

Date and Time: Thursday, May 2, 2024 6:43:00PM EEST

Job Number: 223362309

Documents (100)

1. [Withdrawal from Gaza puts the spotlight back on Mahmoud Abbas](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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2. [Teen makes his mark in Gaza mosques](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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3. [Israeli troops strike Rafah: Missiles kill seven as bulldozers move in to demolish Palestinian homes](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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4. [Sharon weeps as distraught settlers leave Gaza](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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5. [Settlers' resistance handbook](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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6. [READING MATTER](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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7. [IN BRIEF](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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8. [LETTERS TO THE EDITOR](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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9. [Palestinians desire democracy, but face tough road](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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10. [My dinner with Yasser: At a recent chicken-and-chips meal with Arafat, the PLO leader was cheerful and frail but in seeming good health](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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11. [Your say](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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12. [Teen bomber kills policemen](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2004 to Dec 01, 2005

13. [Palestinian gunmen abduct, then free, 3 church volunteers](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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14. [Arafat urges radical shake-up of PA;](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2004 to Dec 01, 2005

15. [West Bank: the new militant focus?](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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16. [Pride restored](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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17. [Bush plea as lives hang on knife-edge](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2004 to Dec 01, 2005

18. [Swift revenge after gunmen kill settler family](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2004 to Dec 01, 2005

19. [First Stage of Israel Evacuation Ends](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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Narrowed by
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20. [The terror continues](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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21. [Abbas Says Calm in Gaza Pullout Would Aid Statehood](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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22. [Foot soldiers of nihilism](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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23. [At Home With the Killers](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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24. [NATION; WORLD](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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25. [At least 14 killed in Gaza firefight: Palestinians vow revenge for deadliest Israeli raid in 17 months](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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26. [I HOPE FOR FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT, FOR PEACE'; PALESTINIAN ELECTION](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2004 to Dec 01, 2005

27. [*Where Compassion Is a One-Way Street*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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28. [*Elmasry's interview started firestorm*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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29. [*Reporters on the Job*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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30. [*Palestinians Killed by Israelis at 2 1/2-Year High*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2004 to Dec 01, 2005

31. [*World - Israel curbs travel by Palestinians;*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2004 to Dec 01, 2005

32. [Palestinian gunmen release three foreigners](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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Narrowed by

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33. [A sterner test; GAZA STRIP: Israeli evacuation an enormous challenge for Abbas](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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34. [Move over, Osama: The Arab version of American Idol, representing some of the worst aspects of Western culture, is taking the Middle East by a storm](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2004 to Dec 01, 2005

35. [OSAMA'S GREATEST ENEMY: HASSAN THE HEARTTHOB](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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36. [THOUSANDS PROTEST SETTLEMENT SHUTDOWN](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2004 to Dec 01, 2005

37. [Dignity was lost as Arabs danced in the streets](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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38. [FIGHTING IN GAZA KILLS 2 ISRAELIS, 1 PALESTINIAN, TRAPS RESIDENTS IN HOMES](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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Narrowed by
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39. [Yesterday's assassination of Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, founder of Hamas, will probably be on the agenda at next week's summit in Tunis. But many in the region are concerned with the survival of existing regimes, write Roula Khalaf and Guy Dinmore](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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40. [HUSSAM ABDO'S FAILED SUICIDE ATTACK SHOCKED THE WORLD BUT MANY SUCH YOUNGSTERS, TRAINED EVEN AS TODDLERS, ONLY AWAIT THEIR TURN; HOW KIDS BECOME WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2004 to Dec 01, 2005

41. [GAZA EVICTIONS PROCEED WITH FORCE; ISRAELI TROOPS CARRY OUT ORDERS AMID NEGOTIATIONS, TAUNTS, TEARS](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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42. [Egyptian opposition bides time](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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43. [First lady heckled in Jerusalem; Laura Bush sees anti- American sentiment up close](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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44. [On the West Bank, a Hint of Resistance Without Blood](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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45. [WORLD DIGEST](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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46. [FBI CHIEF HAILS HELP OF ARAB, MUSLIM NATIONS/ HE REPORTS COOPERATION AGAINST TERRORISM](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2004 to
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47. [*Muslim leader gives Cook a shaking*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2004 to
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48. [*The roundup*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2004 to
Dec 01, 2005

49. [*The roundup*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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News

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50. [*Rice tries to revive stalled peace process*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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51. [*Israeli peace overture follows Gaza destruction*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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52. [TV Choice](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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53. [Unhealthy bedfellows](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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Narrowed by
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54. [Day of bloodshed in northern Gaza Strip](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2004 to Dec 01, 2005

55. [Five children killed in Gaza Strip battles](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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56. [Suicide bombings in Israel kill at least 16](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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57. [*Middle of the road map*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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58. [*01.08.05*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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59. [*WHO ARE YOU TRYING TO KID?*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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60. [*World - Palestinians mark pullout;*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2004 to Dec 01, 2005

61. [*Time for the truth about this sinister brotherhood*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2004 to Dec 01, 2005

62. [*14 firefighters die tackling blaze*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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63. [14 firefighters die tackling blaze](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2004 to Dec 01, 2005

64. [Israeli troops tread lightly in Gaza They help some pack, clash with others as eviction notices go out](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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65. [Fighting rages in Gaza Strip: 3 dead, homes razed as troops seek dead comrades](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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66. [Mideast PR move backfires as: First Lady met by jeers](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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67. [Gaza violence breaks out as Israel publishes prisoner list](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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68. [13-year-old dazzles Gaza worshippers; Devotion, not division, is his text](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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69. [Women queue up to be suicide bombers](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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70. [Unlikely hero in Gaza Strip: With his commanding stage presence and knowledge of the Islamic holy book on the Gaza's preaching circuit. Which is good news for parents \(he preaches obedience\) it's hard to think of Amjad Abu Sido as being just 13 years old. But he's the hottest thing and moderates \(he thinks the mosques are places for religion, not politics\)](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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71. [Murder in the guise of honour](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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72. [U.S. - Israeli link outrages Arabs; Palestinians, Iraqis decry their 'occupiers'](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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73. [Political oxymorons](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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74. [World](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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75. [Don't play with Tigers](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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76. [Abu Mazen's Two Faces, II](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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77. [Three women, three faiths, one hope; Speaking tour examines conflict in Holy Land](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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78. [Law: Defence or murder?: Does Israel have a legal right to assassinate its enemies - or are such executions war crimes? After two years deliberating, its supreme court is set to decide.](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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79. [Emptiness lurks in wake of Arafat era](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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80. [Municipal polls set wheels of Palestinian democracy in motion](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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81. [Border tensions for U.S. , Syria ; Nations spar over foreign fighters' entry into Iraq .](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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82. [Children killed by Israeli military:](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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83. [News in Brief](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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84. [ISRAEL TO RELEASE 400 PALESTINIAN PRISONERS AS 'GOODWILL GESTURE'](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

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Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2004 to Dec 01, 2005

85. [ISRAEL TO RELEASE 400 PALESTINIAN PRISONERS AS 'GOODWILL GESTURE'](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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86. [Reporters on the Job](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2004 to Dec 01, 2005

87. [Harbour Views](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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88. [Muslim-Jewish peace walk today faces a gantlet of emotions](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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89. [14 Palestinians Killed in Battle As Israelis Raid Camps in Gaza](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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90. [Democracy drive: But the US must learn to accept whatever it produces](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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91. [As Pullout Approaches, Sharon Orders Closure in Gaza THE SITUATION](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

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92. [LONDON BOMBINGS: WHAT MAKES A SUICIDE BOMBER?](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2004 to Dec 01, 2005

93. [TERROR IN LONDON: WHAT MAKES A SUICIDE BOMBER?](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2004 to
Dec 01, 2005

94. [Israeli officials downplay threat against Arafat: Declare no immediate plans to kill him. 'I'm not afraid to die,'
Palestinian leader says, but security around him has tightened](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2004 to
Dec 01, 2005

95. [Four views of the opposition to U.S.](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2004 to
Dec 01, 2005

96. [Gaza rocked by fighting, demolitions](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2004 to
Dec 01, 2005

97. [EVERY ONE A LOSER IN LAND OF BEAUTY](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2004 to
Dec 01, 2005

98. [SHARON FREES 500 PALESTINIANS TO AID ABBAS](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2004 to
Dec 01, 2005

99. [Cynicism ignores positive possibilities](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2004 to
Dec 01, 2005

100. [THE VENT](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language - Expanded Results

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2004 to
Dec 01, 2005

Withdrawal from Gaza puts the spotlight back on Mahmoud Abbas

Canberra Times (Australia)

August 19, 2005 Friday

Final Edition

Copyright 2005 The Federal Capital Press of Australia Pty Limited

Section: A;

Length: 872 words

Byline: Nadav Shlezinger

Body

ONLY a couple of days ago, the residents of Nissanit in the northern Gaza Strip, with a population of just over 1000, gathered for a closing ceremony before preparing for their evacuation. Men wept openly. Women cried too. Even soldiers who were about to participate in the evacuation struggled to hold back tears.

The Israeli national anthem was sung, the flag was lowered from its mast, and with that, 25 years of life in Nissanit came to an end. Similar scenes occurred throughout the 21 settlements in the Gaza Strip and four settlements in the northern West Bank that are being evacuated this week.

Not all the settlers have acted in such a calm manner. A small minority have already carried through their threats to use violence (the worst case so far being Wednesday's Jewish terrorist attack in the West Bank that claimed four lives) and there may be more to come. However, what happens over the next few days will only be a minor hurdle compared to the issue of dealing with the long-term effects of the withdrawal. Just as the 1982 evacuation of settlements in the Sinai Peninsula (as part of a peace agreement with Egypt) created reverberations in Israeli society, so too will the disengagement from Gaza. But why is the Israeli government putting its citizens through such turmoil? After all, no sane, democratically elected government chooses to cause upheaval simply for the sake of doing so. The simple explanation is that the Sharon Government has come to a painful conclusion, borne out of years of terrorism endorsed by the Palestinian leadership and out of frustration over the unwillingness of that same Palestinian leadership to act as a partner in serious peace discussions.

Having reached a dead end in negotiations, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon concluded that his only viable option was to act unilaterally.

Although senior Israeli government officials admit that they can't predict precisely what will happen following the pullout, their aims are clear.

As the PM himself indicated during a televised address to the nation on August 15, Israel will be in a better position to negotiate for peace. Said Sharon, "Now the Palestinians bear the burden of proof. They must fight terror organisations, dismantle their infrastructure and show sincere intentions of peace in order to sit with us at the negotiating table".

But the PM also warned that a continuation of violence following Israel's withdrawal would force Israel, having redeployed on defensive lines behind the security fence, to defend its citizens. By establishing a clear demarcation between Israeli and Palestinian areas, Israel is putting itself in a position from which it can handle both scenarios.

Withdrawal from Gaza puts the spotlight back on Mahmoud Abbas

Of course, it is also difficult to predict what will happen in the long-term future.

Israeli and Egyptian officials finally reached an agreement last Monday on the security situation along the Philadelphi route between Egypt and Gaza. Under the agreement, Israel would withdraw its security personnel from the route, which has been a haven for Palestinian arms smugglers in the past. The Israelis would be replaced by Egyptian border guards.

Given that the Gaza Strip (like Sinai) was controlled by Egypt before Israel captured it in the Six-Day War in 1967, it appears likely that Cairo will assume an important role in maintaining calm in Gaza, and in helping to prepare the Palestinians for the possibility of independence. Moreover, Egypt is just as concerned as Israel over the possibility of **Hamas** dominating Gaza.

All speculation aside, the onus lies first and foremost on the Palestinian leadership to make the most of the opportunity presented to them. Former Israeli Foreign Minister Abba Eban once famously quipped, the Palestinians never miss an opportunity to miss an opportunity. The Israeli disengagement from Gaza presents Mahmoud Abbas and the Palestinian Authority with their best chance yet to prove Eban wrong.

The 1993 Oslo Accords gave the Palestinian Authority a degree of self-government and an opportunity to prove their credentials for statehood. History shows that Yasser Arafat blew that opportunity and opted instead for corruption, terrorism and fratricide.

Mahmoud Abbas's victory in last January's presidential elections was supposed to usher in a new era. And while it would be unfair to compare Abbas to his predecessor, it is completely reasonable to criticise him for still not doing anywhere near enough to stop terrorism, and create a situation of law and order.

The absence of any Israeli presence inside the Gaza Strip leaves Abbas with two choices: he can assert his authority and assume a monopoly over the use of force inside Palestinian areas, or he can allow terrorist organisations like **Hamas** and Islamic Jihad to dictate the Palestinian agenda and ensure that lawlessness prevails.

If Abbas chooses the former, he will put the Palestinians on the road to statehood. If he opts for the latter, frittering away what may be the last chance the Palestinians have to prove they are serious about a workable two-state solution, the possibility of a viable Palestinian state emerging may be postponed indefinitely.

Nadav Shlezinger is a policy analyst and researcher at the Australia/Israel and Jewish Affairs Council.

Load-Date: August 18, 2005

Teen makes his mark in Gaza mosques

USA TODAY

July 25, 2005, Monday,

FINAL EDITION

Copyright 2005 Gannett Company, Inc.

Section: NEWS;

Length: 842 words

Byline: Matthew Gutman

Dateline: GAZA CITY

Body

GAZA CITY -- The 150 men stuffed into Gaza City's A-Shamma Mosque were riveted by each word of the Friday sermon.

Over the past year, Amjad Abu Seedo, a baby-faced 13-year-old, has captivated a swelling throng of faithful with his spellbinding Quranic tales and trance-like delivery.

The boy's sermons, punctuated by sweeping gestures, have injected a dose of vitality into mosque life, where sermons had become monotonous during the recent years of the intifada, or Palestinian uprising. "Our mosques in the intifada have become too politicized," says A-Shamma Mosque's muezzin, or regular prayer leader, Muhammed Fayyis Radwan. "We hear the same sermons over and over, and now we need to go back to social issues. Amjad was great in this respect, because he delivered something different."

Jihad Yassin, a 15-year-old carpenter's apprentice, couldn't believe that "a boy his age could utter the words that came from his mouth." Amjad's sermon so moved Yassin that afterward he vowed to "be in the mosque a lot more," and to stop "wasting time watching TV."

The appearance of the imam prodigy may be just another sign of Islam's growing hold on Gazans.

Since the Palestinian uprising began in September 2000, "there has been a marked increased traditionalism," says Khalil Shikaki, director of the Palestine Center for Policy and Survey Research. "In a society under stress with a weak central government, people return to traditional sources of protection: generally family and religion."

Over the past five years, hundreds of mosques have sprung up all over Gaza, where unemployment hovers near 40%, according to the World Bank.

The mosque increasingly has become the hub of male social activity here. Gaza's Islamists shuttered movie theaters more than a decade ago. Palestinian-brewed Taybeh Beer was banned in Gaza in 2000, Nadim Khoury, the beer's master brewer, says in a telephone interview.

Amjad, who spends hours a day poring over the Quran, discovered his talent for oration only a year and a half ago. A friend at the Waqf School, where he is in eighth grade, asked him to present a composition he had written. "So I memorized the sermon and delivered it, and people kept asking me to do it again." Since then, at an age when his

Teen makes his mark in Gaza mosques

peers in Israel celebrate their Bar Mitzvahs -- the Jewish ritual passage into manhood -- Amjad writes and then pumps out his sermons.

Swaying in his preacher's robes, and showering the kneeling men and boys with fire and brimstone, Amjad riffs on mystical Islamic fables, and harangues the faithful, "I beseech you to cease sinning ... to return to the mosque, the critical place in your life, the place to reach God."

The men on their knees in the gallery murmur in assent. Women pray at separate times.

Amjad has preached in 40 mosques in the Gaza City area over the past year, and his popularity is growing. While Islam commands its faithful to pray five times daily, preachers only deliver sermons only at noon prayers on Fridays.

Most imams are older men, who have studied for years, and few people can recall an example of a preacher as young as Amjad.

"To preach at such a young age is indeed unusual, but it is possible if the lad memorizes the Quran and is well learned," says Muhammed Abu Layla, chairman of Islamic Studies at Cairo's Al-Azhar University. Amjad himself says there are stories in the Quran, Islam's holy book, of teenage boys leading Islamic armies into battle.

Outside the mosque, the flags of the militant groups Hamas and Islamic Jihad flap in a dusty breeze. Portraits of "martyrs" -- Palestinians who either blew themselves up trying to kill Israelis or died in urban fighting against the Israeli army -- decorate the street.

Amjad says militant groups constantly try to recruit him. At home after the sermon, he logs into his e-mail account and produces an angry message from a group purportedly linked to the Palestinian Authority's ruling Fatah Party. Amjad says he has rejected their recruiting attempts.

A newspaper clipping with a headline calling Amjad "Hamas Wonder Boy," hangs over the young preacher's desk. While he likens himself to Quranic Islamic warriors who in their teens led Islamic armies into battle, he angrily denies any affiliation with the militant group.

"There are some youth who hold a gun in their right hand," he says, "and others, like me, who hold the Quran in their right hand. ... I depend on God."

During his life, Amjad could depend on little more. His father, who left his mother to marry a woman 20 years her junior, has had no contact with the family in years. Amjad's home is a fifth-story walk-up in Gaza's Shejahiya neighborhood. Plastic flowers complement the red, plastic lawn set that serves Amjad and his five siblings as their living room furniture.

He receives nothing for his preaching. "It is a holy duty," he says. The family is supported with the help of his older siblings.

While he delights in pleasing his mother, Zinat, through his preaching, Amjad insists, "I am a normal child. I play with my friends and love swimming in the (Mediterranean) sea."

Graphic

PHOTO, B/W, Kevin Frayer, AP; PHOTO, B/W

Load-Date: July 25, 2005

Teen makes his mark in Gaza mosques

End of Document

Israeli troops strike Rafah: Missiles kill seven as bulldozers move in to demolish Palestinian homes

Ottawa Citizen

May 18, 2004 Tuesday Final Edition

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Section: News; Pg. A10; News

Length: 756 words

Byline: Tamer Ziara

Dateline: RAFAH, Gaza Strip

Body

RAFAH, Gaza Strip - Israeli tanks cut off the Rafah refugee camp from the rest of Gaza yesterday, sending panicked residents fleeing amid fears of a major military operation. Helicopters fired missiles at the camp hours later, killing at least seven people and wounding two dozen, residents said.

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

The Associated Press

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

The gunships attacked twice after midnight. Palestinians said that around dawn, two missiles killed at least four people as they left a mosque following morning prayers. They said 17 others were wounded.

The military said it was targeting armed Palestinians. **Hamas** said three of the dead were members of the terrorist group.

A few hours earlier, a helicopter fired three missiles at the surrounded refugee camp, killing three people and wounding seven, Palestinians said.

The Israeli military said the target was a group of armed Palestinians approaching Israeli forces.

Yesterday, residents were fleeing the camp in advance of the expected Israeli operation. Frantic residents loaded belongings onto trucks and donkey carts and headed to the neighbouring town, also named Rafah. The UN Relief and Works Agency set up shelters in schools and pitched a tent camp.

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

Last week, Israeli troops destroyed about 100 houses in the camp, and officials said hundreds more may be torn down. In all, more than 11,000 Palestinians in Rafah, out of a population of 90,000, have been made homeless by Israeli demolitions since the outbreak of fighting in 2000.

Israeli troops strike Rafah: Missiles kill seven as bulldozers move in to demolish Palestinian homes

Israeli security officials said they plan to expand the patrol road to a width of about 250 metres, almost double its current size in some places. The army is also considering digging a deep trench, or even a moat, to block the tunnels that lead from Egypt to Rafah.

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

The border created then went through the camp, and thousands of houses were destroyed, with compensation paid to the displaced.

Yuval Dvir, an Israeli reserve colonel who oversaw that destruction, said Israel must leave Gaza now.

"We are following our guts and not our brains," he told Israel Army Radio.

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon has proposed a unilateral pullout of soldiers and settlers from Gaza, but his party rejected the plan.

Deputy Defence Minister Zeev Boim said civilian hardships are unintentional but unavoidable.

Some people in Rafah, he said, "rent their houses for digging tunnels, so not all of the people there are blameless."

