nicht", klagt ein US-Beamter. Eine österreichische Protokolldame geht derweil in Saft - wer weiß, aus welchem Anlass: "Des mach ma sicher net. Mia san in Österreich und net in Amerika. Frauen ohne GrenzenFirst Lady Laura Bush betritt die Bühne. 40 Minuten hat sie für die österreichische Frauen-Lobbying-Organisation "Women without Borders" reserviert. Ihr Outfit ist konservativ-gediegen: beige Jacke mit schwarzen Knöpfen, schwarzer, schwingender Rock bis knapp übers Knie, Stöckelschuhe. Makellos gestylt, aber unaufdringlich.

Zunächst hat Edit Schlaffer von "Frauen ohne Grenzen" das Wort - und so schnell gibt sie es nicht wieder ab. Dann präsentieren vier Vertreterinnen der Organisation internationale Projekte zur Stärkung von Frauen, etwa in Ruanda oder Indien. Laura Bush liegen Themen wie diese sehr am Herzen. Sie lauscht, lächelt, lobt: "That's great!" Sonst gibt sie sich zugeknöpft - ganz wie ihre Jacke.

Das sogenannte Damenprogramm ist übrigens auch ein Herrenprogramm: Laura Bush wird den ganzen Tag unter anderen vom Mann der US-Botschafterin, Craig McCaw, begleitet. Als einziger Herr sitzt er am Roundtable: Gruppenbild mit Herrn. Mit von der Partie ist auch die Frau des US-Botschafters bei der IAEA, Nancy Shulte. Bahn Frei für den PräsidentenDurch die Johannesgasse windet sich eine lange Schlange schwarzer Autos. Der Konvoi des Präsidenten hat sich in Bewegung gesetzt. Mittendrin ein Ambulanzfahrzeug. Für alle Fälle. Die Ringstraße ist leer gefegt, die Route zum Ballhausplatz frei geräumt.

Hofburg statt oval officeDer schwarze Cadillac des US-Präsidenten taucht ins Bellaria-Tor der Präsidentschaftskanzlei ein. Ein aufgeräumter Heinz Fischer empfängt seinen Gast, schreitet mit ihm die Säle ab. Eine prunkvolle Zimmerflucht - wie geschaffen für Bushs präsidentiellen Gang. Fast wie im Oval Office, nur etwas älter. Die Journalisten-Schar wartet hinter einer Kordel im Maria-Theresia-Zimmer, wo Pressekonferenzen und etwas weniger häufig auch Angelobungen über die Bühne gehen. Es ist der erste offizielle Foto-Termin des Tages. Fragen sind nicht vorgesehen.

Einer fragt trotzdem. Nach Bushs ersten Eindrücken in Wien. Die Antwort fällt nicht aus dem Rahmen: "A beautiful city", schwärmt Bush, obwohl er bisher gerade einmal die Flughafen-Autobahn, das Hotel Intercontinental und ein paar 100 Meter Ringstraße vorbeirauschen sah.

Hinter der Tapetentür, beim 30-Minuten-Gespräch mit Fischer, werden zunächst Geschenke ausgetauscht. Ein Wanderstab für Fischer. Mitarbeiter des Weißen Hauses hatten sich extra die Körpermaße des Bundespräsidenten durchgeben lassen, um das Eichenholz punktgenau anzupassen. Der Gast aus Washington darf eine Mozart-CD-Sonderedition mit nach Hause nehmen.

Der mächtigste Mann der Welt beeindruckt seine Gastgeber mit lockerem Auftreten. Auch US-Außenministerin Condoleezza Rice ringt Respekt ab, - obwohl sie kein einziges Wort von sich gibt.

Wie Bush so ist? "Der Mann hat Humor, selbstironischen Humor", resümiert einer der Teilnehmer des hochoffiziellen Termins. Mehrmals schüttelt lautes Lachen die Besprechungsrunde im Jagdzimmer der

Präsidentschaftskanzlei. Ob die Österreicher auch aus Erleichterung lachen? Jeder Zentimeter, jede Sekunde war schon Monate vor dem Treffen ausgemessen worden. Und jetzt lief doch alles so reibungslos. "Smooth", raunt ein Beteiligter.

First Lady on the roadBeim Hotel Intercontinental setzt sich der Konvoi der First Lady in Bewegung. Er ist etwas bescheidener als der von "Mr. 41", wie Laura Bush ihren Mann nennt, und umfasst nur elf Fahrzeuge, ebenfalls inklusive Rettung. Der Kleine auf dem Dreirad, der von der Terrasse des Kindergartens im Stadtpark späht, wirkt dennoch beeindruckt. Die Fahrt zum Stephansdom ist kurz, die Zahl der Schaulustigen überschaubar. Der Stephansplatz war großräumig abgesperrt worden, die Kirche so leer, wie man sie noch nie erlebt hat.BilateralesBush bekommt eine leise Ahnung davon, wie viele Trakte die imperiale Hofburg hat. Über die geheime Ratsstube und den Marmorsaal spaziert er mit seiner Delegation zum nächsten Termin Richtung Josefsplatz. Alles "indoor". Nächste Station: Die Mittlere Lounge, nahe dem Redoutensaal. Das Ambiente ist nun moderner: weiße Vorhänge, ultramarinblauer Teppichboden und schicke schwarze Lederfauteuils. Bundeskanzler Wolfgang Schüssel, der seinen Gast schon am Vorabend in Wien-Schwechat so herzlich empfangen hatte, bittet zum bilateralen Gespräch.

Mit von der Partie diesmal nicht nur Plassnik, Rice und US-Botschafterin McCaw. Auch Vize-Kanzler Hubert Gorbach darf für ein kleines Gruppenfoto posieren. Über die Inhalte dringt zunächst nichts nach außen. Ein Bundeskanzler wie Schüssel kann eben schweigen.

Stephansdom"Sollen wir auf Frau Dr. Schüssel warten?", fragt Laura Bush, ready for action im Stephansdom. Man entscheidet sich, mit der Besichtigungstour zu beginnen. Die Frau des Bundeskanzlers erscheint verspätet, casual mit Rucksack. Des US-Präsidenten Gattin bewundert die Kirche, den Fenstergucker. Bernd Kolodziejczak führt, der amerikanische - in St. Stephan stationierte - Priester Timothy McDonald begleitet sie. Kurz vor 11 Uhr ist Abmarsch. Leaders OnlyDie Runde in der Mittleren Lounge der Hofburg wird größer. "Leaders only" nennt sich das Format nun. Jetzt geht es um die transatlantischen Beziehungen. Es handelt sich ja schließlich um einen EU-USA-Gipfel. Schüssel, seines Zeichens auch EU-Ratspräsident, kann nun mit Verstärkung aus Brüssel - EU-Kommissionspräsident José Manuel Barroso und EU-Außenpolitiker Javier Solana - Tacheles mit Bush reden.

Ladies LunchDie First Lady speist auf Einladung von Krista Schüssel und Präsidentengattin Margit Fischer bei Do & Co im Haas-Haus. Über das Menü wird Schweigen bewahrt - und entsprechend viel spekuliert. Die wartenden Journalisten werden unterdessen mit edlen Lunch-Boxen von Do & Co verköstigt.Mit Verspätung auf dem GipfelEs hat sich eine erste Verspätung eingeschlichen. Das eigentliche Hauptereignis startet etwas später als geplant im Großen Redoutensaal: der EU-USA-Gipfel. Unter den großflächigen Gemälden Mikls grast die Elefantenrunde die Agenda des Treffens ab. Jetzt sind sie alle dabei: Bush, Schüssel, Barroso, Plassnik, Rice, Ferrero, Solana und ihre Einflüsterer.

In der österreichischen Delegation kommt langsam Euphorie auf: "Die Chemie hat von A bis Z gestimmt. Bush sei auf die Europäer zugegangen.

Es ist AngerichtetAuch in der Hofburg wird nun zu Tisch gebeten. Die Herrschaften sitzen beim Working-Lunch zusammen: Forelle und Bachsaibling, Filets vom Kalb mit Eierschwammerl-Gröstl und Blattspinat. Als süßer Abschluss: Wachauer Marillenknödel. Alles wird aufgeputzt. Kunstgenuss in der AlbertinaDie First Lady ist mit ihrem Tross in der Albertina eingelangt, wo sie von Direktor Klaus Albrecht Schröder durch die Mozart-Ausstellung geführt wird. Danach bekommt Laura Bush im Musensaal ausgewählte Werke zu sehen, die extra aus dem Tiefspeicher geholt wurden, darunter den Dürer-Hasen. Abgedeckt (quasi "undercover") warten die lichtempfindlichen Zeichnungen von Dürer, Rubens und Michelangelo auf die Präsidentin. Keineswegs darf der Hase vom Blitz der Fotografen getroffen werden! Krönender Abschluss: Ein Quintett der Wiener Philharmoniker spielt für die First Lady die Kleine Nachtmusik. "It's a thrill", schwärmt sie vorab, wippt zu der Musik mit den Füßen und winkt den Fotografen ab, die sie als störend empfindet. Viele Journalisten, vier FragenGut gelaunt und offenbar gar nicht Jetlag-geschädigt präsentierte sich Bush mit Gastgeber Schüssel und EU-Kommissionspräsident José Barroso bei der Pressekonferenz in der Hofburg. Dabei erfuhren die geneigten Zuhörer nicht nur, dass die Beziehungen zwischen EU und USA angeblich "stark" sind, sondern auch, dass Österreichs Bundeskanzler über Altgriechisch-Kenntnisse verfügt. Freundschaftlich titulierte man sich mit Wolfgang und George Dabblju. (S. 4)

UMFRAGE Mehr als zwei Drittel gegen Gesamtschule

ErfrischungspauseDer Präsidenten-Konvoi rast wieder durch die Stadt. George W. Bush gönnt sich eine kurze Erfrischungspause im Hotel. Haider live in "Al Jazeera" Damit es nicht langweilig wird, tritt Mittwochnachmittag Kärntens Landeshauptmann Jörg Haider live im Sender "Al Jazeera" auf, wo er sich zum Irak-Engagement der USA äußert. Haider hatte Bush kürzlich in der "Presse" als Kriegsverbrecher bezeichnet.

InstrumentensammlungDie beiden Außenministerinnen Plassnik und Rice bestaunen eine halbe Stunde lang die Instrumentensammlung der Nationalbibliothek. Begeistert zeigt sich Rice von zwei Klavieren, auf denen Clara Schuhmann und Franz Schubert spielten. Sie ist ja nicht nur Politikerin, sondern "nebenbei" auch hoch begabte Pianistin. Das österreichische Protokoll strahlt: Man hat die richtige Wahl für Rice getroffen.

DON'T BE SHYBush hat im Prunksaal der Nationalbibliothek am Kopfende eines großen Tisches Platz genommen, flankiert von Ehefrau Laura und Botschafterin McCaw.

"Don't be shy" ("Seid nicht schüchtern!") ruft er den 14 adretten Austausch-Studenten aufmunternd zu, die nun mit ihm diskutieren sollen. Passend zum Ambiente hält der Präsident zunächst eine kleine einleitende "Vorlesung": Die Studenten erfahren, dass freie Gesellschaften Frieden bringen und die USA sich um Zusammenarbeit mit Europa zum Wohle der Welt bemühen. Auch eine nette Einladung hat er für das Jungvolk: "Kommt in die USA. Seht das Land so, wie es ist, und nicht, wie es von Medien beschrieben wird.

Vor kritischen Fragen muss Bush nicht bange sein, zumindest nicht in den ersten zehn Minuten, in den Journalisten als stumme Zaungäste mitlauschen dürfen. Und außerdem hat die US-Botschaft die Diskussionsrunde handverlesen: mit freundlichen, jungen Menschen aus Südosteuropa, Osteuropa, dem Nahen Osten und Afrika - und einem österreichischen Staatsbürger.

Nizar und Rezarta, zwei Studenten aus dem Kosovo, bedanken sich "aus ganzem Herzen" für die US-Intervention im Kosovo. Und Rezarta will dann noch von Frau zu Frau von der First Lady wissen, wie die Bushs so den Tag verbringt. Geschenkt, solche Fragen beantwortet Laura gerne: Um 5.30 aufstehen, Hunde und Katze betreuen, Zeitunglesen, Arbeitsbeginn für "den Präsidenten" um 6.30 Uhr und so weiter und so fort. Nach derlei instruktiven Alltagsgeschichten dürfen die Journalisten wieder vor der Türe warten.