Yesterday, Palestinian Foreign Minister Nabil Shaath pleaded with National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice during a meeting in Berlin to stop the Israeli offensive. Mr. Shaath told Ms. Rice he has received calls from fearful relatives. "She said that she and President Bush will act to stop what is going on in Rafah," Mr. Shaath said.

The U.S. ambassador to Israel, Daniel Kurtzer, met Sunday with the Israeli army chief, Lt.-Gen. Moshe Yaalon, to discuss the Israeli operation. "We understand Israel's need to defend itself from attacks, but as a matter of policy, we oppose the use of home demolitions to achieve this end and we are concerned about the humanitarian consequences of such demolitions," said embassy spokesman Paul Patin.

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

Also yesterday, **Hamas**'s political leader rejected the Palestinian Authority's proposals for a ceasefire, saying his people were suffering a "war of annihilation" by Israel.

"It is not reasonable that there is a talk about a ceasefire in the shadow of a sweeping aggression," Khaled Mashaal said.

Graphic

Photo: Kevin Frayer, The Associated Press; A Palestinian man stands with some of his belongings as a **female** family member throws a mattress out a window as they prepare to leave their home in an area marked for possible demolition by the Israeli army in the Rafah refugee camp.

Load-Date: May 18, 2004

Sharon weeps as distraught settlers leave Gaza

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

August 18, 2005 Thursday

Third Edition

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Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; Pg. 1

Length: 796 words

Byline: Ed O'Loughlin Herald Correspondent in Neve Dekalim, Gaza

Body

When the end came for the Jewish settlements in Gaza it was quicker than anyone had expected. At one minute past the midnight deadline yesterday teams of soldiers began knocking on doors throughout the 21 settlements, telling those who remained that it was time to move on.

In Jerusalem, the Prime Minister, Ariel Sharon, said the television images of Gaza settlers being removed from their homes were "heart-breaking", and praised the restraint of settlers and soldiers.

"It's impossible to watch this, and that includes myself, without tears in the eyes," he said.

Thousands of police and troops had fanned out into every side street, to find most of the settlements abandoned already or at least half-deserted.

But not everyone went quietly. The first group of Israelis to be moved out of Gaza hurled abuse at soldiers manning the Kissufim border crossing.

"Why are you enjoying this? People are being kicked out of their homes," one of 30 passengers screamed from a bus.

At dawn troops went door to door to evict those families who had not left during the two-day "grace period", most of whom left with tears but no fight.

Many of the remaining settlers had resigned themselves to token resistance but one woman was carried out of her house by four soldiers, shouting "I don't want to, I don't want to".

In Neve Dekalim, a group of nine elderly women were seen to be dragged, kicking and screaming, on to a bus by about 50 police and soldiers. "He [Sharon] has destroyed our lives and it's just one big party for you," screeched one of the women. Another yelled: "You are bringing destruction on Israel."

Forced back by squads of police, hundreds took refuge in the settlement's main synagogue complex, saying the Government would have to remove them against their will.

The army said later that even if it had to storm the synagogue it still hoped to have all six of the settlements fully evacuated by this morning - a big advance in an operation for which three weeks had been allowed.

Sharon weeps as distraught settlers leave Gaza

The air was acrid with the smoke of burning tyres and rubbish bins, and scattered volleys of paint- and water-bombs were the main signs of violence as the security forces established themselves on every corner.

As the operation unfolded police and troops arrested scores of militant youths and a few local settlers, largely without injury.

The most serious incident occurred when a woman stabbed a **female** soldier with a syringe and was then arrested. And a middle-aged woman suffered burns to 70 per cent of her body after she set herself on fire in protest.

The streets had rung all night with the sound of hammers as local families bowed to the inevitable and stripped their homes of furniture and appliances.

At dawn yesterday troops went door to door to evict those families who had not left during the two-day "grace period".

But tensions remained high throughout the day. At the home of the Bakshis, one of Neve Dekalim's leading families, the **women** of the house came to the door to photograph the police who had arrived to evict them.

"I want a photograph to show our grandchildren who came to throw us from our home," one woman shouted. "This is our house. I don't understand how anyone can tell us to leave our house just because this man Sharon said so. He's a coward."

Those settlers who had not left by the midnight deadline were led with their luggage to waiting buses. In the days ahead soldiers will load their possessions for storage in other parts of Israel.

By noon yesterday the remaining pockets of resistance - mainly by youths from outside the Gaza Strip - were in the isolated settlement of Kfar Darom, the "tent city" at Shirat Hayam on the coast.

Yesterday afternoon about 2000 boys and girls, some weeping, were praying segregated from each other in the twin synagogues normally reserved for Jews worshipping according to Ashkenazi or Sephardic rites.

One 18-year-old gave her name as Avital, from the West Bank settlement of Shiloh.

"I hope and believe that they won't give our land back to the Palestinians that are killing us and murdering us," she said.

Thousands of Palestinian security forces have also been deployed around the Gaza Strip, stronghold of the radical **Hamas** movement.

Masked members of **Hamas**, carrying weapons and flags, joined a mass demonstration yesterday in Khan Yunis to celebrate the departure of the settlers.

"They destroyed our homes, we'll leave them to destroy theirs by their own hands," read their banners, alluding to Israeli plans to bulldoze all settler homes.

* An Israeli gunman opened fire at a group of Palestinians near the West Bank Jewish settlement of Shiloh yesterday.

Israel's Zaka emergency service said two people were killed and at least three wounded, while the Magen David Adom ambulance service said only that five people were wounded.

Graphic

Sharon weeps as distraught settlers leave Gaza

TWO PHOTOS: Heart-broken ... a weeping settler carries a child as he leaves his house in Neve Dekalim yesterday. Photo: Reuters/Goran Tomasevic Desperate to stay ... police move crying settlers from the Neve Dekalim settlement. Photo: Reuters/Goran Tomasevic

Load-Date: July 17, 2007

End of Document

Settlers' resistance handbook

The Times (London)

May 11, 2005, Wednesday

Copyright 2005 Times Newspapers Limited

Section: Overseas news; 37

Length: 857 words

Byline: Stephen Farrell

Body

The far Right is giving lessons in civil disobedience to fight the Gaza withdrawal, reports Stephen Farrell.

FAR-RIGHT Israeli groups have drawn up a civil disobedience manual as they begin to arrive in Gaza to back settlers fighting Ariel Sharon's disengagement plan.

A Practical Plan to Stop the Pullout was handed out yesterday at a small but noisy protest by ultra-nationalist groups in Beersheba, where a detained activist appeared in court on suspicion of planning attacks on Palestinians.

The majority of the protesters, just 150-strong but making a cacophony with penny whistles and drums, said that they were against violence.

Others were followers of the assassinated far-right Rabbi Meir Kahane and an assortment of the radical West Bank "hilltop youth", the boys sporting ringlets and knitted skullcaps and the girls headscarves and baggy orange shirts.

As some shouted "Police State" and "Enough persecution of Jews", others handed out leaflets calling for a mass blockade of Israel's highways next Monday as a "trial demonstration" ahead of the scheduled mid-August evacuation of 9,500 settlers from Gaza and the northern West Bank.

One booklet, by the National Home group, advocated a three-pronged campaign: reinforcing the Gaza settlers, a civil disobedience campaign and inciting soldiers to disobey orders. Urging followers to get arrested in the tens of thousands to overwhelm the prison system, it said: "Go to detention with joy. Remember, you were arrested, you won."

Yesterday the Government countered suggestions on Monday by Silvan Shalom, the Foreign Minister, that a **Hamas** victory in forthcoming Palestinian elections could jeopardise the pullout.

"The disengagement will not be cancelled," Shaul Mofaz, the Defence Minister, told Israel Army Radio. "Yes, **Hamas** has been strengthened, and we have a reality in which there is a Palestinian Authority and Palestinian terror organisations, but I think we need to make supreme efforts to carry out the disengagement. At the end of the day it's good for Israel."

Officials are divided over how many of the 9,500 settlers in Gaza and the northern West Bank will leave quietly. Some believe that 90 per cent will take compensation packages, others that most will have to be removed forcibly.

Settlers' resistance handbook

But senior officers admit that their main fear is not the Gaza settlers but the altogether more feral "hilltop youth". Occupying the most remote illegal hilltop outposts, and long accustomed to operating virtually outside the law, some are second and third-generation settlers, others immigrants from the United States.

"There are some extremists. These are the guys in my scenarios. We will have to find a way maybe to arrest them beforehand," a senior military official said.

As he waited outside court Noam Livnat, a disengagement opponent and brother of Limor Livnat, the Education Minister, was guarded about violence but indicated that he expected, if not advocated, that some would resort to force against soldiers and police.

"We are in a war. There are some limits, and I am not willing to speak about those limits, but it is war," he said.

"It makes me angry when a mugger starts running towards a citizen with a knife willing to stab him, and people ask the citizen, 'Are you willing to kick him or punch him in the nose?' The question should be to the mugger, and I don't care whether he is wearing a green or blue uniform. These are muggers organised by the Government."

A 16-year-old girl from the Tekoa settlement, wearing a ponytail and teeth braces, was less ambivalent.

"We are going to use violence. We are going to do everything we can," she said.

Minutes later she was kicking and clawing police dragging her away from the court.

"Jail is not going to scare us. You can't put a bunch of 15 and 16-year-old kids in jail, and kids this age are going to be down in force."

INSUBORDINATION TO THE LETTER

Excerpts from a leaflet and booklet A Practical Plan to Stop the Pullout issued by National Home, the anti-disengagement group that advocates a three-pronged strategy: struggle inside Gaza's Gush Katif settlement bloc, civil disobedience and fostering insubordination in the police and army.

* As soon as Gush Katif is closed everyone will start to make their journey there. Men, women and children will start to make their way while sabotaging the natural flow of life in Israel.

* Everyone should take four days' supplies: water, bread, spreads.

* Walking will be only on roads in a way that will disturb the traffic, proudly wearing Israel flags, posters, shirts etc.

* When you reach a place where you are being prevented from continuing that is your front line.

* Ensure that there are as many cameras as possible: videos, stills, digital, mobile telephones etc.

* Bring pamphlets and other informative materials with you in order to distribute them to drivers and pedestrians.

* Every activist has to bring an arrest file and go to detention with joy

Remember: you were arrested, you won.

* A group leaflet recommends that every activist brings a prayer shawl, two sheets, towel, clothing, reading materials, small radio, toothbrush, soap and a phone card

Load-Date: May 11, 2005

READING MATTER

Daily News (New York)

January 30, 2005 Sunday

SPORTS FINAL EDITION

Copyright 2005 Daily News, L.P.



Section: SUNDAY NOW; Pg. 8

Length: 353 words

Byline: BY JULIAN KESNER

Body

- THE BOOK OF KEHLS by Christine Kehl O'Hagan (St. Martin's Press, \$21.95) Having grown up in Jackson Heights, Queens, in a family ravaged by Duchenne muscular dystrophy, a hereditary disease that afflicts males, the author reflects on their struggles, and the patience, humor and willpower that enabled them to cope. O'Hagan watched as her brother and two uncles succumbed to the disease, and she later had to deal with her own guilt at unknowingly passing on DMD to her son, who died at age 24.

- DANGEROUS **WOMEN** edited by Otto Penzler (Mysterious Press, \$24.95) Penzler, owner of the Mysterious Bookshop on W. 56th St. and reigning czar in whodunit writing circles, lined up 17 top suspense writers to submit new and unpublished short stories for this collection. Tales include Laura Lippman's "Dear Penthouse Forum (A First Draft)," about the wrong woman to meet at an airport bar, and "Improvisation" by Ed McBain, in which actresses experiment with murder. Elmore Leonard, Walter Mosley, Joyce Carol Oates, Anne Perry and Nelson DeMille also contribute.

- CAIN'S FIELD: FAITH, FRATRICIDE, AND FEAR IN THE MIDDLE EAST by Matt Rees (Free Press, \$26) Rees, a former Daily News correspondent and the current Time magazine Jerusalem bureau chief, provides an inside look at divisions within the Israeli and Palestinian camps that prevent them from reaching unified stances. Rees pays particular attention to a member of the group **Hamas** who has enraged officials on both sides of the Middle East conflict, as well as Neturei Karta, an orthodox Jewish group that opposes the existence of an Israeli state.

THE IVY CHRONICLES by Karen Quinn (Viking, \$23.95) Upper East Sider Ivy Ames is entirely upper crust - that is, until the mother of two is downsized out of her corporate job and discovers her husband is cheating on her. After regaining her bearing, she moves downtown and starts a new company specializing in placing rich toddlers in the city's most exclusive kindergartens. And while dealing with the children of newspaper moguls, mob bosses and biracial lesbian couples, she tries to find a new life and spouse for herself.

Load-Date: February 1, 2005

READING MATTER

End of Document

IN BRIEF

Geelong Advertiser (Regional Daily)

October 19, 2004 Tuesday

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 17

Length: 365 words

Body

Fightback

PHNOM PENH, Monday -- A wife fed up with her husband's drunken tirades took matters into her own hands, literally, when she attacked him and attempted to rip off his testicles with her fingernails, police said today. The woman, identified only as Kim, 35, had become angry after her drunken husband slapped and kicked her, police said. No charges were expected to be filed as the case was a domestic dispute.

Fischer held

TOKYO, Monday -- Bobby Fischer's new lawyer has accused US officials of "grotesque" abuses of power in their bid to have the chess legend deported home from Japan. Fischer has been in Japanese custody since he was detained at Tokyo's international airport on July 13 for travelling on an invalid passport.

Hideaway

SUVA, Monday -- Pop diva Britney Spears arrived at a tropical Fijian island hideaway today with her new husband Kevin Federline, Fiji Television reported. Spears secretly wed dancer Federline last month, but failed to formalise the marriage for nearly three weeks, prompting speculation that the nuptials were fake.

Milk scandal

BEIJING, Monday -- Police said today seven people have been detained in north-eastern China for allegedly producing and selling 60 tonnes of fake milk powder, just months after 13 babies died and 189 were made ill in a major scandal. Two representatives of the Kangqing dairy product company have been formally arrested, while five other people were in custody.

Gaza killing

GAZA CITY, Monday -- Two members of the radical Palestinian movement ***Hamas*** were killed after they entered Israeli territory early today to carry out an attack, sources on both sides said. The two broke through a barrier separating Israeli territory from the Gaza Strip and were trying to attack the Holit kibbutz when they were spotted by troops, an Israeli military source said.

Tinting ban

RIYADH, Sunday -- Saudi Arabia today banned tinted car windows in a move aimed at preventing militants escaping detection on the kingdom's roads. Many cars in the Muslim Gulf state have darkened windows to protect

IN BRIEF

the privacy of passengers, particularly women. But officials say militants may have used tinted windows to avoid being spotted by security forces.

Load-Date: October 19, 2004

End of Document

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

St. Louis Post-Dispatch (Missouri)

March 23, 2004 Tuesday Five Star Late Lift Edition

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Section: EDITORIAL; Pg. B6; LETTERS

Length: 1316 words

Body

Medicaid cuts: worst bill in six years

Here I am sitting at my desk in Jefferson City at 12:45 a.m. March 18, pondering what the Missouri House of Representatives has done to some of our state's most vulnerable citizens by ramming through House Bill 1566. HB 1566 may lead to the elimination of health care for thousands of Missouri's poorest children, elderly and disabled.

In my six years in the Legislature, this is the worst piece of legislation I have ever seen.

In years past, the Legislature has had a public policy that the state would fund "optional programs." Such programs provide Medicaid for Missouri children who have no insurance (MC Plus for Kids); hearing aids, eyeglasses and dentures for seniors who are poor and incentives for disabled Missourians who go to work.

The bill would authorize the Legislature to choose not to fund some or all of these programs. This totally goes against everything my father and grandfather (both former state legislators) instilled in me about public service. One of the most important duties of government, if not the most important one, is to take care of those individuals who cannot take care of themselves. Children, the elderly and the disabled are such individuals.

The bill will now move to the Senate for debate. I urge the citizens of this area to call and write Missouri senators and encourage them to defeat this bill.

Rep. Ryan McKenna

D-Barnhart

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Keep Bill Haas

In her commentary of March 18, Amy White criticized those who do not clamor for the removal of the two St. Louis School Board members in the voting minority. Perhaps she should have consulted parents of students in the St. Louis public schools. Many of us think that it is important to have at least one voice on the board that will not rubber-stamp directives from the office of Mayor Francis Slay.

Bill Haas has indicated that he may resign from the board to pursue other elected office. Parents have begged him not to resign. Perhaps Amy White does not understand that parents are afraid of who the mayor would appoint to replace him.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Carol Prombo

St. Louis

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Cholesterol and cancer

In recent weeks, the news media have reported that some scientists have called into question whether high levels of HDL (the "good cholesterol") are always beneficial. And when these high levels are beneficial, the scientists are asking, how much good do they do?

They also advise that the recommended levels of LDL (the bad cholesterol) below which no therapy is needed be lowered from 100 to 65-70.

What has not been addressed is research dealing with low cholesterol levels and cancer mortality. I have in my file three studies carried out in the 1980s that address a possible connection.

While a study of 10,000 men reported in the medical journal the Lancet of May 9, 1981, found no clear-cut link between total cholesterol and cancer mortality, two other large studies found a link between low cholesterol levels and increased mortality from cancer.

One such study, of 361,662 men, was reported in the Feb. 20, 1987 Journal of the American Medical Association; the other, of 5125 men and 7363 women, was reported in Cancer Research for Jan. 15, 1988. While some may regard this as inconclusive evidence of a relationship between low cholesterol levels and cancer mortality, the public should at least be forewarned before people with cholesterol levels of 100 start taking cholesterol-lowering medication, to the benefit of the pharmaceutical industry.

Herman T. Blumenthal, Ph.D., M.D.

University City

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Love among the swans

The well-written March 11 commentary on the resurgence of the trumpeter swan was well received by our family. For several years, a small group (as many as seven or as few as three) of trumpeters has visited our lakes in mid-Missouri near Rolla. They originate from restoration projects at the Minneapolis Zoo and at the Hennepin Reservation in Minnesota. The swans arrive in early December and migrate back north in mid-March.

Sadly, earlier this year one of a group of five of these magnificent birds was somehow fatally wounded. Three of the group left early. However, the lifetime mate of the dead bird remained for some time and did not migrate north until recently, at the usual departure time.

These annual visits have brought delight to this whole area, and we feel fortunate that we have been the recipients of the efforts of these conservation groups. As your article pointed out, we are indeed fortunate that our federal government and some of our states recognized the wisdom of restoring these amazing birds to our natural environment.

Jane Scheidemantel

Lenox, Mo.

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Save St. Stanislaus

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Since Archbishop Raymond Burke arrived in St. Louis, I have a much better understanding of why the Protestant Reformation took place.

The short time that he has been here, he has managed to create animosity with politicians who support abortion rights, individuals who have been sexually victimized by priests and now the Polish community that has sacrificed for so many years to keep St. Stanislaus Kostka Church a viable house of worship.

Where was the St. Louis Archdiocese when this parish fell on hard times? It took sacrifices and hard work by the parishioners to rebuild this church. Archbishop Burke intends to gain control of the church and its \$9 million by withholding a priest to serve the parish.

Before giving in, the parish should approach priests from religious orders not under the control of the archdiocese to serve their church. If this is a viable option, then St. Stanislaus Kostka, with the grace of God, will continue for another 112 years.

Who will Archbishop Burke go after next? Since St. Louis is a hodgepodge of many nationalities, races and independent thinkers, there are quite a few targets remaining.

Edward Hamm

Chesterfield

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Spruce up the station

We have recently taken two trips by Amtrak and noticed how attractive all the little station stops are between here and Chicago and beyond. I know it will be years before St. Louis gets a new station, but can't we make the current one more attractive? Here are a few suggestions for making our downtown station more attractive and accessible:

- * Put up larger signs giving clear directions from Clark Street;
- * Pave the crushed-gravel parking lot, which gets muddy when it rains;
- * Replace the floors in both the waiting room and rest rooms. (The wood board in the ladies room is dirty and unsanitary).

Painting the exterior, putting up some pictures inside and planting some flowers outside would help make the station a pleasant place to depart from and return to.