Alte Bücher, junge SängerknabenNach gut einer Stunde ruft ein junger Amerikaner mit Funkspirale am Ohr den Medientross erneut in den Prunksaal der Nationalbibliothek. Hausherrin Johanna Rachinger zeigt dem Präsidentenpaar ein paar ausgewählte Exemplare. Das darf fotografiert werden. Bush zückt die Lesebrille, während vor ihm ein Bibliothekar mit weißem Haar und weißen Handschuhen die "Tabula Peutinfgerina", einen dicken Band mit der einzig erhaltenen kompletten Karte des römischen Straßennetzes, vorlegt. "Und da, hinter der Donau waren die Barbaren", erläutert der Gastgeber. "Right", "I got it", "really?", stößt Bush immer wieder hervor. Seine Frau scheint ohnehin interessiert, sie ist gelernte Bibliothekarin.

Mittlerweile ist auch Condy Rice wieder dazu gestoßen. Gemeinsam mit dem Präsidentenpaar genießt sie fast gerührt den musikalischen Abschluss: Die Wiener Sängerknaben bringen mitten im Prunksaal zwei Ständchen dar. "Shenandoah" und - natürlich - den "Donauwalzer". Rice nickt wissend, Bush nach einer kleinen Erläuterung später auch. Dafür gibt es Präsidentenlob: "Good Job!" Auf dem Josefsplatz haben sich die schwarze Fahrzeuge des Konvois rund ums Denkmal in der richtigen Reihenfolge aufgefädelt.

Good-Bye ViennaDer 21-stündige Wien-Besuch geht zu Ende: Die Air Force One hebt ab. Eine halbe Stunde später landet Bush schon wieder. Auf dem Flugplatz Ferihegy in Budapest, der nächsten Station seiner Reise. Bush wird wohl über Freiheit reden. Das passt zum 50. Jahrestag des Ungarn-Aufstands.

"Bush und Blair in eine Gefängniszelle"

Interview. Briten-Parlamentarier George Galloway demonstrierte in

Wien gegen George Bush.

Von Helmar Dumbs

UMFRAGE Mehr als zwei Drittel gegen Gesamtschule

Die Presse: Sie sind extra in Wien, um gegen George W. Bush zu

demonstrieren. Haben Sie je gegen Saddam Hussein demonstriert, der 100.000e Iraker ermorden ließ?

George Galloway: Ich habe vielleicht schon gegen ihn demonstriert,bevor Sie auf der Welt waren. Ich demonstrierte, während die USA und Großbritannien ihn aufrüsteten.

Und später, beim Massaker in Halabdscha, wo Saddam gegen Iraks Kurden Giftgas einsetzte?

Galloway: Ja. Es gibt Akten, wo mein Name unter denen aufscheint, die das verurteilt haben. Sie werden dort aber kein einziges Mitglied der Regierung Blair finden.

Wie passt das dazu, dass Sie Saddam nach einem Bagdad-Besuch einen "freundlichen, scheuen Mann" (Quelle: DPA; Anm.) nannten?

Galloway: Freundlich sagte ich nie. Ich sagte, dass er ruhig undrational war und bereit, mit den Waffeninspektoren zu kooperieren.

Würden Sie Saddam einen Kriegsverbrecher nennen?

Galloway: Er hat schwere Verbrechen gegen des irakische Volkbegangen. Aber er tötete nicht so viele Iraker wie Bush und Blair. Sie haben dem Irak mehr geschadet, durch Sanktionen und Krieg.

Sie sagten, man sollte Briten-Premier Blair als Kriegsverbrecher vor Gericht stellen. Wer soll ihn denn anklagen, Großbritannien etwa?

Galloway: Nein. Wir sind Signatarstaat des InternationalenStrafgerichtshofs. Dort sollte er angeklagt werden. Auch wegen des größten Kriegsverbrechens, wie es die Nürnberger Prozesse definierten: Beginnen eines Angriffskriegs. Blair ist fast qua definition schuldig.

Sie nannten kürzlich ein Selbstmordattentat auf Tony Blair "moralisch

gerechtfertigt". Dienstag fand man in Wien vier Bombenattrappen. Wäre es gerechtfertigt, George W. Bush mit einer Bombe zu töten?

Galloway: Eine Bombe würde unschuldige Zivilisten töten. Das ist injeder Religion eine Sünde. Es wäre also moralisch nicht gerechtfertigt, und - noch wichtiger - politisch desaströs. Es würde die Kriesgsbefürworter in Washington und London stärken und eine neue Terrorlawine lostreten.

Und wenn ausschließlich Bush bei dem Anschlag sterben würde, dann hätten Sie kein Problem damit?

Galloway: Wenn Sie ein Iraker sind, dessen Leben und Land zerstörtwurden, habe ich keinen Zweifel, dass Sie eine moralische Rechtfertigung konstruieren könnten. Aber es gibt keine Umstände in Wien, unter denen es moralisch oder politisch korrekt wäre, Bush zu attackieren. Blair sollte den Rest seines Lebens mit Bush in einer Gefängniszelle verbringen müssen. Das käme nahe an Folter heran.

Sollen die Koalitionstruppen den Irak sofort verlassen und riskieren,

dass das Land auseinander fällt?

Galloway: Der Irak bricht jetzt auseinander, wo die Koalition dortist. Die Iraker brauchen uns nicht. Das einzige, was sie brauchen ist, dass wir sofort verschwinden. Sonst werden nur auf beiden Seiten mehr Menschen sterben. Das schafft Hass, und aus diesem Sumpf entstehen neue "11. September".

Aber die Anschläge vom 11. September waren vor der Irak-Invasion.

Galloway: Nein. Die Invasion begann 1991, als die Armeen von 29Ländern den Irak bombardierten.

Damals gab es aber ein UN-Mandat.

Galloway: Egal, ob UN-Mandat oder nicht: Die Invasion begann 1991und setzte sich in den 90er-Jahren mit Sanktionen fort, die eine Million Iraker das Leben kosteten. Osama bin Laden selbst hat den "11. September" in Verbindung mit dem Leiden der Iraker gebracht.

"US-Modell hat ausgedient"

Der Paradeintellektuelle Tony Judt prophezeit eine Renaissance deseuropäischen Wohlfahrtsstaates.

Von BURKHARD BISCHOF

wien. Die Vereinigten Staaten, so wie sie sich heute präsentieren - mit ihrem löcherigen Sozialsystem und ihren gigantischen Einkommensunterschieden zwischen Durchschnittsverdienern und den Reichen des Landes - bieten kein Gesellschaftsmodell für die übrige Welt, argumentiert Tony Judt, Professor für Europäische Studien und Geschichte an der New York University: "Amerika, das bis in die Siebzigerjahre in der ganzen Welt als Modell der Moderne angesehen wurde, hat in dieser Rolle ausgedient", erklärte der britische Paradeintellektuelle, der mit provokanten Gedanken immer wieder heftige internationale Diskussionen anstößt, am Dienstag bei einem Vortrag im Institut für die Wissenschaften vom Menschen in Wien. Wenn die USA kein Zukunftsmodell bieten, wer dann? China etwa? "Die Volksrepublik wird vielleicht die größte Volkswirtschaft der Welt, sie bietet aber sicher kein Sozialmodell für die Welt, ja nicht einmal für die Chinesen selbst", meint Judt. Auch ein indisches Modell werde wohl nie ein globaler Exportartikel. Es sei das europäische Modell des Wohlfahrtsstaates, das reüssieren könnte.

"Keine Logik der Globalisierung"

Denn: "Wir sind in eine Periode permanenter Unsicherheit eingetreten,in der das Gefühl weit verbreitet ist, dass alles außer Kontrolle gerät. Umso stärker wird das Verlangen nach mehr Sicherheit, mehr Schutz und nach mehr Staat werden", prophezeit Judt. Und hier könnte das europäische Modell des Wohlfahrtsstaates die Antwort sein. Dieser Wohlfahrtsstaat sei ja auch nie linkes Experiment gewesen, wie viele Amerikaner meinten, sondern das Projekt betagter konservativer Politiker wie Churchill, Adenauer und Schuman gewesen, die ihre Lektionen aus den Gemetzeln des 20. Jahrhunderts gelernt hätten. Freilich könne Europa nur dann zum Modell werden, wenn es mit seiner obsessiven Nabelbeschau aufhöre. Als Beispiel für Europas Probleme nannte Judt Frankreich, das offenbar jegliche Fähigkeit verloren habe, darüber nachzudenken, wie sich das Land verändern müsse. Judt warnte auch vor allen jenen, die ständig die Globalisierung als Lösung für die Probleme der Welt anpriesen: "Die historische Erfahrung zeigt: Es gibt keine Logik der Weltwirtschaft, und es gibt auch keine Logik der Globalisierung.

Zur Person. G. Galloway

Der schottische Politiker George Galloway (51) wurde 2003 wegenheftiger Kritik an Premier Tony Blair aus der Labour-Partei ausgeschlossen und gründete die Partei "Respect". 2005 setzte er sich im Wahlkreis gegen die Labour-Kandidatin durch. IM WORDRAP: George W. Bush: KillerDonald Rumsfeld: Narr New Labour: BetrügerSowjetunion: untergegangen, dadurch Mitschuld an der Weltlage Prinz Charles: nettFußball-

"Bush, Bush, Bush go home!"

VOn JUDITH EGGER

WIEN. Um 17 Uhr ist der Anfang der Mariahilferstraße vor dem

Westbahnhof bereits gerammelt voll. Auch ohne die Wärme der aneinander gedrängten Körper ist die tropische Hitze fast unerträglich. Sämtliche Getränkeregale der umliegenden Geschäfte sind deshalb bereits leer geräumt. Ausläufer der Menschentraube blockieren den Gürtel. "Also nicht nur Bush kann Stau verursachen - sondern auch People Power," ruft ein Aktivist stolz in das Megafon.

Viel mehr Menschen als erwartet

Viel mehr Menschen als erwartet sind gekommen, um lautstark zu zeigen,

dass sie den US-Präsidenten nicht in Wien wollen. "Bush, Bush, Bush go home" ist der Sprechchor, der am häufigsten zu hören ist. Die Polizei zählt 15.000, die Veranstalter schätzen die Zahl der Teilnehmer auf über 20.000. Nicht ganz Wien ist wie angekündigt zur Anti-Bush-Stadt geworden, die Mariahilferstraße gehört aber auf jeden Fall den Bush-Gegnern. Mit Trommeln, Trillerpfeifen, und Lautsprechern sind sie weit in den sechsten und siebten Bezirk zu hören. An der Spitze des Zuges, der um sechs loszieht, marschieren US-Amerikaner: "Support our troops - bring them home", steht auf ihren Transparenten.

Individuelle Transparente

Neben den obligatorischen "Hoch die internationale

Solidarität"-Gesängen und "Bush go home"-Rufen entfaltet sich individuelle Kreativität: "Drop bombs on me" fordert ein junger Mann, der nur mit Boxershorts bekleidet ist, "Invade yourself" eine junge Frau. Kategorisch "Gegen alle Präsidenten" ist ein schwarz gekleideter Bursch.

Neben den typischen Themen wie Irak-Krieg, Guantßnamo und Umweltverschmutzung protestieren über sechzig verschiedenen Gruppen gegen unzählige Dinge, die sie mit der Person Bush verbinden: Palästinenser gegen die israelische Besatzung, Türken gegen Isolationshaft, Philippinos gegen Menschenrechtsverletzungen, österreichische Moslems gegen Islamfeindlichkeit und Iraner gegen einen möglichen US-Angriff.

Das Transparent "Stoppt Bush, rettet die Welt" zeigt, dass der US-Präsident eigentlich für alles Schlechtes auf dieser Welt verantwortlich gemacht wird. Als die Demosntranten bei der Hofburg ankommen, befindet sich der US-Präsident, aber schon im Flugzeug nach Budapest.

Bierflaschen als Wurfgeschosse

Der bunte lange Zug marschiert friedlich zum Heldenplatz. Aggressive

Stimmung kommt vielmehr unter den verschiedenen Organisatoren auf. Wegen Unstimmigkeiten über die Rednerliste, gibt es schon am Westbahnhof zwei Bühnen, die sich mit lauter Musik zu übertönen versuchen. Wie bereits bei der Schüler-Demo am Vormittag, bei der rund 1200 Jugendliche mitmarschiert waren, spaltet sich auch am Abend der Zug: Der größere Teil der Demonstration zieht weiter zum Votivpark. Hier findet die Abschlusskundgebung der Friedensplattform "Stopp Bush" statt: mit prominenten Rednern, wie der Friedensaktivistin Cindy Shannon und dem britischen Abgeordneten George Galloway.

Die radikaleren Gruppen verbleiben vor der Hofburg. Bei Zusammenstößen zwischen den rivalisierenden Linksgruppierungen kommt es zu einer Verhaftung. Außerdem bewerfen rund 50 Jugendliche Polizisten mit Bierflaschen und Feuerwerkskörpern. Nach einer halben Stunde aber ziehen sich die Randalierer zurück.