Andrea Richman

St. Louis County

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Dying by the sword

Ahmed Yassin, the founder and mentor of the **Hamas** terrorist organization, died in a hail of rocket fire. **Hamas** and the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades are calling for revenge and, your March 22 front-page story says, "declaring war on Israelis."

Now these terrorist organizations declare war on Israel? One must ask the age-old question: "Why is this night different from all other nights?"

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Both of these terrorist organizations were born avowing the destruction of the state of Israel and all its Jewish inhabitants. Both have dispatched hundreds of suicide bombers against innocent Israeli civilians, many on the order of Sheik Yassin.

Yassin's violent death as the creator and mastermind of **Hamas** lends credence to the adage: One who lives by the sword shall surely die by the sword.

Sidney Machefsky

University City

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Slandering Kerry?

I thought it a bit much when some editor put the headline "He even looks French" over a March 20 letter about John Kerry that did not even contain the word "French." Obviously, someone on your staff was determined, on no evidence whatsoever, to slander John Kerry.

And he-she was a bit behind the times, for considering the news of the last week, it would have been more appropriate if one's intent is slander to write he "looks Spanish."

D. Ferrel Atkins

Charleston

Load-Date: March 23, 2004

End of Document

Palestinians desire democracy, but face tough road

Charleston Gazette (West Virginia)

November 21, 2004, Sunday

Copyright 2004 Charleston Newspapers

Section: News; Pg. P3A

Length: 868 words

Byline: Karin Laub

Body

The Associated Press

RAMALLAH, West Bank - Freed from Yasser Arafat's one-man rule, Palestinians say they are eager and able to build the first real democracy in the Arab world, despite the dangers lurking on the road to Jan. 9 elections.

The thrill of new possibilities is felt across the West Bank and Gaza Strip: The field of candidates for Palestinian Authority president gets more crowded by the day and includes a militant sheik turned moderate, a dissident once jailed by Arafat, and a prisoner of Israel campaigning from his cell.

"Now it's real competition, the possibility of winning is there," said pro-democracy activist Mustafa Barghouti, a physician considering a presidential bid.

However, the shift to democracy could be rough.

Armed gangs have been controlling the streets in four years of Israeli-Palestinian conflict, raising the threat of political violence during a heated campaign.

Democratic traditions are not deeply rooted. During his 10 years as leader of the Palestinian Authority, Arafat accepted some of the trappings of democracy, including general elections in 1996 and a feisty parliament, but always reserved the final say.

Islamic militants, who are not fielding a candidate, haven't said whether they'll suspend attacks on Israel; without a truce, it would be virtually impossible to hold the vote. And Israel has not yet agreed to keep its troops at a distance from the voting.

Khalil Shekaki, a Palestinian pollster, said that in the turbulent transition phase, the stakes are huge. "We can either find ourselves plunged into a bloodbath, or we can create the most beautiful democracy in the Middle East," he said.

Although the Bush administration is pushing for democracy in the region, and the 21 Arab countries are promising reforms, none has a freely elected government. Many rulers inherit the post and most stay in power for life, either through absolute authority or rigged elections. A few countries, like Morocco, Kuwait, Bahrain and Jordan, have active parliaments, though their monarchs can veto any legislative action.

Palestinians desire democracy, but face tough road

In looking for signs of change at home, the Palestinians are closely watching the power struggle in the ruling Fatah party between the old guard Arafat brought with him when he returned to the Palestinian lands, and the younger generation that had grown up under 37 years of Israeli occupation.

Arafat's interim successor, Mahmoud Abbas, is pitted against younger Fatah activists led by Marwan Barghouti, an uprising leader jailed by Israel and according to polls the most popular Palestinian politician.

Long excluded by Arafat, the younger group is clamoring for influence, but the old-timers appear to be resisting.

Barghouti, sending messages from his prison cell, wants a primary to pick Fatah's candidate, but the old guard insists on anointing Abbas without further debate next week.

If so, Barghouti, 45, is expected to run as an independent, posing a major threat to Abbas' election prospects. Polls suggest support for Abbas, 69, is in single digits.

Until Arafat's death this month, after 40 years at the helm of the Palestinian independence movement, Barghouti wouldn't have dared make his move.

At Barghouti's headquarters in the West Bank city of Ramallah, preparations were in full swing last week. Campaign posters showing Arafat holding up a photo of the jailed Barghouti were stacked in one room, ready for distribution.

Head campaigner Saed Nimr said he can muster at least 1,000 volunteers in the Ramallah area alone. He plans 30-second campaign ads to air on local and satellite TV stations.

Sensing Fatah's weakened grip, other challengers are emerging in sectors previously excluded - devout Muslims, middle-class intellectuals and women. None are considered front-runners, but hope they can forge a winning coalition.

Other possible contenders include Abdel Sattar Qassem, a political science professor and anti-corruption crusader once jailed by Arafat; Talal Sidr, a former Hamas leader-turned-moderate; journalist Majda al-Batch, 47, the only woman who has said she would run; Mustafa Barghouti, a distant cousin of Marwan Barghouti, who wants to speak for the "huge silent majority" unaffiliated with any faction; and billionaire Monib al-Masri, who says a skillful CEO is needed to untangle the Mideast mess.

The new crop of contenders has left Palestinians excited, proud and a little confused.

"I've been to many Arab countries during my studies," said Suleiman Rawaj, 29, a supporter of the militant Hamas group in Gaza City. "I think the freedom we have here in Palestine is the best among the Arab countries."

Palestinians feel they are ahead of the Arab world on several scores. The level of education is relatively high, and their diaspora has brought them in close contact with other cultures. A series of foreign occupiers - Turks, British, Israeli - prevented any local dynasty of despots from taking root. And the long conflict with Israel nurtured a rebellious spirit. The proximity to Israel's vibrant democracy may also have rubbed off, even if it never extended to them.

However, Israeli analysts said it's not enough for the Palestinians to transform themselves into a democracy; they say they also must renounce violence.

Load-Date: November 22, 2004

My dinner with Yasser: At a recent chicken-and-chips meal with Arafat, the PLO leader was cheerful and frail but in seeming good health

The Gazette (Montreal)

November 2, 2004 Tuesday

Final Edition

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Section: EDITORIAL / OP-ED; Pg. A29

Length: 803 words

Byline: JANE KINNINMONT, Los Angeles Times

Body

On Oct. 11, I dined with Yasser Arafat in his compound in the West Bank city of Ramallah. He seemed in good health and excellent humour, high-spirited and joking. There was no intimation of the current illness that has the world wondering if the longtime Israeli-Palestinian stalemate is about to change.

Arafat was frail and a little stooped after 75 years of a very unusual life, but the charisma that must have helped him become the symbol of Palestinian nationalism was evident. I hadn't expected, for instance, that the man that many see as the single biggest obstacle to Israeli-Palestinian peace would serve us chicken, potato chips and Coca-Cola or sport an Israeli flag amid the motley collection of lapel pins that adorns his khaki jacket. But he is a man of many contradictions.

Arafat has been confined to a former British police station in Ramallah for 41 months (although he has now been allowed to leave for medical treatment in Paris).

Our small group was driven in through an 8-foot-high gate that immediately slammed shut behind us. Inside the compound were several buildings, one largely ruined from Israeli military strikes. Piles of sandbags and burned-out cars still surround the smashed-in building. To enter Arafat's building, we needed to get past half a dozen armed, jumpy young men in combat fatigues.

Our dinner table was laden with a mix of Palestinian dishes and fried goodies, but Arafat himself only picked at a plate of vegetables and fruit, and had a spoonful or two of natural yogurt. As the meal began, he took some small pieces of sweet corn and broccoli from his own plate and handed them to each guest. An aide said, "You see - he shares with the people."

It was a bizarre gesture, oddly touching. Still, his people might be more impressed if their president would help them recover the millions of dollars that have gone missing from Palestinian Authority funds over the years, much of which is rumoured to be in the hands of his estranged wife in Paris.

It is hard to reconcile the large-scale legends of Arafat's life with the small man who stood in front of me. This man had done more than anyone else to create Palestinian nationalism yet is widely blamed for undermining the prospect of a Palestinian state. He is hated by his people for corruption and compromise and simultaneously loved by them as an icon of revolution and leadership.

My dinner with Yasser: At a recent chicken-and-chips meal with Arafat, the PLO leader was cheerful and frail but in seeming good health

At one point I asked: Looking back on his decades of leadership, is there anything he would have done differently? Immediately, he began: "I regret that we lost the opportunity at Camp David." I wondered if he was about to admit to some previously unacknowledged error. Of course not. Instead, he launched into a lengthy criticism of the Israeli peace offer made in 2000.

Arafat has a capacity for denial that might be astounding if it wasn't so tragically common in this conflict. The strangest example is when he was asked about the Qassam missiles (homemade rockets developed by Hamas) used by some Palestinian militants, which the Israeli government says provoked its latest strikes in Gaza. Arafat simply said: "They have never hurt anyone."

But what about the two Israeli toddlers killed by Qassams in September? "They were not killed by the rockets," he said. "They merely died from the shock."

At times, Arafat seemed old and forgetful, wandering through history in circles, hypnotized by his revolutionary past. He was flanked by aides who murmured frequent additions and corrections while he was speaking, but he was quick to silence them when he liked.

Discussing relations with Israel, Arafat sounded fairly pragmatic. He was pessimistic about prospects for reconciliation while Ariel Sharon is in power but, surprisingly, said peace might be easier if Benjamin Netanyahu returned to office. Isn't Netanyahu opposed to Sharon's plan to pull settlers out of Gaza? Arafat laughed with an expansive hand gesture and said: "It's an election campaign!"

Arafat had mixed feelings about the Gaza plan. Of course, he welcomed Israeli disengagement. But, like many Palestinians, he suspects that it will stop at Gaza, leaving the issue of the West Bank unresolved. He reminded us that he rejected a similar 1978 offer because "Gaza alone was not enough."

On one issue at least, Arafat agreed with senior Israeli intelligence officials. Both say that Iran is funnelling increasing amounts of cash to militant groups, including Hamas and Islamic Jihad. Arafat offered a simple explanation: Ayatollah Ali Khamenei "is a troublemaker."

He also criticized Egyptian cleric Sheik Yousef Qaradawi, whose recent visit to Britain met controversy over his pronouncements on women's rights and suicide bombings. Arafat said he had once helped secure Qaradawi's release from an Egyptian jail. A quick-witted glance, and a laugh. "There - that was my mistake!"

Graphic

Photo: KEVIN FRAYER, AP; Gaza City supporters of Arafat pray over their weapons for his recovery.

Load-Date: November 2, 2004

Your say

Herald Sun (Melbourne, Australia)

March 25, 2004 Thursday

Copyright 2004 Nationwide News Pty Limited

Section: OPINION; Pg. 18

Length: 1339 words

Body

Architect of destruction

WHY kill Sheik Yassin, an old man in a wheelchair?

Because he was the architect of the campaign of destruction that has killed one in every 6000 Israelis and wounded, or crippled, one in every 1000 over the past 3 1/2 years alone.

Because his "spiritual leadership" was the impetus for the Palestinian suicide-massacre strategy that other terrorist groups have copied.

The only reasons that Israel has not already suffered a mega-attack to make the twin towers, Bali and Madrid pale into insignificance have been divine providence and Israeli vigilance.

Judith Rona,

Bondi

Separated by their weapons

WHEN Palestine sends a suicide bomber it is called terrorism, when Israel rolls in the tanks and uses war planes to kill Palestinians, it is called the fight against terror.

So it seems the difference between terrorist and fighting against terrorism is the weapons you have.

But how do you classify assassination?

Ariel Sharon did not get his nickname of the Butcher of Beirut for no reason.

He should be judged on the war crimes he has committed throughout his life.

Nizar Ibrahim,

Bellfield

Yassin a proper target

SHEIK Yassin hid behind an artificial separation of Hamas into a political and military wing and sanctioned the murder of countless Israeli civilians.

Your say

The past five years have seen constant **Hamas** attacks on buses, pizza parlours and wedding parties.

No other country on earth would have put up with such a thing. If Yassin was not a military target, who is?

Bradley Dean,

Melbourne

Despicable murder

THE assassination of Sheik Yassin has plunged Ariel Sharon and the Israeli Government to new depths of depravity.

The death of the **Hamas** spiritual leader, who was a quadriplegic who used a wheelchair, will go down as one of history's most despicable murders.

Peter Smernos,

Maylands, SA

Yassin/Osama, birds of a feather

THE assassination of Sheik Yassin is being widely condemned by European foreign ministers and heads of state.

Would they condemn the US if Osama bin Laden were killed in a cave in Afghanistan, or even a house in Pakistan?

Yassin was a paramount terrorist leader who sent his minions to kill the men, **women** and children of democratic society, as does bin Laden.

Yassin lived under the protection of Yasser Arafat's Palestinian Authority, constantly ordering and praising suicide bombings against Israelis.

Adam Indikt,

Ringwood

Terrorism by a state

THE assassination of Yassin is just one more act of state terrorism by Israel.

Israel has killed three times as many Palestinians as Palestinians have killed Israelis.

Israel is violating international law in the occupied territories as well as stealing the good land and dividing the West Bank into ghettos.

When is the world going to rein in this rogue state?

Fiona Jordan,

Ferntree Gully

Israeli troops are criminals

RE "Israelis taking care of own" (March 23): Israeli troops are the biggest culprits of crimes against the Palestinians.

When talking about war criminals, don't forget to name the Israelis who direct troops to kill Palestinians in refugee camps.

Your say

It is very clear that Mr Sharon has no interest in peace.

Andrew Sayers,

Melbourne

Downer a disgrace

TO call anyone a "lousy, rotten disgrace" is serious and to make such a verbal assessment of the Foreign Affairs Minister is outrageous.

However, in the case of Alexander Downer and his statements concerning the federal police commissioner, many would agree.

Downer's comparison verged on the disgraceful and for him to then heap obviously insincere praise on Mick Keelty showed he was not only a disgrace but a bad actor.

John Sheen,

Shepparton

New lows in Canberra

ALL Australians, regardless of political colour, should have genuine concern over the Prime Minister's clumsy attempt to silence one of our most honest and forthright law officers.

Every time we think this mob in Canberra has reached rock bottom, they find a new low.

John X. Berlin,

Maclean, NSW

Freed far too soon

I AM amazed that two women serving 50-year sentences in Thai jails for trafficking drugs may spend only another five years in an Australian jail before being freed.

Only a few weeks ago David Hicks reportedly said he would be "happy to serve the rest of his sentence in Australia".

Of course he would, knowing our legal system releases criminals after they have served part of their sentences.

Why should we take back those who commit offences overseas? Let them serve their sentences there. But if we do take them back, they should serve exactly the sentence they were given in the country of their crime.

Cathryn Szondy,

Burwood East

Help tackle problem gamblers

NSW has more than 100,000 pokies and the same incidence of problem gambling as Victoria, which has 27,500 machines.

The clear evidence is that caps on machines simply don't address problem gambling.

The crusaders who believe that gambling is sinful might be comforted in thinking that there are fewer machines to facilitate gambling, but this will do nothing to reduce problem gambling.

Your say

The anti-gambling lobby refuses to address the hard issues.

It is time these prohibitionists joined the industry in developing more effective harm minimisation programs, such as the self-exclusion program.

Margaret Kearney,

executive director, Clubs Victoria

God didn't make our laws

WHILE I respect John Newton's religious devotion, God did not make the rules for Australians, our Government did ("Complain to God", March 22).

The churches and state are separate, so the perceived commands of the Judeo-Christian-Islamic God, or those of any other deities, while crucial to their followers, are totally irrelevant to lawmaking.

This, ideally, should ensure equal protection for all groups.

Roy Williams,

Clifton Hill

Bring back ashtrays

FRANK Sargent (50/50, March 22) was rightly upset when a burning cigarette was thrown at his car from a passing vehicle.

Many new vehicles have been made without ashtrays and irresponsible fools have taken this as a licence to improperly dispose of cigarettes.

When considering the huge fire risks in Victoria, it might be prudent for manufacturers, or the Government, to ensure that vehicles have ashtrays.

Bill McIntyre,

Narrawong

Remember these legends

WITH the new AFL season about to start, it's time to remember two great men lost in 2003, Jack Dyer and Bob Rose.

What an example to us all. Their dignity, humility and sense of humour is sadly missed. Compare them with the football identities presenting themselves today as "entertainers".

Jack Dyer didn't have to poke fun at the "different", or the poor, to make us split our sides. He didn't appeal to the base instincts of the mob. How we miss Bob and Jack.

Denis Jacka,

Keysborough

Speeding truckies

DON'T the trucks in the Burnley tunnel register on the speed cameras? As I was driving through the tunnel for the first time and obeying the speed limit signs, a large truck tailgated me, flashing its lights.

Your say

Both lanes were bumper-to-bumper. What was I supposed to do? I moved over when I could and the truck roared through to tailgate the next car.

Lexie Fredericks,

Forest Hill

Sex brings out the worst

IT seems recognition of same-sex relationships, a basic human rights issue, brings out the worst in social conservatives and religious fundamentalists.

Rene Day, in "An end to family history" (March 22) argues that same-sex marriages will remove genealogy.

Is this based on a misguided assumption that if gay marriage is legally recognised, there will be an influx of people rushing into same-sex marriages who might otherwise have lived a straight life?

Rene Day concludes by asking if this loss of genealogy is what we want.

What we all should want is a society that recognises the rights of all individuals and relationships, regardless of sexuality or status. In that context, the answer to the question is yes.

Neil Klemm,

Geelong

Load-Date: March 24, 2004

Teen bomber kills policemen

Prince George Citizen (British Columbia)

September 23, 2004 Thursday

Final Edition

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 24

Length: 324 words

Byline: Associated Press

Dateline: JERUSALEM

Body

JERUSALEM (AP) -- A Palestinian teenager blew herself up at a busy Jerusalem bus station Wednesday, killing two Israeli policemen who stopped her for a security check and wounding 16 bystanders in an attack that evaded Israel's clampdown on the West Bank for the Jewish holidays.

Hours later, an Israeli helicopter fired a missile at a Gaza refugee camp, wounding 12 people, Palestinians said. In earlier retaliation, Israeli tanks entered the Khan Younis refugee camp and a bulldozer tore down a house across from a bloc of Jewish settlements. The military said the purpose was to clear areas used by militants to fire at Israelis.

Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, meanwhile, dropped a plan to evacuate 21 Jewish settlements in the Gaza Strip simultaneously at the beginning of next year, reverting to an earlier formula -- a staged pullout in the summer of 2005.

That prompted U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell to say Palestinian Prime Minister Ahmed Qureia -- and not Palestinian President Yasser Arafat -- should be empowered to take control of Gaza. Arafat "is not able to act in this manner," Powell said Wednesday. Israel and the United States are boycotting Arafat, the head of the Palestinian Authority.

Sharon also hinted that Israel might one day assassinate Arafat, as it did with two leaders of the Islamic militant group **Hamas** responsible for scores of suicide bombings.

The Al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades, a violent group with ties to Arafat's Fatah movement, claimed responsibility for Wednesday's bombing, but it was unclear what would trigger an Israeli move to assassinate Arafat. Israel has not carried out earlier threats despite attacks with dozens of casualties.

The blast at a busy intersection in the French Hill neighbourhood of northern Jerusalem destroyed a nearby police post, leaving shards of glass in the road as the smell of burning rubber wafted in the air.

The Al Aqsa Brigades identified the bomber as Zainab Abu Salem, 19.

Graphic

Colour Photo: Associated Press; Israeli police and rescue personnel carry a body to an ambulance after a **female** suicide bomber blew herself up near a bus stop. ;

Load-Date: February 17, 2006

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Palestinian gunmen abduct, then free, 3 church volunteers

The Record (Kitchener-Waterloo, Ontario)

July 31, 2004 Saturday Final Edition

Copyright 2004 Metroland Media Group Ltd

Section: FRONT; Pg. A11; NEWS

Length: 372 words

Dateline: NABLUS, WEST BANK

Body

Palestinian gunmen abducted three foreign church volunteers in Nablus late yesterday, releasing them several hours later under pressure from Palestinian authorities and other militants.

The reason for the abduction was unknown but it came two weeks after militants in Gaza snatched four French charity workers amid a political crisis that shook the authority of Palestinian President Yasser Arafat. The four French were also released.