Was wurde aus Bushs Mist?

Auch für den Putz-Trupp hieß es: Betreten verboten!

Von MANFRED SEEH

WIEN. Nachdem Passagierflugzeuge landen, begibt sich üblicherweise

ein Reinigungs-Trupp an Bord, um die Maschinen wieder "startklar" zu machen. Wie ist das eigentlich bei der Air Force One, der Maschine des US-Präsidenten? Anders! "Wir haben den Mist wegtransportiert und das WC abgepumpt, aber wir haben die Maschine nicht von innen gesehen", erklärte Flughafen-Wien-Sprecherin Brigitta Pongratz.

UMFRAGE Mehr als zwei Drittel gegen Gesamtschule

Die Reinigung an Bord erfolgte aus Sicherheitsgründen durch US-Personal. Allerdings, so erklärt Pongratz, sei dies nicht unbedingt eine Spezialität der Air Force One - dies komme auch bei anderen Flugzeugen von Staatsgästen vor.

Und wer betankte die markante blau lackierte Großraum-Maschine? Brachten die Amerikaner eigenen Treibstoff mit? Das nicht. Die Tanks der Air Force One wurden sehr wohl mit österreichischem Kraftstoff aufgefüllt, allerdings wurde das Kerosin vorher "gründlich überprüft", wie aus verlässlicher Quelle zu erfahren war.

Indessen wird die Landung am Dienstagabend als "Bilderbuchaktion" bezeichnet. Heinz Sommerbauer von Austro Control zur "Presse" weiter: "Auch der Linienverkehr war nur wenig verzögert. Nach Gesprächen mit dem Piloten der Präsidenten-Maschine habe man die "Freeze"-Phase (Einfrier-Phase für alle anderen anfliegenden Maschinen) auf etwa 15 Minuten reduzieren können. Noch vor der Air Force One waren - sozusagen als Vorhut - "einige große Transportmaschinen" gelandet.

Für kleine, private Flieger bestand während der Dauer des Bush-Aufenthalts ohnedies eine Luftraum-Sperre - Radius: ca. 80 Kilometer rund um Schwechat.

Reaktionen

SP: Ankündigung positiv

Die Bereitschaft von Präsident George W. Bush, das GefangenenlagerGuantßnamo schließen zu wollen, sei zumindest eine positive Ankündigung, sagte Peter Schieder, außenpolitischer Sprecher der SPÖ, zur "Presse". Nicht akzeptabel sei aber, dass dieser Schritt nicht sofort erfolgen soll. Laut Schieder sollten die USA in einem ersten Schritt entscheiden, gegen welche Gefangenen sie Anklage erhoben wird. Bei allen anderen soll eine Arbeitsgruppe, die von den Vereinten Nationen gebildet wird, die weitere Vorgangsweise klären und über eventuelle Schadenersatzansprüche entscheiden. Schieder kritisierte auch, dass Bush in der Frage der CIA-Überflüge und bezüglich einer Beendigung des Irak-Einsatzes keine klaren Ansagen gemacht habe.

Grüne: Wenig Klarheit

Der Wunsch von Bush, Guantßnamo zu schließen, sei ihr zu unkonkret,sagte die außenpolitische Sprecherin der Grünen, Ulrike Lunacek, zur "Presse". Von Schüssel hätte sie erwartet, dass er auf einen fixen Termin für die Schließung des Lagers drängen werde. Das Thema nur anzusprechen, sei einfach zu wenig. Auch beim Thema Iran habe sie eine klare Absage von Schüssel zu neuen Kriegsabenteuern der USA erwartet, sagt Lunacek.

FPÖ: Wien in Verruf

Der Bush-Besuch bringe Wien in Verruf, schimpfte FP-ChefHeinz-Christian Strache. Es sei unfassbar, dass "einer der größten Menschenrechtsverletzer", der unter anderem Guantßnamo, Abu Ghraib oder das Massaker in Haditha zu verantworten habe, in Wien von Bundeskanzler Schüssel unter enormen Kosten hofiert werde.

BZÖ: Völkerrecht für alle

Das Völkerrecht gelte auch für einen großen Staat wie die USA, sagteder Kärntner Landeshauptmann und BZÖ-Chef Jörg Haider in einem Interview mit dem arabischen Fernsehsender Al Jazeera. Sowohl der von den USA gegen den Irak begonnene Krieg als auch das US-Gefangenenlager Guantßnamo würden gegen internationales Recht verstoßen.

Fakten: Wogegen sie sind

Die Großdemonstration in Wien richtete sich unter anderem gegen: @JV Krieg und Kapitalismus @JV Truppen im Irak und Afghanistan @JV Menschenrechtsverletzungen @JV Möglichen Angriff auf den Iran @JV Neoliberale Wirtschaftspolitik @JV Militarisierung

Gemeinsamer Druck auf

Öllieferanten

EU und USA wollen erstmals gemeinsam die Energieabhängigkeit voninstabilen Staaten verringern.

WIEN (ki/sr). Der Beschluss der EU und der USA, im Energiebereich

künftig an einem Strang zu ziehen, bringt Russland vor dem G 8-Gipfel in St. Petersburg im Juli unter Druck. Die EU und die USA vereinbarten in Wien eine gemeinsame Strategie zur Sicherheit und Stabilität der Energiemärkte. Zwar soll die Kooperation mit Lieferländern verstärkt werden, es sollen aber "geopolitische Konsequenzen" aus der Abhängigkeit von Öllieferländern gezogen werden.

Die Energiekrise zu Beginn des Jahres sitzt den Europäern noch tief in den Knochen. Die zunehmend instabile politische Situation in einigen OPEC-Staaten hat die EU und die USA nun veranlasst, mögliche gemeinsame außenpolitische Reaktionen zu vereinbaren, wenn es die Situation erfordere.

Doch nicht nur in der Energiefrage ist Russland unter Druck: Beim transatlantischen Business-Dialog (TABD) im Rahmen des Bush-Besuchs stand das Thema Produktpiraterie im Mittelpunkt. Die EU und die USA wollen verstärkt Fälschern den Kampf ansagen. Probleme gebe es hier vor allem mit Russland und China. "Diese Länder müssen stärker gegen den Missbrauch geistigen Eigentums ankämpfen", sagte der Vizepräsident der EU-Kommission, Günter Verheugen.

In der Schlusserklärung des Gipfels fordern die EU und die USA darüber hinaus die Einhaltung von Verträgen und marktwirtschaftlichen Prinzipien ein. Vertragspartner werden aufgefordert, den Zugang zu Infrastrukturen zu gewährleisten, um das "Funktionieren des weltweiten Energiemarktes" sicherzustellen.

WTO-Runde darf nicht scheitern

US-Präsident Georg W. Bush appellierte auch an die Europäer, die

WTO-Verhandlungen nicht scheitern zu lassen. Bush räumte ein, dass es zwischen Europäern und den USA Differenzen bei den Verhandlungen gebe. Diese seien auf dem Gipfel in Wien auch angesprochen worden.

Wiener Schlusserklärung

@JV Menschenrechte und Demokratie. "Wir werden weiterhin im Nahen

Osten eng kooperieren, besonders durch das Quartett (UN, EU, USA, Russland; Anm.). Wir heißen temporäre internationale Mechanismen willkommen, die die Hilfe direkt an die palästinensische Bevölkerung ermöglichen. Im letzten Jahr hat unsere Kooperation mit dem Iran eine neue Ebene erreicht. Wir haben in jeder Phase des derzeitigen Versuchs, die Frage des iranischen Nuklearprogramms zu lösen, eng zusammengearbeitet.

- @JV Globale Herausforderungen und Sicherheit. "Wir werden unsere Kooperation im Kampf gegen den Terrorismus durch Austrocknen der Ressourcen (Finanzierung, Reise und andere materielle Unterstützung), durch Verweigerung von Unterschlupf für Terroristen verstärken sowie durch die Verhinderungen von neuen Rekrutierungen.
- @JV Wohlstand. "Wir stimmen der Strategie zum Schutz geistigen Eigentums im Kampf gegen Produktpiraterie und Fälschungen zu. Konkrete Maßnahmen zur Bekämpfung wurden bereits gesetzt.
- @JV Energie und Klimawandel. "Wir anerkennen die strategische Rolle von Versorgungssicherheit, Wettbewerb und Nachhaltigkeit im Energie-Sektor. Wir wollen die Versorgungssicherheit verbessern, indem wir den Dialog mit Transitländern, Produzenten und Verbrauchern verstärken sowie die Diversifizierung der Energiequellen und der Versorgungsrouten weltweit, besonders im Kaspischen Meer, Nah-Ost, Afrika und Lateinamerika. In Bezug auf die ernste und langfristige Herausforderung des Klimawandels, des Verlustes an Biodiversität und Luftverschmutzung werden wir enger kooperieren.

"Polizei-Einsatz geht an die Grenzen"

BUSH-BESUCH. Gewerkschaft übt heftige Kritik an Personalnot.

Nächster Großeinsatz naht.

Von KLAUS STÖGER

WIEN. Die SP-dominierte Polizeigewerkschaft übte am Mittwoch

heftige Kritik am Personalkonzept der Wiener Polizei. Beim Sicherheitseinsatz zum Bush-Besuch agiere jeder einzelne Beamte absolut am Limit. "Die Leute kommen locker auf bis zu 80 Stunden Dienst in dieser Woche", ärgert sich Gewerkschafter Hermann Greylinger. Und vom Bush-Besuch gehe es für die meisten Polizisten dann gleich zum nächsten Großeinsatz, dem Donauinselfest.

Dort müsse am Wochenende die Sicherheit von mehr als zwei Millionen Besuchern garantiert werden. "Von einer Einhaltung der gesetzlich vorgeschriebenen Ruhezeiten kann da überhaupt keine Rede sein", ärgert sich Greylinger. Jetzt mache sich "für jeden ganz deutlich die große Personalnot an Polizisten in Wien bemerkbar", kritisiert der SP-Gewerkschafter. Für Franz Pail, den Vorsitzenden der Polizeigewerkschaft, zeige der Einsatz, der "an die Grenzen der Belastbarkeit" gehe, aber, "wie flexibel wir auch in Ausnahmesituationen sind", sagt Pail zur "Presse". Durch den Bush-Einsatz blieben in den Polizeiinspektionen jedoch die Akten liegen.

Nur noch Notdienst möglich?

"Dort ist nur noch ein Notdienst aufrecht, ein oder zwei Beamte halten

die Stellung", erklärt Greylinger. Auch die Kriminalpolizei könne nur in eingeschränktem Maße ihre Arbeit erledigen. "Die meisten von ihnen müssen in irgendwelchen Hoteletagen Wache stehen", kritisiert der Gewerkschafter. Er berichtet, dass es bei einem Polizeieinsatz in Wien zum ersten Mal notwendig geworden sei, dass aus allen Bundesländern Polizisten zur Verstärkung angefordert werden mussten.

Die Polizeiführung habe aber aus dem EULAC-Gipfel im Mai (Treffen zwischen der EU und Lateinamerika) dazugelernt, ergänzt Pail. "Auch damals waren Kollegen aus mehreren Bundesländern nach Wien abkommandiert, die hier in teilweise aufgelassenen Kasernen völlig inakzeptable Unterkünfte vorgefunden haben". Massive Proteste der Gewerkschaft waren die Folge. Für die Kommandierung während des Bush-Besuches habe man den Polizisten aus den Bundesländern nun bessere Quartiere in der Maria Theresien-Kaserne zur Verfügung gestellt.

Karl Mahrer, Landespolizeikommandant-Stellvertreter von Wien, bestätigt den enormen Personalaufwand. "Die Beamten sind in diesen Tagen so belastet wie noch nie und bis zum Zerreißen angespannt. Dafür zeige man in der Polizeiführung Verständnis. Dass aber abseits des Bush-Einsatzes in den Polizeiinspektionen lediglich ein "Notdienst" am Werk sei, dementiert Mahrer. "Der Regeldienst ist natürlich voll aufrecht", in der Nacht von Dienstag auf Mittwoch habe die Polizei unter anderem einen mutmaßlichen Frauenmörder und eine Messerstecherin festgenommen.

Vom Bush-Einsatz auf die Insel

Mahrer bestätigte, dass das am Freitag beginnende Donauinselfest

zusätzlichen Aufwand bedeutet. Diesmal werde der Polizeieinsatz gegenüber den Vorjahren verstärkt, da ein besonderes Augenmerk auf die Sicherheit in öffentlichen Verkehrsmitteln liegt.

Bush: "Werde genauso weitermachen"

EU-USA-Gipfel. Der US-Präsident verteidigt in Wien seine

Außenpolitik, zeigte aber auch Verständnis für seine Kritiker. Er werde Guantßnamo schließen, bekräftigte Bush.