Associated Press

Five gunmen seized the foreigners -- an American, a Briton and an Irishman -- around midnight yesterday as they were returning to Nablus. Five foreign women accompanying the men were left unharmed.

The Al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades, which is affiliated with Arafat's Fatah movement, said earlier it was helping track down the kidnappers, believed to be from a splinter faction of Al Aqsa.

The unidentified volunteers came to Nablus more than three weeks ago, apparently for missionary activities. They were abducted in an upscale part of town, where restaurants stay open late and young people often meet.

Earlier yesterday, Israeli helicopters launched a missile attack in Gaza City against a suspected weapons workshop in a building owned by the family of a suicide bomber.

Medics at the scene said at least two people were injured.

The Israeli military said the building in the Zeitoun district of Gaza was a bomb factory that produced explosives for the Hamas militant organization. Palestinian officials said it was a small factory that produced car batteries.

In a separate incident, Palestinians shot four rockets at an Israeli town yesterday, hours after Israel's army expanded an operation in the northern Gaza Strip.

Before daybreak, Israeli troops moved to the outskirts of Beit Lahiya, a town near Gaza's northern edge, residents said. Soon afterward militants fired four rockets across the border into Israel.

Two landed in residential areas of Sderot, causing panic but no injuries. Also yesterday, Israeli troops shot and killed several Palestinians they said were planting explosives near a Gaza Strip crossing to Israel.

Palestinian gunmen abduct, then free, 3 church volunteers

Israeli and Palestinians officials plan to meet this weekend at a hotel on the Dead Sea to discuss co-ordinating the Israeli pullout next year from the Gaza Strip.

Load-Date: July 31, 2004

End of Document

Arafat urges radical shake-up of PA;

Morning Star
August 19, 2004

Copyright 2004 People's Press Printing Society Ltd

Section: Pg. 3

Length: 359 words

Byline: by Our Foreign Desk

Body

PALESTINIAN leader Yasser Arafat issued a plea for reform of the Palestinian Authority in an address to legislators at his battered headquarters in the West Bank town of Ramallah yesterday.

President Arafat has been under growing pressure internationally and from critics at home to implement reforms in the authority, which is widely accused of corruption.

"We have to be brave enough to admit mistakes, " Mr Arafat said. "We fortify our commitment to correct those mistakes."

During the speech he called for a "comprehensive workshop of reforms.

"It's true that there were wrongs and unacceptable practices by me and many others.

Even the prophets commit mistakes, " he said.

"There were wrong practices in some institutions and some misused their positions. There were not enough efforts to strengthen the rule of law, the independence of the judicial institutions. We have begun to take measures to solve this."

President Arafat called for a greater role for women and young leaders in politics. "We must open the doors wide for our young generation to seize the opportunity to serve our people, " he said.

The veteran leader's appointment last month of a relative to a senior security position in the Gaza Strip sparked violent protests and was followed by a wave of kidnappings and unrest.

Israel has pledged to withdraw from Gaza next year.

Egypt, which is acting as a mediator, has offered to help ensure peace in the area after the Israeli pullout, but is insisting that President Arafat reform his security forces.

In a show of solidarity with thousands of hunger-striking prisoners being held by Israel, Mr Arafat said that leaders of the various Palestinian factions had agreed to hold a fast day. He met leaders of Palestinian groups, including Hamas and Islamic Jihad, earlier this week.

Arafat urges radical shake-up of PA;

The Palestinian prisoners launched their hunger strike on Sunday, demanding more family visits and better communication with the outside world.

Mr Arafat said that the Palestinians have appealed for international intervention to pressure Israel into improving conditions for the prisoners.

Israel has said that it won't give in to the prisoners' demands.

Load-Date: August 20, 2004

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West Bank: the new militant focus?

Christian Science Monitor (Boston, MA)

October 18, 2005, Tuesday

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 06

Length: 951 words

Byline: By Ilene R. Prusher Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

Dateline: JERUSALEM

Highlight: Israel suspended talks with Palestinians Monday after three young Israelis were killed Sunday in the West Bank.

Body

As they prepared Monday to bury their daughters - cousins who were killed along with a teenage boy in a drive-by shooting by Palestinian militants in the West Bank - parents blamed the Israeli government for not doing more to protect them.

"I did my part," one of the grieving fathers cried as Kinneret Mandel and Matat Adler, women in their early 20s, were eulogized at a hilltop cemetery here after Sunday's shooting attack in the Gush Etzion settlements, south of Jerusalem. "Why didn't others do theirs? Why couldn't anyone defend you from this?"

Unlike at most Israeli funerals of terror-attack victims, no government officials were in attendance - at the families' request. But the mix of anger and insecurity felt by many settlers in the aftermath of Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's Gaza Strip disengagement plan is reverberating throughout the halls of Israel's political and military establishment.

Officials said Monday they were cutting off security ties with the Palestinians and reversing a decision to ease up on the movement of Palestinian traffic around the West Bank. Reuters, quoting a defense ministry source, reported that Israeli troops will ring major West Bank cities and require that Palestinians travel between them by public transportation only, rather than in private cars.

Sunday's shooting attacks, in two different locations in the West Bank, raise the specter of a return to intifada-style bloodshed, something Israelis and Palestinians alike have predicted. Given that Israel has pulled out from the Gaza Strip, some analysts suggest that the focus will now shift to the West Bank, home to about 245,000 settlers and some 2.4 million Palestinians.

Many Israelis view such attacks as proof that Palestinians have either no will - or no way - to put an end to violence against Israelis. Many Palestinians, according to recent polls, view attacks on Israelis in the West Bank as wholly legitimate, in contrast to attacks inside the Green Line, Israel's pre-1967 boundaries.

Further complicating the state of Israeli-Palestinian relations, which appeared to be promising enough for Israeli and Palestinian leaders to plan for a summit this week, was the factor of who perpetrated the attack.

The Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade, a militant offshoot of the Fatah faction of the Palestinian Liberation Organization, took responsibility. Some wings of the somewhat fragmented organization have denied involvement. Fatah, the party

West Bank: the new militant focus?

founded by the late Yasser Arafat and now headed by Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, has already been scrambling to assert its authority in Gaza, where various militant groups have engaged in regular shootings and kidnappings of foreigners in the wake of Israel's withdrawal.

While senior Israeli and Palestinian officials have said that reining in Muslim militant groups like Hamas and Islamic Jihad is key to establishing stability and rule of law, Sunday's shootings by a Fatah-related group not only embarrasses Mr. Abbas - currently abroad and on his way to meet President Bush - but also demonstrates the complexities he faces within his own organization.

Across the West Bank, and in right-wing circles, some Israelis accuse their leaders of becoming too lenient toward Palestinian travel around the West Bank. As a good-will gesture meant to help pave the way for Israeli and Palestinian leaders to implement the road map outlined by the Bush administration, Israel had begun allowing Palestinian traffic to flow more quickly through checkpoints and re-issued permits for more Palestinians to work in Israel.

"It's simple: all of the roads were opened up to Arab traffic, and our lives are at risk," Shaul Goldstein, the mayor of the Gush Etzion settlement block where the three settlers were killed, told reporters after the shooting. "It's time for us to wake up and realize that by opening our roads, leaving army posts unmanned, and abandoning most of the army checkpoints, we are sitting ducks."

Although senior officials in the Palestinian Authority were quick to condemn the shooting, many Palestinians note that it did not take place in a vacuum.

Just last week, four Palestinians were killed in Israeli raids in the West Bank and Gaza, two of them children, according to the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights in Gaza. On Sunday, Israeli troops shot dead a man whom Palestinian news agencies called an "activist;" Israeli and international news agencies said he was an Islamic Jihad commander.

"The Israelis want a cease-fire from the Palestinians, but also to reserve their unilateral right to keep going out on raids and continuing to kill," says Ziad Abu Amar, a Palestinian legislator from Gaza. "If the Israelis continue to arrest and kill members of [militant groups], it will be embarrassing for others to just sit by and watch."

Dr. Abu Amar, an author and expert on Hamas on other Palestinian militants, describes the situation as most Palestinians see it.

As long as Israel continues military activities in the West Bank, expands settlements, and keeps building the security barrier, he says, Palestinians will look at the horizon and see more intifada than peace process.

"Did the Israelis expect that once they leave Gaza they will get a license from the Palestinians to swallow up the West Bank? It's fine to expect that the struggle over the West Bank will continue," Amar says. "Palestinians will try to resist by using violence."

Chief Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat said that both Sunday's shooting and the Israeli army's continued policy of targeted assassinations served to sabotage efforts to resume peace talks. Any attack on Israelis, he argues, is not in the Palestinian interest.

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Load-Date: October 17, 2005

Pride restored

University Wire

August 19, 2004 Thursday

Copyright 2004 Technician via U-Wire

Section: COLUMN

Length: 810 words

Byline: By Brian Onorio, Technician; **SOURCE:** North Carolina State U.

Dateline: RALEIGH, N.C.

Body

As I was watching the Parade of Nations during the Opening Ceremony of the Athens 2004 Olympic Games, I was filled with an emotion that I haven't felt in quite a long time. Pride. As the Iraqi delegation took the field with a thunderous roar from the spectators, I was absolutely filled with pride for this nation. It is because of us that there are two more free nations that will compete in these games. The Iraqi Olympians no longer have to be afraid of the consequences of going home medal-less. Afghanistan sent the first women that have ever represented that country. No, I'm not asking for applause and a look what we did, but it's impossible not to sit back and say that what we did in Afghanistan, and especially Iraq, was wrong.

It's hard to feel pride for this nation. With constant attacks from within our own border, it makes it difficult to like this country. John Kerry has been slinging mud in every direction saying the country is on the wrong course, what we did in Iraq was wrong (no wait, he said it was right, no, he said he wasn't sure what he would do, then he said he would've done the same thing), he said that this President has destroyed all of our allies in Europe (meanwhile, President Putin of Russia announced that he still wouldn't send troops if Kerry was elected. You see John, these people will never work with us unless they're being invaded by the Nazi's), you have a propagandist (I mean documentarian), Michael Moore, lying and splicing a film to achieve a certain reaction (America-hating) and was endorsed by the Palestinian Terror group, Hamas, and it goes on and on and on. Indeed, pride is a difficult emotion when we're sitting in this kind of atmosphere. But seeing those Iraqi athletes take the field and not have to fear going back to Saddam restored the national pride I almost let John Kerry & Co. take away.

The Michael Moore/Howard Dean wing of the Democratic Party can preach peace. They can say all day that they don't want war; that war is ugly; that it wasn't worth one American life. They can talk about peace and reserve their spots on the beautiful grassy knolls of college campuses and wave their signs about America's illegitimate, racist (huh?) war all day long. They can make their patriotic films about how bad this country is and explain that it is patriotic to intervene when you believe the country has gone awry. They can receive their rave reviews from Hamas and claim that they would be just as effective as the President in fighting terror. But let me ask you one very simple question. For all of those people (and maybe even yourself) who preach love and peace, how much peace have you actually achieved? How many people have you liberated with your rhetoric? How many despotic regimes have you removed because of your flowing white gown and yard signs filled with America-hating slogans? How many of you that believe that peace is patriotic have helped to achieve anything remotely close to peace for anyone besides yourself?

Pride restored

No, Afghanistan and Iraq have not been perfect. I admit mistakes. We did not find weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. But it's a shame that the mistakes are allowed to be amplified to cast a shadow on what we actually have done. What war is perfect? Furthermore, if you were President and you were told that 1.) the CIA says Saddam has WMDs, 2) British Intelligence says he has them, 3.) President Putin says he's got 'em, 4.) The madman destroyed hordes of his own people with them, 5.) the worst terrorist attack in history happened just a few months ago on your own soil with weapons of non-mass destruction, what would you do? Try to gain international support? Yeah. Go for it. If 40 countries aren't enough, then I suppose you'll never be pleased.

But given our short-comings, it is important not to lose focus on the right we have done. Fifty-five million people will have free, democratic elections soon. Yes, these places aren't what you would call "peaceful" but it's a start. Hope has been restored to the citizens of Iraq and Afghanistan. Hope for a better future, not a continuation of a terrible past; hope for the education of women, not women who are chained and covered like property; hope for the next generation, not an insecure future at the mercy of madmen; hope for a better life, not a life insecure of a positive outcome.

It is important that we as Americans of either political party remain united in what we have done as a country and what we will do as a country. Elie Wiesel, survivor of the holocaust and author of the book "Night" understands the necessity of confronting evil. "I swore never to be silent whenever and wherever human beings endure suffering and humiliation. We must always take sides. Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented."

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Load-Date: August 19, 2004

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Bush plea as lives hang on knife-edge

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

September 22, 2004 Wednesday

Third Edition

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Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; International News; Pg. 14

Length: 779 words

Byline: Marian Wilkinson Herald Correspondent in Washington, and agencies

Body

Two hostages, one American and one British, were under threat of execution as President George Bush arrived in New York to ask the United Nations for more help in Iraq and to meet Iraq's interim Prime Minister, Iyad Allawi.

The beheading of an American hostage, Eugene Armstrong, put the Iraq invasion at the forefront of the US election campaign.

The execution video that showed Mr Armstrong, a construction contractor, blindfolded and screaming, brought home the horror of the war.

It was released as Mr Bush and his Democratic opponent, John Kerry, stepped up their debate about Iraq.

A US official in Washington confirmed that Mr Armstrong's body had been recovered soon after the videotape was posted on an Islamic website. It showed a terrorist, believed to be the Jordanian Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, carrying out the murder while a statement was read.

It referred to Mr Bush as "a dog" and said "the mujahideen will give America a taste of the degradation you have inflicted on the Iraqi people".

Mr Bush described the killers as "ideologues of hatred" who carried out the beheading "in order to shake our will".

Two other hostages, an American, Jack Hensley, and a Briton, Kenneth Bigley, remained under threat of execution.

Zarqawi's followers kidnapped the three Westerners last week and are demanding the release of all **female** prisoners from US custody in Iraq. The US military say two of Saddam Hussein's senior scientists are the only **women** being held. One of them is "Dr Germ", Rihab Rashid Taha.

The family of Mr Bigley yesterday begged the British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, to save his life.

"I ask Tony Blair personally to consider the amount of bloodshed already suffered," Mr Bigley's son Craig said on BBC television. "Only you can save him now ... Please meet the demands and release my father - two **women** for two men."

Bush plea as lives hang on knife-edge

In a message aired on the Arabic satellite television channels Al-Jazeera and Al Arabiya yesterday, a British official appealed for Mr Bigley's release, the Government said. The message made it clear that Britain was not holding any Iraqi women prisoners and therefore could not meet the kidnappers' demands, the Foreign Office said.

On the eve of Mr Bush's speech to the UN, Senator Kerry issued his most trenchant attack yet on Mr Bush's Iraq policy.

Senator Kerry called for "a great honest national debate on Iraq". For the first time, he said Mr Bush's Iraq policy "has not strengthened our national security. It has weakened it."

He accused Mr Bush of "colossal failures of judgement" and "incompetence", and said the overthrow of Saddam had not made America safer.

"The satisfaction we take in his downfall does not hide this fact: we have traded a dictator for a chaos that has left America less secure."

Mr Bush hit back, accusing Senator Kerry of "twisting in the wind, with new contradictions of his old positions on Iraq".

He noted Senator Kerry's vote last year to support the war and his continued justification of that vote.

"Incredibly, he now believes our national security would be stronger with Saddam Hussein in power, not in prison," he said.

Polls show Mr Bush is still significantly ahead of Senator Kerry on the question of which of them is better suited to handle the Iraq crisis, even though half of the country believes the war was a mistake.

The leader of the militant Palestinian group Hamas, which has claimed a string of suicide bombings in Israel, has urged Iraqi guerillas to stop taking hostages and concentrate on fighting the occupation of their country.

"We are against kidnappings, and we wish the Iraqi resistance would stay away from this behaviour and concentrate on its natural right in defending its land and people, by resisting the occupation forces, foremost the American occupation," said the head of the Hamas political bureau, Khaled Mashaal.

The US abuse of prisoners in Iraq was cited by the UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, in a warning to world leaders that international law was being "shamelessly disregarded" around the world. In a speech to the UN General Assembly, Mr Annan said: "Again and again, we see fundamental laws shamelessly disregarded."

He was to speak before Mr Bush on the opening day of the two-week session attended by 64 presidents, 25 prime ministers and 86 foreign ministers. A Turkish firm said yesterday that it was suspending its operations in Iraq to save 10 employees abducted by Iraqi militants at the weekend. "We are halting our activities in Iraq," Vinsan construction company said in a statement faxed to Reuters.

In a videotape aired by Al-Jazeera on Saturday, the Abu Bakr al-Seddiq Battalions threatened to kill the workers within three days if the company did not quit Iraq.

Graphic

PHOTO: Timeless terror ... the American construction contractor Eugene Armstrong kneels helplessly before his black-clad captors just moments before he was executed, as shown on the video on an Islamic website. Photo: AP

Bush plea as lives hang on knife-edge

Load-Date: July 17, 2007

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Swift revenge after gunmen kill settler family;

Irish News

May 03, 2004

Copyright 2004 The Irish News Limited

Section: Pg. 18

Length: 317 words

Body

AN ISRAELI helicopter launched missiles at a 14-storey building in the middle of Gaza City yesterday, hours after a pregnant Jewish settler and her four young daughters were killed by Palestinian gunmen.

Part of the building's roof collapsed and screaming women stood on the balconies. People fled in panic after the attack on the building of apartments and businesses in the Rimal area.

Ambulances raced to the scene.

The building housed the offices for a radio station affiliated with Hamas and also offices of the main Palestinian newspaper al Ayyam.

The air strike followed an attack by Palestinian gunmen on a vehicle as it was driving out of Gaza. The attack - in which the two gunmen died - killed a pregnant woman and her four daughters, outraging Israelis.

The militant Islamic Jihad and Popular Resistance Committees, an umbrella group, claimed responsibility.

The violence came as members of Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's Likud Party voted in a referendum on his plan to pull out of Gaza.

There has been a reduction in violence in the Israeli-occupied territory since Mr Sharon announced, several months ago, his exit plan. Israel was on high alert ahead of yesterday's vote.

Earlier Mr Sharon issued a lastminute appeal to voters to support his withdrawal plan, saying rejection would threaten the country's future.

The Likud vote is a critical test for him. A loss would likely spark a major political crisis, including a possible cabinet reshuffle, a split in the hardline party or even early elections.

Some sources said Mr Sharon was determined to carry out the withdrawal, regardless of the outcome of the vote. Others said he might seek a nationwide referendum on the plan.

He proposes withdrawing from the Gaza Strip, including evacuating 7,500 settlers, taking down four small West Bank settlements and finishing the controversial West Bank "separation barrier" by the end of 2005.

Swift revenge after gunmen kill settler family;

Graphic

EXIT POLL: Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon votes in yesterday's Likud Party poll PICTURE: Kevin Frayer/AP

Load-Date: May 4, 2004

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First Stage of Israel Evacuation Ends

New York Sun (Archive)

August 24, 2005 Wednesday

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Section: FRONT PAGE; Pg. 1

Length: 914 words

Byline: By BENNY AVNI, Staff Reporter of the Sun

Dateline: UNITED NATIONS

Body

As Israel completed the complex and sensitive task of removing Jewish citizens from Gaza and West Bank settlements, officials yesterday said that further progress depends largely on the Palestinian Arabs. Israeli diplomats said the United Nations will not be involved in verifying the withdrawal, and President Bush vowed to help the "people of Gaza."

"The first stage of the separation plan ended, but is not complete," the Israeli army's chief of staff, Lieutenant General Dan Halutz, said. Practically all Jewish citizens were evacuated from 21 settlements in Gaza and four in the northern West Bank, General Halutz said in a final press briefing yesterday. The operation lasted less than a week. The army has yet to help the Gaza evacuees remove the remainder of their belongings and raze their former homes. General Halutz said this process will last about 20 days.

General Halutz spoke after two small West Bank settlements, Sanur and Homesh, were evacuated yesterday without significant violence. About 15,000 settlers and their supporters were evacuated from Gaza and the Shomron region of the West Bank since the beginning of the joint police-army operation last Monday, the general said. "Undoubtedly, the act of civilian evacuation was carried out faster than expected," he said. Success was made possible by good preparation by the troops, their commanders, and the related civilian institutions, he said, also praising the behavior of the settlers and their leaders.

Israel's ambassador to the United Nations, Dan Gillerman, told The New York Sun that Jerusalem will oppose any U.N. Security Council resolution drawn up to verify the completion of Israel's withdrawal from Gaza. Arab countries have demanded that Israel withdraw from all of the territories that it has controlled since the 1967 war. Secretary-General Annan has indicated that the United Nations has the expertise to verify the Gaza withdrawal.

Noting that Mr. Annan verified the demarcation of the Lebanese-Israeli border known as the "blue line" after Israel left Lebanon in 2000, and that the secretary-general is currently working to verify Syria's withdrawal from Lebanon, a U.N. spokesman, Farhan Haq, told the Sun yesterday that Turtle Bay "has the expertise and experience to verify a withdrawal." He stressed, however, that Mr. Annan will only apply this expertise to Gaza "if asked to do so."

Today the Security Council is expected to issue a nonbinding "press statement" regarding the completion of the civilian evacuation, but beyond that, there should be no U.N. involvement, Mr. Gillerman said. Israelis are concerned that some council members will demand further evacuation, including in the disputed areas of the West

First Stage of Israel Evacuation Ends

Bank, and then will require U.N. verification for that as well."The U.N. has no role in the separation plan, and we will oppose any such role," Mr. Gillerman said.

When Mr. Sharon arrives in New York in mid-September, he is expected to become "the real superstar" of the Turtle Bay summit attended by a large number of heads of state, Mr. Gillerman said, adding that the Israeli U.N. mission is already "flooded" with requests from leaders who hope to make an appointment with Mr. Sharon.

Mr. Gillerman is expected to have a breakfast meeting today with the U.N. Development Program administrator, Kemal Dervis, to discuss the use of funds by the agency's Gaza office for Palestinian Arab political propaganda. Mr. Gillerman said that Mr. Dervis has already conveyed his disapproval. But this was not the first time the agency was involved in such action: In January, the Sun reported that the UNDP continued to transfer funds to a West Bank charity affiliated with the terrorist organization **Hamas** even after being alerted to the **Hamas** link by the Israeli army.

Meanwhile, in Jerusalem, a Foreign Ministry spokesman, Gideon Meir, told the Associated Press, "We disengaged the people from the land in the Gaza Strip and the northern part of the West Bank. Now it's the Palestinians' turn to disengage themselves from violence and terror."

President Bush, who spoke with reporters in Idaho, agreed. "In order for this process to go forward there must be confidence," he said. "Confidence that the Palestinian people will have in their own government to perform, confidence with the Israelis that they'll see a peaceful state emerging."

Praising Mr. Sharon "for having made a very tough decision," Mr. Bush said that the Israeli move "has really changed the dynamics on the ground, and has really provided hope for the Palestinian people." The president called on world powers to support Gaza's economy in order to turn the area into a democracy.

Despite dire predictions of violence in the two settlements that were evacuated yesterday, particularly at Sanur, where hard-line, anti-government protesters traveled to make their final stand, the daylong operation was considered a success. The only significant violent event occurred when a **female** soldier was stabbed by a **female** assailant. The soldier was quickly taken to a hospital, where she was treated for minor wounds.

In scenes reminiscent of last week's confrontation at Gaza's Kfar Darom, dozens of demonstrators took over the roof of a fort built by the British and tried to prevent police and army troops from climbing up to evacuate them. But negotiations that had been conducted earlier between troop commanders and settler leaders proved fruitful, and after minor skirmishes that lasted for several hours, the fort was emptied.

Load-Date: August 24, 2005

The terror continues

National Post (f/k/a The Financial Post) (Canada)

July 21, 2005 Thursday

National Edition

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Section: ISSUES & IDEAS; Pg. A18

Length: 908 words

Byline: Barry Rubin, The Jerusalem Post

Body

Since February, 2005, there has been a formal ceasefire in the war initiated by Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat more than four years earlier. Nevertheless, the Palestinian terror war against Israel continues. This situation cannot be understood without looking at it from the point of those who find terrorism so politically rewarding and acceptable in terms of Palestinian politics.

Any would-be Palestinian terrorist can take the following for granted:

His attack will be encouraged by the official Palestinian media and by PA-appointed and paid clerics in their sermons.

He will not be stopped by PA forces.

If he succeeds in killing Israelis he will be praised by PA institutions, the ruling Fatah group and the Palestinian media.

If he is captured or arrested by Israel the PA will demand his release.

After an attack he will not be arrested by the PA. In a few high-profile cases attracting Western pressure, he will be placed under house arrest and soon allowed to "escape."

If he is killed, the PA will make him an honoured martyr.

If he is a member of the ruling Fatah group, it will not criticize, expel or punish him.

Whatever he does, including the brutal murder of Israeli civilians, he will still be welcome to join the PA payroll as a security man. If as a member of the security services he commits a terror attack, he will not be fired.

Given all these factors, it is not surprising that Palestinians, including members of Fatah and the PA security services, continue to plan and carry out terrorist attacks on Israel. During the five months between the Feb. 8 ceasefire decision by the Palestinians and July 8, Palestinians carried out 812 attacks on Israeli targets. In thousands more cases attacks were disrupted by Israeli arrests, security efforts or defensive operations.

Some attacks take place in the Gaza Strip and West Bank. Others are aimed at Israel itself, though a higher proportion of these are blocked. The type of attacks include shootings at Israeli civilians in the Gaza Strip and West

The terror continues

Bank, the firing of mortars and rockets, assaults on homes and economic targets, as well as against Israeli forces organizing the withdrawal from the Gaza Strip.

What makes the situation even more ironic is that the main factor reducing the number and effectiveness of attacks inside Israel has been the security fence so strongly opposed by the PA. If the fence did not exist, Israeli casualties would be much higher, given the PA's own lassitude in blocking terrorism.

As a result, while Palestinians succeeded in carrying out 21 suicide bombing attacks in 2001, 40 in 2002, and 16 in 2003, in 2004 they succeeded in perpetrating only six. Correspondingly, Israeli casualties dropped from 453 killed in 2002 to 118 killed in 2004. It is important to note that these dramatic reductions took place before there was any ceasefire agreement, though since then these numbers have fallen further.

Again, though, this result is not due to a lack of effort on the part of terrorists, or the extent of effort by the PA itself. In April, May and June 2005 alone, 21 Palestinian children under the age of 18 were caught at Israeli checkpoints trying to smuggle bombs, guns or ammunition into Israel.

Remarkably, nearly half (47%) of the attacks since the ceasefire have been claimed by Fatah, the ruling group in the PA, into whose hands the international community now proposes to place \$3-billion in aid. To date, no Fatah official, member or security force employee has been punished, expelled or fired for involvement in almost 400 attacks.

These are important indicators of the current situation, vital for Westerners to be aware of.

Without such understanding, Israeli actions are robbed of their motivation and necessity, making Israel seem to be acting irrationally, arbitrarily and purely out of cruelty. For example:

Israeli roadblocks are necessary because of ongoing attempts to smuggle in explosives and arms to kill Israelis. The use of children and women for these purposes requires careful searching of these people. This is the cause of delays or blockages Palestinians must suffer. If there were no attacks, there would be no roadblocks, or even Israeli forces in the lands ruled by the PA.

The security fence is necessary to block ongoing attacks the PA does not itself stop. This is why the fence is being built.

The attacks inhibit Israeli withdrawals not because Israel wants to keep these territories but as a defensive measure. If there were no attacks, Israel could easily pull back to the 2000 lines and turn over more territory in the West Bank to the PA.

Continuing casualties on the Palestinian side are due to the continuing war conducted by Palestinian political organizations. If the Palestinians stopped all attacks on Israel, Israel would not conduct any operations against the Palestinians. But the opposite point does not hold true: even when Israel stops all military operations against the Palestinians, the attacks continue.

The refusal or inability of the PA to stop attacks is a significant factor making Israeli leaders and the public doubt PA willingness or ability to make real peace. Continuing terrorism is one of the main problems blocking progress toward a comprehensive resolution resulting in an independent Palestinian state.

While Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas has major domestic difficulties in effectively stopping the terrorism, the problem is enhanced by his political strategy of refusing to try.

Graphic

The terror continues

Black & White

Photo: Mohammed Abed, AFP, Getty Images; A **Hamas** militant stands in front of a portrait of late **Hamas** leader Ahmed Yassen in the Gaza Strip.

Load-Date: July 21, 2005

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Abbas Says Calm in Gaza Pullout Would Aid Statehood

The New York Times

August 10, 2005 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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Section: Section A; Column 1; Foreign Desk; Pg. 3

Length: 827 words

Byline: By STEVEN ERLANGER; Dina Kraft contributed reporting from Neve Dekalim for this article.

Dateline: JERUSALEM, Aug. 9

Body

Mahmoud Abbas, the Palestinian president, urged his people to ensure calm for Israel's pullout from Gaza, saying a smooth Israeli withdrawal would bolster the image of Palestinians in the world and hasten the coming of an independent Palestinian state.

In a speech televised live from a special session of parliament in Gaza, Mr. Abbas called on Palestinian militants to keep to the cease-fire with Israel and work to prevent chaos, looting or the seizure of property.

"The withdrawal must take place in calm, in a civilized manner," he said. "We will be able to confirm to the world that we deserve a state and that this step is just the beginning, and not the end."

He urged Palestinians to avoid any provocations that could bring Israeli military might down on Gaza. "Let them go," he said. "Let us allow them to leave."

Israel has declared it illegal for its citizens to remain in Gaza after midnight Sunday. Beginning on Aug. 17, the police and the army will remove any Israelis who remain in Gaza settlements, forcibly if necessary, then pack up their belongings and destroy their homes. There are 21 Israeli settlements in Gaza, with about 9,000 inhabitants; at least half have so far made little effort to plan for their future outside the occupied territory.

Mr. Abbas also cautioned against exaggerated celebrations, because the Israeli withdrawal is a far cry from an end to the occupation of the West Bank and East Jerusalem, he said. "The Israelis are still occupying our land, and the road is still long ahead," he said.

He warned that Israel would try to use the Gaza pullout to justify retaining control over large parts of the West Bank, and said President Bush "listened to us and said that any change to the borders must be done as a result of an agreement between the two sides."

Israel will also pull out of four small settlements in the northern West Bank, clearing an area larger than Gaza. But it remains uncertain whether the Israeli Army will keep security control over that area or hand it over to the Palestinians. On Tuesday, the army declared part of the West Bank area a closed military zone, like Gaza, to try to prevent nonresident opponents of the pullout from entering it.

Abbas Says Calm in Gaza Pullout Would Aid Statehood

Mr. Abbas also vowed that legislative elections, which should have taken place in 2000 and were originally scheduled for mid-July, would now take place in January. The militant Islamic movement **Hamas**, which was angry about the July postponement, said it would take part in the January elections.

Gaza remains chaotic, with open rivalries among various Palestinian security services. About 200 masked, armed militants from Mr. Abbas's Fatah movement rallied outside parliament, demanding an end to recent efforts by the Palestinian Authority to arrest their members.

Mr. Abbas has promised to have one government, one law and one gun -- in other words, a monopoly on power to be held by elected officials. But right now, his promise is only an aspiration, and his criticism of the militants for firing rockets and mortars against Israeli targets has been rejected by **Hamas**, Islamic Jihad and the local Popular Resistance Committee.

The mufti of Jerusalem, Akram Sabi, also issued a religious ruling against disrupting the Israeli pullout.

In the Israeli settlements on Tuesday, there was a prayer vigil outside the synagogue in Neve Dekalim, with about 2,000 people singing psalms, blowing the shofar and praying that the Israeli government would stop its pullout plans.

At the same time, 90 percent of the northern Gaza settlement of Elei Sinai, made up of settlers pulled out of the Sinai after the peace treaty with Egypt, said they would not oppose the pullout but hold a parting ceremony before leaving on Aug. 17. In Dugit, nearby, at least 20 families say they will evacuate voluntarily.

But many of the settlers say they have no respect for the government or the army, which issued them letters urging them to go voluntarily.

Miriam Yifrah, 47, asked whether she had gotten a letter, said, "I ripped it up and didn't even read it."

Petyah Neriya, 50, a director of the yeshiva of Neve Dekalim, has been there for 23 years. "We receive our orders from above, not from the prime minister or from the soldiers," he said. "We will continue on our path." God had ordered them to settle the biblical land of Israel, he said, and that is what he intended to do.

The Israeli Army chief of staff, Lt. Gen. Dan Halutz, told the army radio that the military was searching for nine soldiers who had deserted with their weapons. "This concerns us," he said, alluding to the case last week when a young deserter killed four Israeli Arabs on a crowded bus.

He also said that about 50 soldiers had refused to obey orders connected to the disengagement plan and that such action would not be tolerated. "If we do not deal with the problem while it is still on a small scale, it could become a destructive phenomenon," he said.

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Graphic

Photos: In the Neve Dekalim settlement in Gaza, **women** prayed yesterday in hopes that the Israeli government would drop the Gaza settler withdrawal. (Photo by Rina Castelnuevo for The New York Times)

Mahmoud Abbas, the Palestinian president, addressing his parliament in Gaza City yesterday. (Pool photo by Spencer Platt)

Abbas Says Calm in Gaza Pullout Would Aid Statehood

Load-Date: August 10, 2005

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Foot soldiers of nihilism

The Weekend Australian

June 26, 2004 Saturday NSW Country Edition

Copyright 2004 Nationwide News Pty Limited

Section: REVIEW; Books; Pg. B10

Length: 852 words

Byline: Peter Coleman

Body

An attempt to explain the explosion in suicide bombings misses a few points, argues Peter Coleman

My Life as a Weapon: A Modern History of Suicide Bombing

By Christoph Reuter, Princeton University Press, 200pp, \$44.95

WHAT makes young people turn themselves into human bombs? Here at last is a careful investigation of this atrocious epidemic. The author is a German journalist and Orientalist who has spent years in Arab and Muslim countries and speaks many of the key languages. He wants to help put an end to this era of unspeakable crimes.

Poverty and ignorance will not explain these suicides, he says. Some, like the September 11 bombers, are rich and well-educated. Nor is religious fanaticism, especially Islam, always a key. The Tamils are Hindu and the Tamil Tigers are secularist. Terrorism alone is not an explanation. The IRA does not practise suicide; neither does the Algerian GIA, which likes slitting throats but not their own. Even sex -- and the 70 black-eyed virgins with heaving breasts who will greet the martyrs in Paradise -- does not quite explain those suicidalists who fear and shun all contact with women.

MATP

Reuter has his own theory. It is not as comprehensive as he thinks but it helps. The suicide bombers are motivated, he believes, by their sense of powerlessness. After years of humiliation at the hands of the US, Israel, Turkey or the West in general, they have found a weapon that annihilates the logic of power. No credible threat can be made against someone who has no desire to survive. These martyrs demonstrate that the apparently powerful may also be made powerless.

Add an apocalyptic ideology and heroic myth of sacrificial defeat (as in the great battle of Karbala 1300 years ago) and you have an unstoppable force. As the early Christians found, armies crumble before the faith of the martyrs.

By becoming a human bomb, the young man becomes a hero. He does God's will and enters Paradise. The welfare department of the terrorist network takes care of the funeral, gives his family a few hundred dollars and will look after the children. (Hamas has an annual budget of \$100 million.)

But there is an element that Reuter neglects. Suicide killers are as old as history, but their victims were carefully targeted. The new terrorists kill innocent bystanders, often deliberately and with indifference (as in Bali). Only a sense of evil, however unfashionable that may be, can begin to explain murder on that scale. In his fear of being judgmental, Reuter sometimes tries too hard to understand.

Foot soldiers of nihilism

He begins his analysis with the Iranian suicide battalions of the Iran-Iraq War in the 1980s. Early in 1984, Iraqi machine-gunners heard what sounded like swarms of locusts approaching from behind the hills. The sound swelled as tens of thousands of mouths roared "Karbala!". It was a human wave attack. But the attackers were children. The Iraqis shot them like rows of empty bottles -- until in the end some of the Iraqis went mad or fled. No one can go on shooting children in their thousands and stay sane.

The suicide weapon soon spread across the world to the Hezbollah in Lebanon, the Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka, **Hamas** in Israel, to Turkey, Kashmir, Chechnya -- and al-Qa'ida from Indonesia to the US.

Human bombs are cheap. The only costs are nails, an explosive, a battery, a switch, some chemicals and a strong belt with pockets. The most expensive part is the taxi ride to the target site. Training has also been simplified. Years ago the candidate had to spend two days in a grave next to a corpse to show he was the right stuff. Then he had to learn all about bombs. Today the queue of volunteers is so long that almost all a bomber has to do is wash put on clean clothes and ask God to forgive his sins. When he has strapped on his explosives and put the Koran in his left breast pocket, he is ready -- to kill and to die.

What is to be done? Reuter counsels patience. The West cannot destroy this epidemic by force of arms. The disease must run its course. Take Iran. Twenty years ago it was the homeland of the Islamic Revolution and the inspiration for all suicide bombers. But not today. When al-Qa'ida struck New York, there was popular if silent Schadenfreude in many parts of the Middle East -- but none in Iran, where there were spontaneously organised mass funeral processions.

Iranians have turned against the idea of suicide and indiscriminate killing to fight the Great Satan and have become the most secular, modern society in the region. They want a little peace, prosperity and democracy.

But, says Reuter, this transformation came from within. The same will happen everywhere, provided the West does not rely on military shock and awe as the Americans did in Baghdad and the Israelis do in Gaza. This advice is all very well. People will get tired of listening to the mad mullahs. The trouble is that meanwhile Osama bin Laden will have stockpiled his weapons of mass destruction.

Understanding and patience are essential, but they are not enough. We dare not drop our guard in their name. We also need strength. There is no peace without the sword.

Load-Date: June 25, 2004

At Home With the Killers

New York Sun (Archive)

May 26, 2004 Wednesday

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Section: ARTS & LETTERS; Pg. 16

Length: 853 words

Byline: By BRENDAN CONWAY

Body

Eleven years have passed since the first Palestinian committed a suicide attack in Israel. In April of 1993, Sahar Tamam Nabulsi, a ***Hamas*** terrorist, 22 years of age, loaded a stolen Mitsubishi van with gas canisters and drove it between two parked buses outside a cafeteria. When he ignited the load, the blast gutted the buses, blowing jagged shards of metal into the cafe. An Arab Israeli bystander was killed, and eight others were injured.

Few Israelis and fewer outsiders immediately understood the meaning of the attack or the complex psychology and politics behind it. But some have spent the last decade trying to. Christoph Reuter, a correspondent for the German weekly Stern, interviewed as many families of suicide bombers as he could find, canvassed their countries of origin for insights, and has compiled the results in a short, readable book.

The windows Mr. Reuter makes into suicide terrorists' family lives do not quite confirm Hannah Arendt's dictum on the banality of evil, but they hardly gainsay it. They show how lamentable is the ethos of chauvinism and pride that supports suicide terrorism. But they also show how fragile and contrived that support can sometimes be, and how it is, ultimately, unnatural.

In most cases, bravado pours forth from family members, but thinly veiled sorrow follows. Take the case of Ismail Masawabi, age 23, an actor, aspiring painter, and son of a wealthy window manufacturer. In 2001, on the evening of June 22, he blew himself up near the neighboring Israeli settlement. Masawabi had worn a kippa and driven toward the gates of the settlement, intending to detonate his cargo inside, but his car became stuck in sand. When he called for help in Hebron, Israeli soldiers approached to answer the call; Masawabi then pushed the button, killing himself and the three soldiers.

Mr. Reuter tracked down and interviewed several members of Masawabi's family in their home in Khan Yunis. He shows first the strange belligerence of the Masawabis' defense of the suicide act. "Anyone with an atom of honor in his body should do it," a cousin exclaimed. But things weren't meant to turn out this way, the father admits.

"We planned to open the shop downstairs for his painting," he told Mr. Reuter. "That was what I had hoped." But after speaking of the shop the father lost his composure. "At least we're happy that he died in this way," he continued defensively. "That he didn't die at home, that he wasn't just shot dead at the checkpoint." Mr. Reuter has his doubts, and rightly so.