VON FRIEDERIKE LEIBL

WIEN. US-Präsident George Bush ging beim EU-USA-Gipfel am Mittwoch

in Wien beim Konflikt um das US-Sonderlager in Guantßnamo Bay einen Schritt auf die EU zu. "Ich möchte Guantßnamo schließen. Ich möchte das endlich beenden", bekräftigte er. Gleichzeitig fand Bush deutliche Worte für Kritiker seiner Außenpolitik, insbesondere am Irak-Krieg: "Ich verstehe manche Befürchtungen. Aber Politik erfordert harte Entscheidungen. Und ich werde genau so weitermachen.

"Kaltblütige Killer"

Bush selbst habe das Thema Guantßnamo angesprochen, sagte der

EU-Ratsvorsitzende, Bundeskanzler Wolfgang Schüssel. Laut EU-Kreisen wurden dem Thema rund 15 Minuten gewidmet, außergewöhnlich ausführlich für diese Art von Gipfeln, die sonst über Formalitäten kaum hinausgehen. Der Konflikt sei "deutlicher denn je" besprochen worden.

Der US-Präsident machte jedoch klar, dass die Schließung von der Entscheidung des Obersten Gerichtshofs über die Rechtmäßigkeit von Militärtribunalen abhänge. Gefährliche Gefangene dürften nicht in die Freiheit entlassen werden. "Einige müssen angeklagt werden, sie sind kaltblütige Killer", sagte Bush. Die anderen Gefangenen wolle man in ihre Herkunftsländer zurückschicken, was aber neue Probleme aufwerfe. Die Häftlinge stammten zum großen Teil aus Saudiarabien, Afghanistan und Jemen. Es gebe "internationalen Druck", die Gefangenen nicht dorthin zurückzuführen, sagte Bush. US-Kreise verwiesen darauf, dass ausgeschlossen werden müsse, dass die Männer gefoltert oder ohne Prozess auf die Straße gesetzt würden.

Schüssel bekräftigte die Forderung der EU, Guantßnamo zu schließen. "Wir können den Kampf gegen Terrorismus nur gewinnen, wenn wir unsere eigenen Werte nicht aufgeben. Europa müsse den USA bei der Lösung des Guantßnamo-Konflikts zur Seite stehen, sagte Schüssel. "Wir müssen Herkunftsländern helfen, die Gefangenen zurückzunehmen, um ihnen den Prozess zu machen oder sie freizulassen.

Gegenüber dem Iran demonstrierten die EU und die USA Geschlossenheit: Es müsse vermieden werden, dass der Iran über Möglichkeiten für die Herstellung nuklearer Waffen verfüge. Der Iran müsse nun rasch entscheiden, ob er das westliche Angebot im Atom-Konflikt annehme. Die von Teheran geforderte Frist bis 22. August "sieht wie ein langer Zeitraum aus", sagte Bush. "Sie sollten nicht so lange für die Analyse eines guten Vorschlags brauchen.

Warnungen wurden auch in Richtung Nordkorea und Syrien ausgegeben. Nordkoreas Pläne für den Test einer Langstreckenrakete müssten die Welt nervös machen, sagte Bush. Schüssel kündigte an, dass sich die EU einer "deutlichen internationalen Reaktion" anschließen könnte, wenn die internationalen Vereinbarungen über Raketentests verletzt würden. Syrien erteilte Bush eine klare Aufforderung: "Lasst den Libanon in Ruhe. Zum Nahen Osten meinte der US-Präsident, dass Washington eine Zwei-Staaten-Lösung unterstütze. Gleichzeitig sei die Anerkennung der *Hamas*-Regierung für die USA ausgeschlossen.

Ausdrückliche Würdigung fand die österreichische Rolle am Balkan. Die EU seit unter dem Vorsitz von Bundeskanzler Schüssel "führend" bei der Lösung von Konflikten in der Region gewesen. Die USA boten Europa bei der Balkan-Politik Unterstützung an. Dem Vernehmen nach wurde bei den Gesprächen auch die Zukunft des Kosovo angesprochen.

"Absurde Vorwürfe"

Auf die Frage eines Journalisten, wie Bush seine fallenden Imagewerte

in Europa und die jüngste Umfrage, wonach die USA die größte Weltbedrohung sei, bewerte, reagierte der US-Präsident emotional. Derartige Vorwürfe seien "absurd". Er könne zwar verstehen, dass seine Entscheidungen nicht überall goutiert würden, sagte Bush. "Aber ich mache mich bei meiner Politik nicht von Umfragen abhängig. Es sei richtig, dass der Krieg im Irak zu Differenzen zwischen der EU und den USA geführt habe und er könne "die

UMFRAGE Mehr als zwei Drittel gegen Gesamtschule

starken Gefühle" nachvollziehen. "Aber was vorbei ist, ist vorbei, und was vor uns liegt, ist eine hoffnungsvolle Demokratie im Irak.

Europa habe nie begriffen, welchen Einschnitt der 11. 9. 2001 für die USA bedeuteten, sagte Bush. "Für Europa war es ein Schreckensmoment, in den USA bedeutete es einen Sinneswandel. Und bei allem, was man den USA vorwerfe, sollte man eines nicht vergessen: "Es sind wir, die die Hungrigen dieser Welt füttern.

Mit Leibwache durch die Sperrzone Hofburg

Lokalaugenschein: Was dem Secret Service beim Test der Polizei nicht

gelang, gelang der "Presse": Ein Spaziergang durch die Sperrzone in der City.

Von Andreas Wetz

Wien. "Es ist schön, wenn der US-Präsident und seine Frau religiös

sind", sagt Ordens-Schwester Coletta, Kindergärtnerin der Salvator-Schule in Kaisermühlen, und lugt dabei über das Absperrgitter. Obwohl kein Bush-Fan, kann sie die negative Stimmung, die dem Präsidenten entgegen schlägt, nicht verstehen. "Sein Besuch ist eine Auszeichnung für Österreich, und Sicherheit muss sein. Stellen Sie sich vor, es passiert etwas!"

Fußmarsch der First Lady

Eben war Coletta an diesem Mittwoch noch beim Zahnarzt im

Behandlungsstuhl gelegen, jetzt gesellt sie sich zu den Schaulustigen, die Laura Bush, Frau von George W., bei ihrem Besuch im Stephansdom beobachten wollen. Von Außerhalb der Sperrzone. Innerhalb der Absperrung besprechen sich grimmig dreinblickende Männer in schwarzen Anzügen mit sichtlich nervösen Polizisten: Planänderung!