Mr. Reuter gets a similar answer from the infamous Palestinian who, in 2001, upon learning his son had blown himself and 21 bystanders into the next life, told a journalist from Abu Dhabi TV, "If I had 20 children, I'd send them all off to Israel to blow themselves up and to kill some Israelis." Mr. Reuter had a researcher track him down to get

At Home With the Killers

further comment. The response? "What was I supposed to say?" the man - identified only as Said - asked angrily when pushed to explain his remarks. "I have to be proud of him!" Before long, Said broke down. The tears began to flow, and he left the room.

Mr. Reuter granted some of his interviewees anonymity, and this helped him uncover those cases where relatives clearly traded pride and politics for open displays of sorrow. The most striking happened at a cemetery in Iran, where members of the "suicide battalions" who fought the Iran-Iraq War are buried. There, Mr. Reuter found a mother weeping over her son's grave. Guarded at first, in time she admitted that she no longer thinks her son Reza's loss was a worthwhile sacrifice for the imam and the revolution. "I don't believe it's God's will for someone to just throw his life away," she told Mr. Reuter. Reza was 13 at the time of his death in 1984.

Still, Mr. Reuter found just one case where a relative openly admitted doubts to a foreign journalist. "I had other plans for my son," says Hussein Tawil of Ramallah, whose 19-year-old son, Dia, an engineering student, blew himself up with a nail bomb, injuring dozens at a northern Jerusalem bus stop in 2001. Hussein accepted Hamas's congratulations after the attacks. He keeps photos captioned "Dia the Martyr" on his living room walls. "But why," he asks Mr. Reuter with desperation, "Why my son?"

There is no good answer to Mr. Tawil's question. If suicide is unnatural, then it is all the more unnatural for a parent to applaud it. The imams and ayatollahs who encourage suicide attacks do not admit this. Will they ever? It's hard to say, but at least they nod toward just-war theory occasionally.

In 2001, Mr. Reuter recounts, Sheikh Muhammada Said Tantawi, grand mufti at Cairo's Al-Azhar University, pronounced suicide terrorism justified "so long as [the bomber's] intention consists of killing the enemy's soldiers, but not women and children." Three years earlier, this same mufti had affirmed an unqualified "right of all Muslims, Palestinians, and Arabs to blow themselves up in the heart of Israel." If a terrorist-abettor can now speak against killing the enemy's children, maybe he'll one day condemn the killing of his own.

Load-Date: May 27, 2004

NATION;
WORLD

Philadelphia Daily News

FEBRUARY 12, 2004 Thursday 4STAR EDITION

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Section: NATIONAL; Pg. 31

Length: 325 words

Byline: Associated Press

Body

Civility is first victim

in gay-marriage debate

With scuffles breaking out inside the Statehouse and people chanting slogans for and against gay rights, Massachusetts lawmakers yesterday took up a proposed constitutional amendment to ban gay marriage.

People who came from across the country were confronted with tight security as the lawmakers entered the volatile national debate over gay rights - a debate stoked by a ruling from the state's highest court saying that gay couples have the right to marry.

2nd bombing in 2 days

brings Iraqi toll to 100

The second suicide bombing in as many days killed up to 47 people yesterday, pushing the toll in the back-to-back attacks to 100. Again, the targets were Iraqis - a crowd of volunteers for Iraq's new army.

Also yesterday, the U.S. military posted a \$10 million bounty on a Jordanian militant, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, suspected of organizing violence by foreign fighters to spark a Sunni-Shiite civil war in Iraq.

U.S. infant mortality rises;

Life expectancy highest ever

U.S. infant mortality has climbed for the first time since 1958, partly because older women are putting off motherhood and then having multiple babies via fertility drugs.

NATION; WORLD

At the same time, U.S. life expectancy reached an all-time high of 77.4 years in 2002, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said. Life expectancy in 2001 was 77.2 years.

The infant mortality rate rose from 6.8 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2001 to 7.0 in 2002.

15 Palestinians killed;

militants vow retaliation

Israel sent troops and tanks into a densely populated neighborhood and a refugee camp yesterday to search for Palestinian militants, setting off the bloodiest day of fighting in the Gaza Strip in 16 months. Fifteen Palestinians were killed and more than 50 were wounded.

Hamas, the militant Islamic group, responded by urging all its cells throughout Gaza and the West Bank to attack. Similar calls in the past have brought suicide bombings in Israel.

Load-Date: August 22, 2005

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At least 14 killed in Gaza firefight: Palestinians vow revenge for deadliest Israeli raid in 17 months

Ottawa Citizen

March 8, 2004 Monday Final Edition

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Section: News; Pg. A6; News

Length: 867 words

Byline: Stephen Farrell

Dateline: BUREIJ REFUGEE CAMP, Gaza Strip

Body

BUREIJ REFUGEE CAMP, Gaza Strip - Thousands of Palestinians vowed revenge yesterday for the deaths of 14 people, including three children, after Israeli troops carried out their deadliest raid in Gaza in 17 months.

Palestinians armed with Kalashnikov rifles, Molotov cocktails and crude anti-tank missiles fought an eight-hour battle against Israeli troops firing from helicopters, tanks and rooftop sniper positions in Bureij and Nusseirat camps.

After the incursion, tens of thousands joined the mass funeral march through the streets. **Women** threw sweets on to the crowd as gunmen fired in the air and shouted for revenge "until we uproot the last Zionist invaders from our sacred soil."

The Times, London; with files from Citizen News Services

The latest in a series of Israeli raids into Gaza in recent months came against the backdrop of proposals by Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon to withdraw settlers, and maybe even all troops, from the Gaza Strip. The plan has provoked anger among Mr. Sharon's right-wing coalition partners and suspicion among Palestinians, who have long seen the Israeli former general as a champion of the 7,000 Jewish settlers living among 1.2 million Palestinians in Gaza and 240,000 in the West Bank.

Of the casualties yesterday, hospital officials said the dead included 10 gunmen and three boys, ages eight, 12 and 15.

More than 80 people were wounded.

Palestinian children were seen running after Israeli vehicles, hurling stones as armed terrorists fired at the troops.

Israel said the pre-dawn raid -- which officials described as a "pinpoint operation" -- came after terrorists had attacked Israeli convoys and fired rockets into Jewish settlements nearby. It had been intended to seize weapons, although none were recovered.

"We witnessed intensive fighting from the beginning: anti-tank missiles, rocket-propelled grenades, Kalashnikovs, Molotov cocktails," said a spokesman for the Israeli Defence Forces. "We did not manage to confiscate anything or arrest anyone. We didn't get close enough and decided to go and pull out."

At least 14 killed in Gaza firefight: Palestinians vow revenge for deadliest Israeli raid in 17 months

The Palestinian death toll was the highest in Gaza since October 2002, when 19 were killed in fighting in the Khan Younis refugee camp.

Officials argued that the Israeli military had to act because the Palestinian Authority had failed to curb terrorist groups such as **Hamas** and Islamic Jihad.

"Terrorism is pouring out of this refugee camp, and we have to stop it," Israeli government spokesman Avi Pazner said. "We believe that by doing so we have prevented acts of terror in Israel and saved many human lives."

He denied any link with the proposed withdrawal. "We are now fighting terrorism. This has nothing to do with any future plan about Gaza," he said.

In the past week, Israeli helicopter gunships have struck twice, killing six militants and a boy in missile attacks in Gaza City.

Palestinians have accused Mr. Sharon of undermining any chance of peace.

"At a time when they're speaking about withdrawing from Gaza, they're destroying Gaza," Palestinian cabinet minister Saeb Erekat said. "It's a major escalation. It's very dangerous."

The raids came a day after a carefully planned suicide bomb attack by Palestinians on the main Erez border crossing between Israel and Gaza, in which terrorists in vehicles disguised as Israeli army jeeps tried to penetrate the heavily guarded junction.

The attack was thwarted. Four Palestinian attackers and two Palestinian policemen were killed. **Hamas**, Islamic Jihad and al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades claimed joint responsibility.

Palestinian officials said they believed the terrorist organizations were combining and refining their resistance against the Israelis to survive relentless and escalating crackdowns and in response to Mr. Sharon's plan to withdraw from Gaza. "Nobody is certain what's going to happen as far as Sharon's plan," said Ziad Abu Amr, a Gaza representative on the Palestinian Legislative Council. "All sides are trying to improve their positions here."

The mooted withdrawal is part of Mr. Sharon's proposal for a "unilateral disengagement." Coupled with the erection of the barrier sealing off the West Bank, this would see Israel dismantling some isolated settlements there, while seeking to annex the larger, more easily defended settlement blocs.

Also yesterday, soldiers scuffled with Palestinians protesting the separation barrier Israel is building in the West Bank. Residents of the village of Beit Dukou, northwest of Jerusalem, tried to block bulldozers clearing land for the barrier.

Soldiers threw stun grenades and chased and dragged villagers down an embankment. The residents say that barrier will cut them off from their fields. "The wall strangles the people completely," local council head Said Rayan said. About 1,500 people live in the village.

Israel insists it needs the barrier to keep Palestinian suicide bombers and other attackers out. However, the planned route of the complex of walls, fences, trenches, barbed wire and electronic sensors snakes back and forth into the West Bank to protect Jewish settlements and enclose Palestinian towns and villages, leading to Palestinian charges that the real purpose of the project is to confiscate West Bank land.

Graphic

At least 14 killed in Gaza firefight: Palestinians vow revenge for deadliest Israeli raid in 17 months

Colour Photo: Goran Tomasevic, Reuters; Israeli soldiers clashed with Palestinian residents of the village of Beit Dukou, northwest of Jerusalem, yesterday, as the residents tried to block bulldozers from clearing land for Israel's security barrier. 'The wall strangles the people completely,' said villager Said Rayan.

Load-Date: March 8, 2004

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**I HOPE FOR FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT, FOR PEACE';
PALESTINIAN ELECTION**

The Independent (London)

January 10, 2005, Monday

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Section: First Edition; NEWS; Pg. 4

Length: 327 words

Body

MOHAMMED TAUFIQ, 28, Ramallah, West Bank, uniformed Palestinian security serviceman

"I voted for Abu Mazen. I had a free choice. I hope for freedom of movement - I come from Gaza and haven't seen my family for seven years. I hope there will be peace but I'm not going to shoot at **Hamas** to get it. Even if I am under orders to."

ABIR REZEQ, 25, Abu Qash, unemployed **women's** studies graduate

"I am not saying how I voted - it's a personal matter which I discussed with my husband. I voted according to Palestinian interests and my own interests. I want a job and I have been unable to get one ... I would have voted for a woman candidate if there had been one."

ALI MUGRABI, 42, East Jerusalem, runs a record shop

"I voted for Mustafa Barghouti. He supports the continuation of the armed struggle and he is a former Communist like me. He is against corruption. I am worried that some people were turned away from this Israeli-run polling station because they couldn't find their names on the list."

IYAD HAMIS, 29, El Bireh, West Bank, unemployed taxi driver

"I used to work on the road between Ramallah and Jerusalem but now I can't because of the wall. I voted for Abu Mazen because I hope he will solve the economic and political problems. The Americans and Israelis didn't like Yasser Arafat so we didn't make progress."

MARINA IBSHARIA, 27, El Bireh, a Christian who has three sons

"I voted for Mustafa Barghouti because we like him and know him personally. He is a straightforward man. I am not deeply involved in politics but I hope there will more freedom of movement. I want my sons to be able to visit archaeological sites in Israel."

YUNIS ABU ESBAH, 40, East Jerusalem, shoe shop owner

"I'm not saying how I voted. I voted to show the world who know the West Bank is occupied what they don't know - Jerusalem is occupied too and is as much Palestinian as the West Bank. We are afraid we may lose our East Jerusalem ID cards if we vote, but I voted anyway."

I HOPE FOR FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT, FOR PEACE'; PALESTINIAN ELECTION

Load-Date: January 10, 2005

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Where Compassion Is a One-Way Street

The Forward

January 9, 2004

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Section: Forward Forum; Pg. 9

Length: 830 words

Byline: Yoel Marcus

Body

Eitan Ronel, a retired lieutenant colonel, returned his rank insignia to the Israeli army chief of staff this week, along with a letter full of bitterness. "Human life has lost its worth and values we were raised on, such as purity of arms, have become a bad joke," he wrote.

Ronel's protest over the army's conduct in the territories is not the first and won't be the last. The reserve pilots, the Sayeret Matkal commandos and the 12th-graders got there before him. Before them, there were the four Shin Bet security agency chiefs and the former head of the Mossad. On top of that, we've got B'Tselem: The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories and Gush Shalom ("Peace Bloc"), plus the Yossi Beilins and the Yossi Sarids and the Avraham Burgs, who are big on peace with the Palestinians and feel their pain. We have committees of inquiry investigating how and why Palestinian women and children were killed in this or that operation. We have a Supreme Court to which every Palestinian can appeal. We have a media that will not allow the least injustice or wrong to slip by. We have columnists whose hearts ache along with the Palestinians.

What I would like to know is why there is no one on the other side crying out against the Palestinian Authority's policy of hatred and bloodshed. Where is their B'Tselem? Where are the Palestinian refuseniks who object to the murder of women and children?

How come, when civilians are accidentally killed in one of our military operations, everyone clamors right away for an investigation, while their suicide bombers have no qualms about boarding a bus packed with children or entering a crowded restaurant and blowing themselves up, fully aware of who they are taking with them? Not only are they not denounced, but their families are treated with respect and showered with perks and pensions.

While we quarrel bitterly over ways to resolve the conflict, the Palestinian government has only one way, and it begins and ends with violence. The Palestinians imbibe hatred of Israel with their mothers' milk. From childhood, they are taught that the Jews must die.

In their textbooks, it doesn't say, of course, that the ones who stole their rights were the Arab countries, who invaded the land earmarked for them in the United Nations partition plan when they attacked in 1948. It doesn't say that they were liberated from Arab occupation only in 1967 - by Israel. Actually, it's been easier for them to push for an independent state under Israeli control than it would ever have been under Jordanian-Egyptian rule.

Whenever a truly historic moment arises - the Oslo accords, the Clinton-Barak initiative - that's when they go on a spree of suicide bombings in the heart of Israeli population centers. The Palestinians have crossed all the red lines. They have turned Israeli peaceniks into radicals, rousing them into angry rebellion against what is happening

Where Compassion Is a One-Way Street

around them. But while we respond, while we torture ourselves, while we keep asking ourselves every second if we haven't gone overboard and maybe it's time to stop, the Palestinians have never shown the slightest regret over any attack, no matter how massive, no matter how cruel.

Instead of the Palestinian Authority keeping Hamas in check, it is Hamas that sets the tone. Even in times of grief and pain, the two peoples are poles apart. When we bury our dead, we weep quietly at the graveside. For them, every funeral becomes a raucous demonstration of hatred and incitement against Israel.

Israeli society is mired in gritty debate. The government is being criticized for not doing enough to end the conflict. Before the intifadas, there were signs that coexistence was possible. Tens of thousands of Israelis flocked to the territories - to have their teeth fixed, to have their cars repaired, to do their food shopping. Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians worked in Israel proper.

Today, the only contact is via the barrel of a gun, the army checkpoint, the helicopter gunship, the Qassam rocket and the explosive belt. The Israeli army reprisal attacks in the territories may be brutal, but there are also people who feel sorry for the Palestinians' bitter lot.

Here one finds anger mixed with compassion; there, one finds anger mixed with loathing. Below the surface in Israel, hopes for peace continue to rumble. For them, hatred is total and blinding. Here they are with President Bush's road map staring them in the face, promising them a state of their own, yet they won't do the one thing that will open the gate: dismantle the terrorist infrastructure. Abu Mazen was ousted as Palestinian prime minister and his successor Abu Ala will follow the orders of Arafat, who knows no other way but terror.

It is not a fence that will change things but tearing down the wall of hatred that the Palestinians have built between the two peoples.

Yoel Marcus is a lead columnist for Ha'aretz, www.haaretzdaily.com, where this article originally appeared.

Load-Date: June 14, 2006

Elmasry's interview started firestorm

The Record (Kitchener-Waterloo, Ontario)

October 30, 2004 Saturday Final Edition

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Section: FRONT; Pg. A11; EXCERPT

Length: 1357 words

Body

Mohamed Elmasry, national president of the Waterloo-based Canadian Islamic Congress, sparked an outcry from Jewish and Muslim groups for comments made on The Michael Coren Show, on the Crossroads Television System, on October 19.

The topic of the talk show was What Is a Terrorist?

In addition to host Coren and guest Elmasry, participants included Irfan Syed, a Muslim lawyer, Peter Merrifield, who was identified as a terrorism and security consultant, and Adam Aptowitzer, Ontario chairman of B'nai Brith's Institute for International Affairs.

Critics denounced Elmasry's remarks and called for his resignation. On Wednesday, the congress issued an apology by Elmasry who also offered to resign as president. Board members refused to accept Elmasry's resignation.

Record staff

Many Record readers may not have seen the episode on which the controversial remarks were made.

Here are some excerpts of what Coren, Elmasry and other guest panelists said on the show.

Some of the verbal sparring, where it's difficult to decipher what was said by whom, is identified by the term (CROSSTALK). BREAK is a period of time that may or may not include commercials.

*

ELMASRY: My definition (of terrorism), for what it's worth, is that any act committed by a group or individual or a state against totally innocent civilians. And totally we have to really put underneath that big red line. Using, use of violence against totally innocent civilians. So this means these civilians should not be military. They should not be a spy. They should not be civilians helping a military.

COREN: And the purposeful target, not the accidental hurting of those people, but the direct targeting of those people.

ELMASRY: Yes. Yes.

BREAK

COREN: Let's go to pre-occupation of the West Bank.

Elmasry's interview started firestorm

ELMASRY: No, but let me give an example, one example from European history. If you look, actually, in the resistance of the French against the Germans, they did the same thing. They blow up bridges. They did kidnap people, they assassinate people.

COREN: Who?

ELMASRY: The French. They assassinated soldiers and their collaborators, and French. French civilians. (CROSSTALK)

COREN: But Mohammed, I think that's a rather tenuous argument. I mean I know a little about the war and the French resistance and the lack of it, sadly, but . . . I can't remember of one case where the French resistance, the Maquis or even their allies, communist or Gaulist or nationalist, would go into a school where German children were and kill them all.

ELMASRY: That's why we're saying that totally innocent people.

COREN: OK.

ELMASRY: . . . and totally innocent people, obviously, is the children. But they are not innocent if they are part of a population which is a total population of Israel is part of the army. (CROSSTALK) From 18 on, they are part of the soldiers, even if they have civilian clothes.

COREN: So if Israeli children are killed, that is a valid use of military force by Palestinians?

ELMASRY: No, they are not valid.

COREN: So what are you saying?

ELMASRY: I'm saying that it has to be totally innocent, OK? Totally innocent are the children, obviously, OK? But they are not innocent if the army (inaudible) in civilian clothes, OK?

COREN: What about women?

ELMASRY: The same, if they are women in the army.

COREN: Anyone over the age of 18 in Israel is a valid target.

ELMASRY: Anybody above 18 is a part of the Israeli army.

COREN: Everyone in Israel and anyone and everyone in Israel, irrespective of gender, over the age of 18 is a valid target?

ELMASRY: Yes . . .

BREAK

ELMASRY: . . . I would like to wake up one day and there is no terror either by a state.

COREN: You mean you'd like to win.

ELMASRY: No, I would like actually for the conflict to stop, for the aggressor (which Elmasry identified as Israel, earlier in the program) to stop the aggression, OK? So this means that, for example, when you look at any conflict, there is an aggressor and their victims.

COREN: Not as simplistic as that, I think.

ELMASRY: It is actually . . . You don't have to have a Ph.D. in political science to identify that in the Israeli West Bank, occupied West Bank and Gaza, the Israelis, for the 37 years, are the occupying power. So the resistance is

Elmasry's interview started firestorm

the same as the French resistance. Use low-tech. You don't have helicopter phantoms, and they do whatever they want. They make mistakes; they make mistakes, yes, and we have to condemn it.

COREN: I've got to tell you I think you've just dug a very large hole for yourself there. I am not unsympathetic, and I do believe that Israel uses way too much force and I believe that Palestinians are blanketed with the term "terrorist," which is very unfair, but what you've said there, I believe, is very dangerous talk. There's a massive difference.

SYED: I wouldn't be so definitive as saying that everybody over 18 is a legitimate target. I mean obviously that goes too far. I mean even according to our faith belief, you have to distinguish between combatants and non-combatants. That includes women, children, the elderly and all that.

ELMASRY: Everybody above 18 is a combatant.

BREAK

COREN: I, in fact, don't know a Palestinian in this country who would agree with you that every Israeli over the age of 18 is a legitimate target. I've never met someone who has said that.

ELMASRY: Let's explain the situation. For example the Taba (Egypt) suicide bombing the last two weeks now. OK. These people actually targeting people who they don't know. The composition of these people they don't know. And this is a terror, a terrorist act.

(CROSSTALK)

COREN: They do know. They're families on holiday . . . religious holiday.

ELMASRY: No, no. They don't know.

COREN: Yes they do.

ELMASRY: They know the composition in general. But they don't know actually if they are 100 per cent Israeli. They are children there. (CROSSTALK) This is a terrorist act.

APTOWITZER: Because they might be Egyptian and not Israeli?

ELMASRY: No, no, no. Because, because actually the composition of the situation is much different from going to a bus stop where Israeli in uniform and some also in civilian clothes, but they are soldiers on leave. OK? Israel has a popular army. They have a draft.

UNIDENTIFIED: Why?

ELMASRY: I don't know why because they want to keep their (CROSSTALK)

COREN: . . . and Syria and the entire Arab world keeps threatening them for goodness sake . . . We're back in a few moments on the Michael Coren Show. Don't you dare go away. I don't think you will, actually. See you in a few moments.

BREAK

ELMASRY: We've been actually doing an anti-Islam in the Canadian media for the last seven years.

COREN: Yes, I know and often it's incredible nonsense.

ELMASRY: Which we actually try to instruct Canadian Muslims. You give me the owner of a newspaper today in Canada and I tell you how many Muslim terrorist words were used frequently for the (unintelligible) a month. Canwest (Global Communications Corp.), it has its own league, OK, because of the ownership. The rest are different. Now when you have professional journalists, they have a duty, a social duty, to protect the readers from a

Elmasry's interview started firestorm

negative stereotype. So you have between a word "terrorist" and you have also "freedom fighter." In between, there is a spectrum who are, for example, Afghan men. You have rebels, you have militants, you have etc. etc. Now, in my thinking I don't want you to actually put anything which is different from the facts you're presenting to your readers or your viewers. A terrorist act is a terrorist act. Taba has been a terrorist act. OK? Even if you don't know who has actually done it. And you said well in that case **Hamas** took the responsibility or Islamic Jihad took the responsibility because this is their name. **Hamas** or Hezbollah.

COREN: Is a suicide bombing on a bus in Israel an attack of terrorism?

ELMASRY: Yes. Yes. OK. And then after that, **Hamas** is an Islamic group. The only thing that we're actually objecting in the study is that when you put this back to back. Because this is actually a political use of language. The National Post is actually consciously using the word terrorist, because they're putting a political spin.

COREN: I don't necessarily disagree with you . . .

BREAK

Graphic

Photo: MOHAMED ELMASRY, PRESIDENT OF THE CANADIAN ISLAMIC CONGRESS

Load-Date: October 30, 2004

Reporters on the Job

Christian Science Monitor (Boston, MA)

December 27, 2004, Monday

Copyright 2004 The Christian Science Publishing Society

Section: WORLD; Pg. 06

Length: 362 words

Body

* More Hijabs in Politics: Correspondent Ben Lynfield covered the last Palestinian presidential and legislative elections in 1996. While reporting on the results of last week's municipal elections (this page), Ben was struck by the number of women who won seats. He went to the West Bank town of Obadeiah because he'd read that the Islamic militant group Hamas had won seven of 10 seats. "They only had seven candidates so it makes you wonder what might have happened if they'd had 10 candidates," says Ben. But he was also drawn by the fact that three women had won seats there. "The Palestinians have a quota system guaranteeing women two places on each municipal council. If these elections were meant to bring new faces to the Palestinian political scene, I think one of the messages is that some of those faces will be wearing hijabs," says Ben referring to the Islamic head covering worn by women.

* Kiev's Tent City: Correspondent Fred Weir spent Sunday visiting polling stations in Kiev, Ukraine, interviewing voters (page 7). "Most said they were hoping this election would give them closure - a feeling that the crisis was over. Most in Kiev think [presidential candidate Viktor] Yushchenko will win," says Fred. Later, he interviewed people still camped in the tent city on a main street in the capital. "There's still about 1,000 people here, mostly students. They don't think this vote will bring closure. They came to Kiev for a revolution and feel that there's more to come," he says.

They told Fred that they'll stay until Yushchenko is inaugurated and outgoing President Leonid Kuchma is in jail. "They're pro-Western, pro-democracy and want to see a sweeping social transformation and the breaking off of relations with Russia. Beyond that there's not a real coherent ideology. They talk about alleviating poverty, free education, and free medical care," says Fred. "I think their welcome is starting wear thin. Local organizations are no longer giving them bread and soup."

David Clark Scott

World editor

Let us hear from you.

Mail to: One Norway Street, Boston, MA 02115 via e-mail: world(at)csmonitor.com

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Load-Date: December 26, 2004

Reporters on the Job

End of Document

Palestinians Killed by Israelis at 2 1/2-Year High

The New York Times

November 2, 2004 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2004 The New York Times Company

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

Length: 322 words

Byline: By STEVEN ERLANGER

Dateline: JERUSALEM, Nov. 1

Body

The Israeli Army killed more Palestinians in October than in any month since the height of open warfare in April 2002, when Israelis moved through the West Bank and fought Palestinian security forces and militants.

The army killed 165 Palestinians in October, 159 of them in the Gaza Strip, according to the Israeli daily Haaretz. In Gaza, Israeli forces were trying to stop the shelling of Israeli towns in what was the largest Israeli military operation there in four years. There was heavy fighting between Israelis and Palestinians in the narrow, crowded alleys of the Jabaliya refugee camp, and a number of the dead were senior members of militant groups like Hamas, Islamic Jihad and Al Aksa Martyrs Brigades.

According to an inquiry by Haaretz, 50 of the 165 dead, or just over 30 percent, were civilians, including women, children, the elderly and males under 16.

Other calculations of the total number of Palestinian dead are slightly different, but all reflect the largest death toll since April 2002. The Palestinian Human Rights Monitoring Group says that 148 Palestinians were killed by Israeli security forces in October and that 5 died from Palestinian retribution. The Palestinian Red Crescent says 142 Palestinians died.

In the Gaza operation itself, at least 115 Palestinians were killed, and 39 percent (45 people) were civilians, according to Haaretz's calculations. More than 90 homes, said by the army to have been used to launch rockets or harbor militants, were destroyed.

In a second part of that operation last week, around the Khan Yunis refugee camp, 17 more Palestinians were killed and 50 were injured. Three of the Khan Yunis dead were girls under age 12.

Near Rafah, a schoolgirl, 13, was shot numerous times as she approached an Israeli military outpost and refused to stop. The soldiers said they feared that her schoolbag contained a bomb. The commander of the unit is expected to face court-martial.

Graphic

Photo: On Oct. 7, Gazans buried two 14-year-olds who had been killed when Israelis used tank fire to try to suppress raids on settlements. (Photo by Mahmud Hams/Agence France-Presse--Getty Images)

Load-Date: November 2, 2004

End of Document

World - Israel curbs travel by Palestinians;

Morning Star

October 18, 2005

Copyright 2005 People's Press Printing Society Ltd

Length: 420 words

Body

Israel suspended most contacts with the Palestinian Authority and slapped tough travel restrictions on the West Bank yesterday.

The punitive measure followed two drive-by shootings by Palestinian guerillas which killed three young Israelis and wounded five near Jewish settlements.

The Palestinian attack near the Gush Etzion block of settlements on Sunday was the deadliest since July.

The al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, which has ties to the ruling Fatah party, admitted responsibility.

However, security officials claimed that Islamic militant group Hamas might have been involved.

Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat said that the shootings had been "unfortunate" and accused the attackers of trying to sabotage efforts to revive peace talks.

He urged Israel to reconsider the travel restrictions and suspension of contacts, saying: "Angry messages, collective punishment and violence will just add to the complexities."

Mr Erekat said that Israeli negotiators had failed to turn up for a meeting on Sunday evening to discuss the reopening of the Rafah border crossing between Gaza and Egypt.

Israeli Foreign Ministry spokesman Mark Regev initially said that all contacts with the Palestinian Authority had been halted, but he later clarified that this applied only to committees on specific issues, such as prisoner releases, security and customs at border crossings.

Israel also sealed the West Bank towns of Hebron and Bethlehem, which are closest to Gush Etzion, and banned private Palestinian-owned cars from the West Bank's main north-south road.

Security officials said that Israel is planning to impose permanent traffic separation in the West Bank, with Israeli motorists using main highways and Palestinians largely forced to drive on back roads.

Overnight, soldiers seized 19 wanted Palestinians in the West Bank, the army said.

In the first attack, militants racing past the Gush Etzion junction in a car opened fire at Israelis waiting at a bus stop and at others in nearby cars.

World - Israel curbs travel by Palestinians;

One Israeli died at the scene and two others expired in hospital. Two were young women from a nearby settlement and the other was a 15-year-old boy.

The second attack, which seriously wounded one Israeli, took place near the Eli settlement in the northern West Bank.

The same day, Israeli troops shot dead Islamic Jihad militant Nihad Abu Ghanim in the northern West Bank. A bystander was seriously wounded.

A Palestinian witness said that two Israeli jeeps had driven up to Mr Abu Ghanim as he was driving down the road and shot him.

Load-Date: October 18, 2005

End of Document

Palestinian gunmen release three foreigners

Windsor Star (Ontario)

July 31, 2004 Saturday Final Edition

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Section: News; Pg. D2; News

Length: 390 words

Dateline: NABLUS, West Bank

Body

NABLUS, West Bank -- Palestinian gunmen abducted three foreign church volunteers in Nablus late Friday, releasing them several hours later under pressure from Palestinian authorities and other militants, Palestinian security officials said.

The reason for the abduction was not known but it came two weeks after militants in Gaza snatched four French charity workers amid a political crisis that shook the authority of Palestinian President Yasser Arafat. The four French were also quickly released.

Star News Services

Five gunmen seized the foreigners -- an American, a Briton and an Irishman -- around midnight Friday as they were returning to the home where they were staying in Nablus, the officials said. The three were taken to the nearby Balata refugee camp.

Five foreign women accompanying the men were left unharmed. They refused to speak with reporters.

Security officials later said the three were freed but gave few details. The Al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades, which is affiliated with Arafat's Fatah movement, said earlier it was helping track down the kidnappers, who it said were believed to be from a splinter faction of Al Aqsa.

The volunteers, who were not identified, came to Nablus more than three weeks ago, apparently for missionary activities, the officials said. They were abducted in an upscale part of Nablus, where restaurants stay open late into the night and young people often meet.

Britain's Foreign Office said it had no information about the reported abduction in Nablus but was investigating the reports.

Earlier Friday, Israeli helicopters launched a missile attack in Gaza City against a suspected Palestinian weapons workshop in a building owned by the family of a female suicide bomber.

Medics at the scene said at least two people were injured. One missile slammed into the three-storey building, sending a huge fireball high over the city. A second missile failed to explode.

The Israeli military said the building in the Zeitoun district of Gaza was a bomb factory that produced explosives for the Hamas militant organization. Palestinian officials said it was a small factory that produced car batteries.

Palestinian gunmen release three foreigners

Israeli helicopters continued hovering over the site as ambulances raced to the scene. But the building was empty at the time of the strike and two bystanders were treated at the site for minor wounds.

Load-Date: July 31, 2004

End of Document

A sterner test; GAZA STRIP: Israeli evacuation an enormous challenge for Abbas

Salt Lake Tribune (Utah)

August 19, 2005, Friday

Copyright 2005 The Salt Lake Tribune

Section: Nation/World; Pg. A18

Length: 388 words

Body

Some Palestinians are claiming that Israel's evacuation of the Gaza Strip is a victory for the suicide bombers of **Hamas**. In truth, it is a victory for reality.

The Israeli government of Ariel Sharon realized the obvious, that holding on to a few thousand Jewish settlers in a sea of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians in Gaza was impractical. It simply was not worth the military resources. To better secure his nation over the long term, Sharon decided to withdraw.

He is right.

But being right sometimes is not easy. Sharon was himself an architect of the settlement policy, so it must sadden him deeply to preside over the removal of Jews from land that he had hoped would become part of a greater Israel.

Many Israelis undoubtedly share his sadness. Even those who have disagreed with Sharon from the outset of the settlement policy probably do not exult in seeing people removed from their homes against their will, especially by their own countrymen and **women**.

That explains the somber mood in Israel.

While Palestinians naturally are exuberant to see Israelis leaving land that Palestinians claim for their own state, they would be wrong to count it a victory for the Intifada. The violent struggle against Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza undoubtedly has influenced Sharon's decision to leave the latter, but the long campaign of Palestinian violence has not improved the lot of the Palestinian people. Precisely the opposite is true.

The Palestinian attacks and the crushing Israeli reprisals have left Palestinian cities and villages, to say nothing of the economy, in tatters. If that's victory, it is a strange one.

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas has said as much. He is right.

Clear-eyed people on both sides of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict can see that decades of warfare have not secured the hopes and aspirations of either side.

That said, it is natural for the Palestinians to celebrate the Israeli departure from Gaza. The role of Palestinian violence in bringing about that result is debatable.

A sterner test; GAZA STRIP: Israeli evacuation an enormous challenge for Abbas

What is not debatable is the challenge that governing Gaza presents for Abbas and the future of the Palestinian Authority. The various Palestinian factions must reach accord on how they administer the area.

This is a sterner test for the Palestinian state-in-waiting than the evacuation is for Israel.

Load-Date: August 19, 2005

End of Document

Move over, Osama: The Arab version of American Idol, representing some of the worst aspects of Western culture, is taking the Middle East by a storm

The Gazette (Montreal)

August 27, 2004 Friday

Final Edition

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Section: EDITORIAL / OP-ED; Pg. A19

Length: 918 words

Byline: ERIC MINK, St. Louis Post-Dispatch

Body

Osama bin Laden and fellow-travelling Islamist radicals believe that Western culture defiles their belief system and that unless it is stopped, it will obliterate what they regard as the one true way of life.

They're right.

Materialistic excess, free expression, individualism, political and spiritual independence and the pursuit of happiness - the underpinnings of Western culture - fly in the face of the hierarchical subservience and sacrifice of personal will at the core of their extreme imagining of Islam.

And if unchecked, the allure and sheer volume of Western culture - most especially the broadly accessible pop-culture expressions of television, movies, music, fashion and the popular press - would undermine and overwhelm any bin-Ladian ideal of society. ("Ideal" defined as something resembling the suffocating rule of the Taliban in Afghanistan.)

But the Islamists are wrong on two fundamental points: First, this would not be a bad thing; no sensible inhabitant of Earth in 2004 regards a 10th-century lifestyle as a step forward. Second, they can no more stop this force than they can keep the sun from rising in the east. Ask the now-free people of the Czech Republic, Poland and Romania, among others, about the impact of Western culture.

A current case in point: Superstar 2.

While Shiite insurgents, Iraqi forces (so to speak) and American troops fight and die over shrines and cemetery slabs in Najaf, the rest of the Arab world is working itself into a delighted frenzy of expectation over the second-season finale of the Lebanese-produced TV show Superstar 2.

This Sunday, Ammar Hassan, a 26-year-old Palestinian from the West Bank town of Salfit, and Ayman al-Atar of Libya will sing their hearts out on Superstar 2 in the finals of a pan-Arab version of American Idol. Millions of viewers throughout the Middle East then will choose a winner by voting via the Internet and cell-phone text messages.

Move over, Osama: The Arab version of American Idol, representing some of the worst aspects of Western culture, is taking the Middle East by a storm

This is the second season of Superstar (hence the "2"). It began Feb. 29 with 83 contestants - including 32 women - selected from about 40,000 applicants. A panel of judges then took a couple of months to winnow the field to 14 for final sorting by viewers.

Finding common cause with cultural conservatives in the United States who bemoan the decadence of North American pop culture, religious fundamentalists and terrorist groups in the Middle East have denounced Superstar and other reality shows being broadcast by Arab networks and satellite distributors. "These kinds of programs are in contradiction with our habits and with the principles of Islam," a Lebanese sheik told Agence France-Presse. "We are seeing youngsters kissing and expressing emotions. This is indecent."

A Palestinian spokesman for Hamas told a reporter for the Jerusalem Post, that we "are not in need of singers, corruption mongers and advocates of immorality."

Hamas apparently is irked that the Palestinian people seem more interested in a TV competition featuring the appealing Hassan than they are in strapping on vests packed with explosives and nails and blowing themselves up at Israeli military checkpoints. Go figure. The coming Superstar 2 climax also is draining attention away from what has turned out to be a poorly timed hunger strike by Palestinian prisoners held by Israel.

The Palestinian Authority, however, is playing the situation cleverly, declaring a week of solidarity with Hassan, setting up giant outdoor viewing screens in towns in the West Bank and Gaza and persuading the major Palestinian telecommunications company to offer discounts on text-message votes sent to the show.

"People are very bored with the political and security situation," an official for the authority's Ministry of Culture told the Jerusalem newspaper. "For them, the show is an escape from the distress and frustration. We believe that creative art contributes to the people's struggle for freedom."

It is also an expression of that freedom, and its pull is powerful.

In 2003, the first season of Superstar became a focus for national pride in the region, even provoking some accusations - as there have been in the United States from time to time about American Idol - of vote rigging. Thousands of fans protested loudly in the streets of Beirut at the headquarters of Future Television, the show's producer, when Lebanese semi-finalist Melhem Zein was voted out in favour of Syria's Rwaqida Attiyeh and the eventual winner, Diana Curazon of Jordan.

Zein - from Lebanon's Bekaa Valley, previously famous as the place where Hezbollah terrorists received training and sanctuary - was enormously popular with his fellow Lebanese, and problems with overloaded phone lines and Web servers only heightened suspicions of a fix. But Future Television is owned by the billionaire family of Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri; the company had no rational incentive to make Zein lose. Still, public pressure persuaded Future to give Zein a three-hour solo TV special the next week and sign him to a record deal.

In Jordan, a Superstar fan told United Press International that the show was "a good exercise in democracy for the Arab masses." That's a stretch on both democratic and cultural grounds. Superstar, after all, isn't exactly a Hopper canvas, a Shakespeare tragedy, On the Waterfront, The Sopranos or the Gettysburg Address.

But the power of the creative spirit - even at the level of a cheesy TV talent competition - surpasses that of terrorism, war and oppression. Osama and his ilk are right to be very, very afraid.

Graphic

Photo: MUHAMMED MUHEISEN, AP; Ahmed Hassan, 63, father of Ammar Hassan, watches as his son performs on TV during the Arab Idol competition.

Move over, Osama: The Arab version of American Idol, representing some of the worst aspects of Western culture, is taking the Middle East by a storm

Load-Date: August 27, 2004

End of Document

OSAMA'S GREATEST ENEMY: HASSAN THE HEARTTHOB

St. Louis Post-Dispatch (Missouri)

August 25, 2004 Wednesday Five Star Late Lift Edition

Copyright 2004 St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Inc.

Section: EDITORIAL; Eric Mink; Pg. B07

Length: 944 words

Byline: Eric Mink

Body

CULTURE

A pan-Arab version of "American Idol" shows how powerful pop-culture can be in undermining terrorism Osama bin Laden and fellow-traveling Islamist radicals believe that Western culture defiles their belief system and that unless it is stopped, it will obliterate what they regard as the one true way of life.

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Notes

COMMENTARY A FORUM FOR OTHER VOICES, IDEAS AND OPINIONS

Graphic

photo; Graphic / ILLUSTRATIONS BY NEWSART - (A television set dropping on Osama Bin Laden.)