Ursprünglich hätte die First Lady die wenigen Meter vom Dom zum Haas-Haus - wo das Mittagessen am Programm stand - aus Sicherheitsgründen mit dem Auto fahren sollen. Frau Bush entschied anders, wollte dem goldenen Käfig des gepanzerten Fahrzeugs für ein paar Sekunden entfliehen um einmal nicht durch Klimaanlagen gefilterte Wiener Luft zu schnuppern. Die Folgen des Extrawunsches: "Wir müssen mehr Personal organisieren", so ein Polizist.

Der Personalnotstand der Polizei ist auch an einer Personenschleuse bei der Sperrzone um die Hofburg Thema (siehe Artikel oben). "Viele von uns hätten heute frei", erzählt ein Beamter, der seinen Namen lieber nicht in der Zeitung lesen will. Der Aufwand insgesamt lässt ihn eher kalt. "Nach dem Halbjahr der EU-Präsidentschaft ist das längst Routine. Wobei: Ganz so wie immer sei es dann doch nicht abgelaufen.

"Der Secret Service hat unsere Vorkehrungen getestet", so der Polizist. Mehrmals hätten Mitglieder der Leibgarde des Präsidenten versucht, sich ohne Berechtigungsausweis und mit fadenscheinigen Ausreden durch die Kontrollen zu mogeln: ohne Erfolg. Für berechtigte Anrainer funktionierte das Zutrittssystem jedoch reibungslos.

Ob Bushs Prätorianer vielleicht auch die Bomben-Attrappen am Dienstag in der Innenstadt deponiert haben? Der Beamte und seine Kollegen grinsen.

Woran der Secret Service scheiterte, gelang der "Presse", nämlich der Zutritt zur Sperrzone Hofburg - ohne Berechtigungskarte aber mit persönlicher Leibwache in Form eines Polizisten. Trotz bescheidener Kundenfrequenz ("Sie sind der Dritte heute") hält Verkäuferin Helga Sura in der Douglas-Parfümerie am Kohlmarkt - sie liegt innerhalb der Sperrzone - die Stellung. "Wir nutzen die Zeit, um Papierkram zu erledigen. Natürlich gäbe es Einbußen, in einer Weltstadt müsse man aber damit leben können.

Parfum für die Polizei

UMFRAGE Mehr als zwei Drittel gegen Gesamtschule

Wie mit der drückenden Hitze. Wenn schon kaum Kundschaft kommt, macht

Frau Sura zumindest Werbung in eigener Sache. "Ich habe Ihnen zur Erfrischung ein Eau de Cologne hingestellt", spricht sie den schwitzenden Polizisten an. "Sagen Sie es ruhig auch Ihren Kollegen vor der Tür, und wer will, dem bringe ich Kaffee.

ZUR PERSON

Franz Pail ist Vorsitzender der Polizeigewerkschaft. Er gehört den

sozialdemokratischen Gewerkschaftern an. Der Burgenländer Pail gilt als "Urgestein" der Exekutive. Er führt die Polizeigewerkschaft bereits seit den frühen 90er Jahren an. Vor seiner Zeit als Gewerkschafter versah Pail Dienst in einem Wachzimmer in der Wiener Innenstadt.

nebenbei

Ein Dankeschön von G.W.

Da staunte Franz Semper, Einsatzleiter der Wiener Polizei, nichtschlecht. Mittwochvormittag wurden er und sechs weitere Mitarbeiter der Exekutive vom Secret Service ins Hotel Intercontinental geladen, wo ihnen US-Präsident Bush persönlich für ihre Arbeit dankte. Bush, der von seiner Frau Laura und von Außenministerin Condoleezza Rice begleitet wurde, sprach mit jedem einzelnen Gast und erkundigte sich genau über ihre Arbeit. Er sei "sehr locker, freundlich, aufgeschlossen und kontaktfreudig" gewesen, erzählte Semper. Zuletzt stellte sich Bush auch noch zum Erinnerungsfoto für jeden einzelnen Geladenen.

Frequenzen gescannt

Um Fernzündungen von Bomben per Mobiltelefon oder Funk zu verhindern,fuhr im Präsidenten-Konvoi auch ein Wagen der Sondereinheit Observation (SEO) mit, der Frequenzen abscannte. Im Innenministerium beruhigte man: Es würden keine Telefongespräche abgehört.

Vierfacher Umsatz

Die Gastronomen rund um die Sperrzone in der Innenstadt klagten - nurdas Cafe Hofburg jubelte. "Jeden Tag ein Gipfel", forderte Kellner Robert. Immerhin hat sein Café, das innerhalb der Sperrzone liegt, mit Sicherheitsleuten den vierfachen Umsatz gehabt. Am Speiseplan standen Spinatstrudel und Gulasch. Alkohol wurde nicht konsumiert.

[Fotos: EPA,

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Section: WORLD; Pg. B8; Around the world in headgear

Byline: Associated Press; Getty Images

Graphic

Colour Photo: Associated Press; VEILED SUPPORT: Palestinian <u>women</u> participate in a rally to support the <u>Hamas</u> government in Gaza City,Wednesday. Staff from the Palestinian prime minister's office went on strike Wednesday, joining a widespread work stoppage by civil servants demanding overdue salaries from the <u>Hamas</u>-led government.;

Colour Photo: Associated Press; PEACE BRO: An Israeli peace activist from the group Peace Now wears a helmet painted to look like those of United Nations peacekeepers as he and others protest Israeli military operations in Gaza.:

Colour Photo: Associated Press; DESIGNER DUDS: A model displays Japanese designer Ylang Ylang's knit bikini with matching cap during the 2007 Spring & Summer Tokyo Collection in Tokyo, Wednesday.;

Colour Photo: Associated Press; 'WIG MAN': Republican U.S. Senate hopeful Daniel 'Wig Man' Vovak participates in a debate this week in Baltimore. Maryland voters have a bevy of Senate candidates to choose from in next week's primaries.;

Colour Photo: Getty Images; CROWN JEWELS: A model displays a gold crown with diamonds during the exhibition Jeweller 2006: Best Jewelry of Russia, Wednesday in Moscow.; Colour

Photo: Associated Press; PAPAL LID: Pope Benedict XVI wears a 'saturno hat,' inspired by the ringed planet Saturn, to shield himself from the sun as he is driven through the crowd of faithful prior to his weekly general audience in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican, Wednesday.

Load-Date: September 7, 2006