OSAMA'S GREATEST ENEMY: HASSAN THE HEARTTHOB

Load-Date: August 25, 2004

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THOUSANDS PROTEST SETTLEMENT SHUTDOWN

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (Pennsylvania)

July 19, 2005 Tuesday

SOONER EDITION

Copyright 2005 P.G. Publishing Co.

Section: WORLD,

Length: 400 words

Byline: DION NISSENBAUM, KNIGHT RIDDER NEWSPAPERS

Dateline: NETIVOT, Israel

Body

Thousands of demonstrators yesterday defied their government, evaded military checkpoints and confronted soldiers in a last-ditch crusade to scuttle Israel's looming plan to shut down all of its Gaza Strip settlements.

With Israel preparing next month to raze its 21 settlements nestled amid occupied Palestinian lands and clear the area of its 8,500 Israelis, a phalanx of police and soldiers temporarily blocked more than 20,000 chanting, cheering, praying protesters from marching toward Gaza.

The showdown came as Israeli officials were finalizing plans to forcibly remove settlers who refuse to leave their homes, in what is expected to be one of the most contentious and emotional political moves Israel has made in decades.

Tensions in the area have been building for weeks, with Israeli settlers clashing with soldiers, Palestinian militants launching rockets into the Gaza settlements and Israel responding by killing seven leaders of the extremist group **Hamas** while dispatching tanks to the border with a threat to invade if the attacks did not cease.

So far, none of the provocations has undermined plans to shut down all the Israeli settlements in the Gaza Strip and four in the West Bank.

Settlers and their backers are doing all they can to derail the pullout.

Organizers of yesterday's rally initially planned a three-day march to the Gaza Strip's largest settlement, but Israeli officials declared the region a closed military zone last week and barred protesters from taking part. Demonstrators worked out a deal to lead a rally near the Gaza Strip border and a small march to a nearby town.

As protesters across Israel were boarding buses to attend the rally, Israeli officials declared the protest illegal and directed police to block the buses from heading toward Gaza.

Despite the attempt to thwart them, many demonstrators flocked to the region in minivans and cars adorned with orange banners and ribbons to symbolize their opposition to closing the settlements.

THOUSANDS PROTEST SETTLEMENT SHUTDOWN

"The prime minister is trying to take the homes of the Israelis," said Ben Tsion Klibansky, a 45-year-old Russian immigrant who had packed clothes, bread, cheese, sweets and a sleeping bag in his backpack to take part in the march. "We emigrated to Israel, and now we see that it is not our country."

The rally drew a strong Orthodox Jewish contingent. A long blue tarp separated women and men attending the protest.

Load-Date: July 20, 2005

End of Document

Dignity was lost as Arabs danced in the streets

Financial Times (London, England)

May 11, 2004 Tuesday

London Edition 2

Copyright 2004 The Financial Times Limited

Section: LETTERS TO THE EDITOR; Pg. 18

Length: 341 words

Byline: By THOMAS WALKER

Body

From Mr Thomas Walker.

Sir, Roula Khalaf's analysis of the causes for an apparent loss of dignity in the Arab world is predictable, but incomplete ("A tragic loss of Arab dignity laid bare in pictures", May 8). Clearly, she steers us to the conclusion that this loss of dignity stems from recent images we have all seen and that have become symbols in the Arab world of US and British cruelty or, at least, lack of respect for the Muslim community in the Middle East.

She refers to the shocking photographs of the little boy in Iraq who tragically lost both arms in a bombing raid, to George W. Bush standing side by side with Ariel Sharon in a show of support, to the body of the slain leader of **Hamas**, and now to the photographs of Iraqi prisoners being tortured at the hands of US soldiers. But is that not a rather incomplete explanation for this loss of dignity in the Arab world?

Would it not be worth mentioning that a loss of dignity could result from the knowledge that the world watched as thousands of Arabs danced in the streets on September 11, celebrating the gruesome deaths of so many innocent people? Or maybe some loss of dignity is inevitable in a culture in much of the Arab world that supports and applauds an organisation that will recruit an innocent teenage girl to strap a bomb to herself and set off to kill as many **women** and children as possible. Or, as images go, would it not have been reasonable for Ms Khalaf to refer to images of a heaving crowd of jubilant Iraqis cheering as two US civilians burned to death after suffering a bomb attack? The cheering did not stop as the civilians were dismembered and hung from a nearby bridge.

Perhaps Ms Khalaf would argue that this behaviour is a result of the loss of dignity perpetrated by the Americans. But does that not just seem a bit indirect? Should the Arab world itself not be somewhat accountable for this apparent loss of dignity? Even in this culture of political correctness, it is surprising that we never read that point of view.

Thomas Walker, London W11 2PX, UK

Load-Date: May 10, 2004

FIGHTING IN GAZA KILLS 2 ISRAELIS, 1 PALESTINIAN, TRAPS RESIDENTS IN HOMES

St. Louis Post-Dispatch (Missouri)

May 15, 2004 Saturday Five Star Late Lift Edition

Copyright 2004 St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Inc.

Section: NEWS; Pg. 29

Length: 379 words

Byline: The Associated Press

Dateline: RAFAH, GAZA STRIP

Body

Heavy fighting raged in this refugee camp Friday, killing two Israeli soldiers and a Palestinian man and trapping frightened residents in their homes, the army and witnesses said.

Troops seized several houses, and army bulldozers knocked down at least 35 buildings on the edge of the camp, trying to secure the area for soldiers searching for the remains of five others killed there in a blast earlier in the week.

Military officials said that once this search was over, the army could expand a military patrol road between the camp and the Egyptian border - a move that would see hundreds of houses in Rafah flattened.

Early today, Israeli helicopter gunships rocketed two deserted buildings that once housed Islamic Jihad offices in Gaza City, the militant group said. Two bystanders were wounded, doctors said.

During Friday's clashes, gunmen moved through the narrow alleys of the camp, firing homemade rockets and rifles at the troops. The Israelis responded with missiles launched from helicopter gunships and heavy machine gun fire.

One soldier was shot as he escorted a Palestinian women into a house troops had commandeered, the army said. A crew that tried to evacuate him came under sniper fire that killed another soldier and wounded two others, the army said.

The Islamic militant group Hamas claimed responsibility for the shooting and said it would release footage of the attack.

On the Palestinian side, one man was killed in a missile strike and a second died when an explosive device blew up prematurely. Eight Palestinians were wounded, two of them seriously.

Also, three Palestinians were buried under the rubble of their destroyed house, witnesses said.

The military said that armed men were in the house and that it had been destroyed in heavy exchanges of fire.

Residents were trapped in their homes by the heavy fighting. Hisham Mohammed, 35, said he was stuck on the third floor of his apartment building with the rest of his family on the ground floor.

FIGHTING IN GAZA KILLS 2 ISRAELIS, 1 PALESTINIAN, TRAPS RESIDENTS IN HOMES

Palestinian security officials said that by the end of the day, 35 buildings were destroyed close to the patrol road that runs between Rafah and the Egyptian border. On that road, an armored personnel carrier transporting a ton of explosives was blown up by a homemade rocket Wednesday, killing five soldiers.

Load-Date: May 15, 2004

End of Document

Yesterday's assassination of Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, founder of Hamas, will probably be on the agenda at next week's summit in Tunis. But many in the region are concerned with the survival of existing regimes, write Roula Khalaf and Guy Dinmore

Financial Times (London, England)

March 23, 2004 Tuesday

London Edition 1

Copyright 2004 The Financial Times Limited

Section: COMMENT & ANALYSIS; Pg. 21

Length: 1684 words

Byline: By GUY DINMORE and ROULA KHALAF

Body

It was through the website of a pan-Arab newspaper that most Arab governments last month learned details of Washington's post-Iraq war strategy for the Middle East.

Rumours of an ambitious project had been circulating for weeks as US and European officials met in Washington to discuss the "Greater Middle East initiative" intended to be unveiled at the G8 summit in June.

But when a leaked copy of preliminary proposals to promote social and political reforms appeared in the London-based daily al-Hayat, the Arab reaction was harsh.

Hosni Mubarak, the Egyptian president, and Crown Prince Abdullah, Saudi Arabia's de facto ruler, told the US that the region would "not accept" reform being "imposed on Arab and Islamic countries from the outside". Stability, they said, required Washington's attention to crisis - namely the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and Iraq.

The botched handling of the initiative and the Arab reaction underlines the growing polarisation between the US and the Arab world a year after the US invasion of Iraq.

While the language in the US initiative - which the administration is redrafting - was somewhat patronising, the document was modest in its aims. Its proposals included aiding parliamentary exchanges, giving help in drafting legislation, promotion of literacy, micro-finance and the establishment of a regional development bank.

The furore, however, was driven primarily by the sense that the US had failed to consult its Arab allies in its quest to impose change.

Many leaders in the region also saw in the "Greater Middle East initiative" alarming signs of the right-wing Israeli view that democratising the Arab world was a pre-requisite for solving the Arab-Israeli conflict.

So concerned were Arab rulers that when their foreign ministers met last month to prepare for next week's Arab League summit in Tunis, a flood of initiatives was put forth to reform their own countries, as well as the League itself.

Yesterday's assassination of Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, founder of Hamas, will probably be on the agenda at next week's summit in Tunis. But many in the region are co....

The summit's resolutions are expected to emphasise that the most important contribution the US could make to regional stability is to rein in Israel, particularly after yesterday's Israeli assassination of Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, the spiritual leader of the militant Hamas group. But the summit is also hoping to issue a declaration of principles on gradual reforms, a strategy that might placate the US without threatening the survival of existing regimes.

"Since the Iraq war, governments in the region have been trying to respond to pressure from abroad and from within and to ease some measures but at the same time they want to stay in full control of everything," says Ibrahim Nawar, head of the Arab Press Freedom Watch. "We've seen some positive developments in the last years but not to the extent that it can be sustained."

But the faltering of the US initiative also shows that while the Arab public is eager for the very same reforms proposed by the US, Washington's other policies in region - in Iraq and the occupied Palestinian territories - have eroded American credibility.

Indeed, most in the Arab world view the initiative as just another disturbing sign of American neo-imperialism.

"We see a trend of increasing disorientation, confusion on the ideological and cultural scale," says Mohammed al-Sayed Said, deputy director of Cairo's al-Ahram Centre for Strategic Studies, describing trends in Arab public opinion. "We see mounting distrust and hostility towards the US - it's becoming one of the major dogma in the region."

The transformation of the Middle East was the broader objective of the Iraq war. The US justified its attack on Baghdad by focusing on the brutality of Saddam Hussein's regime, his links with terrorists, and the "grave threat" his weapons of mass destruction presented to the world.

Beyond the specific casus belli, however, lay a grand vision of how America should wield its unrivalled military and economic power. That sense of supremacy and the concept of a "unipolar" world emerged after the collapse of the Soviet empire in 1991. But it was the terror attacks of September 11, 2001, that shifted what the George W. Bush administration readily describes as an imperial mindset to reshaping the Middle East.

"Sixty years of Western nations excusing and accommodating the lack of freedom in the Middle East did nothing to make us safe - because in the long run, stability cannot be purchased at the expense of liberty," President Bush told the National Endowment for Democracy last November. But the US intervention in Iraq, at least in the short term, has undermined Washington's ability to turn its vision into reality.

Arab warnings that the war could exacerbate the threat of terrorist attacks from radical Islamists have proved credible. In Saudi Arabia, for instance, a more open confrontation has now erupted between security forces and cells of al-Qaeda. In Iraq, the war provided an excuse for al-Qaeda to win new recruits.

An October tape from Osama bin Laden, al-Qaeda's leader, broadcast on the pan-Arab al-Jazeera network, identified Iraq as the front for a new jihad, or holy war, and called on Muslims to join the battle. The rising number of suicide attacks in Iraq suggest local Islamists and foreign militants may have heeded Mr bin Laden's call.

The US, however, points to Libya's decision in December to abandon its weapons of mass destruction as a sign of reinforced stability in the wake of the Iraq war, even if the autocratic Colonel Muammar Gaddafi remains in control of the country.

Earlier this month, Mr Bush also insisted that "because America and our allies acted (in Iraq), all the world is now seeing democracy rising in the heart of the Middle East". The Iraqi Governing Council's agreement on an interim constitution which guarantees human rights and freedom of religion, he said, was one of the historic changes that were "sending a message across the region from Damascus to Tehran".

US and Arab officials agree that the Iraqi experiment in democracy, if it succeeds, will have a defining impact on the region. But the past year has shown that Iraq's vision of democracy and the projection of American power do not

Yesterday's assassination of Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, founder of Hamas, will probably be on the agenda at next week's summit in Tunis. But many in the region are co....

necessarily coexist. The most glaring illustration is in Iraq itself, where the US has been resisting early elections out of fear that radicals, whether Shia or Sunni, would make gains.

While the US has succeeded in unsettling two hardline states - Syria and non-Arab Iran, in both countries the reaction of the regimes has been to consolidate power rather than speed internal reforms.

Iran's hardline mullahs became more determined to undermine their reformist rivals, a strategy that culminated in the banning of many reformist candidates and the victory of conservatives in last month's parliamentary election.

In Syria, growing US pressure has encouraged intellectual reformers to act more boldly by speaking out against the government. But it has yet to produce any marked change in the behaviour of the Syrian regime towards its people.

Seen from the Arab world, US policy is also riddled with contradictions.

"The US is serious - it wants to change the Middle East but it doesn't know how," says Jamal Khashoggi, a Saudi political analyst and adviser to a senior member of the royal family. "They want democracy but not Islamists to emerge. They want democracy but they want the elected bodies to accept relations with Israel."

Analysts argue that the US is not doing enough to create secular alternatives to existing regimes.

True, some progressive laws have been put in place in a few countries over the past year. The Moroccan government, for example, introduced a family code that brings far-reaching reforms to women's rights. In Jordan, a quota was set for women to be elected to parliament. In Saudi Arabia, senior princes in the al-Saud family are now promoting the need for religious reforms that could moderate the radical rhetoric of the puritanical Wahabi Islam. Still, though, the trend towards more Islamisation and radicalisation is continuing and is likely to have been exacerbated by the Iraq war. "The democratic mood has grown and it has allowed liberals to position themselves more openly. But they have not expanded this influence in society," says Mr al-Sayed Said of the al-Ahram Centre.

Elections in Jordan, Morocco and Kuwait show that Islamists remain the largest opposition to government. Other indicators of Islamisation are the newly launched satellite stations in the region devoted to Islamic causes and the increasing number of religious programmes that can be seen on more general channels.

According to a survey released last week by the Pew Research Centre, overwhelming majorities in Jordan and Morocco believe suicide attacks against Americans and other westerners in Iraq are justified. Most people in these countries also say the US and Britain lied about Iraq's weapons of mass destruction.

Perhaps the greatest dilemma facing the US in its quest for a more democratic Middle East is to reconcile its ambitions with its self-declared war on terror. Human-rights defenders say that new anti-terrorism laws are being used to suppress freedom of expression. More broadly the US has appeared willing to forge more intimate ties with unsavoury regimes - Tunisia and Algeria for example - that have stood squarely on its side in the campaign against terrorism.

The conflicting signals from the US reinforce the suspicion that Washington is seeking to create democracies that are secular and resolutely pro-American. Nader Fergani, the lead writer of the UN-backed Arab Human Development Report, the published in 2002, says outside pressure such as the "Greater Middle East initiative" would reinforce Arab regimes' inclination to adopt shallow reforms.

"I'm afraid what will come out of (America's push for change) will be superficial, cosmetic reforms to respond to outside pressure, and that will delay deep and profound change," he says.

"This has been one of the mechanisms of authoritarian regimes - if you speak of human rights, they go and set up their own human rights organisation. . .we end up with facades that don't represent genuine reform."

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**HUSSAM ABDO'S FAILED SUICIDE ATTACK SHOCKED THE WORLD BUT
MANY SUCH YOUNGSTERS, TRAINED EVEN AS TODDLERS, ONLY AWAIT
THEIR TURN; HOW KIDS BECOME WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION**

The Express

March 27, 2004

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 25

Length: 1367 words

Byline: By Ben Raymond in Nablus, West Bank

Body

IT WAS the world's most shocking image of the week - a cowering boy with baffled and fearful eyes strapped inside a deadly harness of high explosives. The truth behind the heart-rending picture is even more sickening. Hussam Abdo, seconds from becoming the Middle East's youngest suicide bomber at an Israeli army checkpoint here on the West Bank, is not a 14-year-old boy - it turns out he is 16 and comes from a family of midgets.

However his mental age is considerably younger than it should be because at the age of six he was hit by a car and left with brain damage. The evil fanatics who saw fit to push poor, troubled Hussam into the frontline of their conflict and turn him into a human bomb primed to destroy the objects of their hatred were yesterday making no apology for their callous would-be sacrifice.

A spokesman for the Islamic terror group **Hamas** insisted: "A 16-year-old is a man and a mujahed warrior . This week's operation was not the first time a 16-year-old has been sent on a holy jihad mission."

And that is the awful truth: every day in the Middle East, children far younger than Hussam are brainwashed to seek martyrdom as the highest form of religious duty. Indoctrination begins the moment they join kindergarten - from toys they play with to videos they watch and books they read. All carry the same message: children are put on this earth to kill Israelis. Heavenly rewards are promised for giving their lives to the cause - direct entrance to paradise, where rivers of honey and willing virgins await.

Only a week before Hussam was plied with such promises and assured his mother would be paid 100 shekels (about GBP 12) for his death, the same men in the shadowy alleys of Balata refugee camp in Nablus sent an even younger boy through the same checkpoint with a bag full of explosives. Abdallah Quran, 11, was stopped by an eagle-eyed Israeli policewoman who noticed something odd about his knapsack.

Last month Israeli police arrested three boys aged 12, 13 and 15, who said they were on their way to carry out a shooting attack in the Israeli city of Afula.

Two weeks ago, two 17-year-old schoolboys from Gaza killed nine Israelis in a double suicide bombing at the port in Ashdod, an Israeli city on the Mediterranean coast. In the Gaza Strip Palestinian boys as young as 10 have been caught planting bombs or smuggling weapons.

HUSSAM ABDO'S FAILED SUICIDE ATTACK SHOCKED THE WORLD BUT MANY SUCH YOUNGSTERS, TRAINED EVEN AS TODDLERS, ONLY AWAIT THEIR TURN; HOW KIDS BECOME WEAPONS OF MASS....

CHILLINGLY, the yearning among Palestinian children for "shuhada", or martyrdom, has become almost commonplace. A poll conducted by the Islamic University among teenagers in Gaza several months after the outbreak of the Palestinian intifada revealed that 73 per cent of children said they wanted to be a "shahid".

According to the Israeli army, 29 of more than 150 Palestinian suicide attacks since the intifada began in September 2000 were carried out by teenagers below the age of 18. Youngsters also carried out attacks using assault rifles or explosive devices and a further 40 under-18s have been caught attempting attacks.

But the recruitment of teenagers for these "operations" of mass murder does not take place in a vacuum. Palestinian schools - even those administered by the United Nations - are plastered with posters and graffiti glorifying suicide bombers and other "martyrs".

Inside the schools, teachers urge children to seek martyrdom. In Hamas kindergartens, children as young as three are dressed in combat fatigues with toy guns or sheathed in white robes and wrapped in dummy suicide bomb belts. For end-of-term graduation ceremonies, under the guidance of their teachers, pupils act out attacks on Israeli soldiers or the suicide bombing of an Israeli bus.

Palestinian television broadcasts endless MTV-style video clips exhorting children to put down their toys and take up stones and guns to fight the Israelis. They depict a paradise full of sweets and urge Palestinian children to give their lives willingly by confronting the Israelis.

One programme broadcast on Palestine TV was titled "Children who love the homeland and the martyr's death".

Each summer the Palestinian authority organises summer camps and sports competitions for schoolchildren. They could name them for religious prophets or flowers, but choose to name them after suicide bombers.

The memory of Mohammed Al-Dourra, 12, killed in crossfire during the first weekend of the intifada, is repeatedly invoked to encourage other young Palestinians. In one particularly stomach-churning video clip, Al-Dourra is pictured in paradise, calling on other children to "Follow me".

The image of another young boy, Farres Odeh, is also widely used. Odeh was filmed throwing stones at an advancing Israeli tank.

The menacing photograph is in almost every Palestinian school. Odeh was killed soon after.

The call to arms comes from the very top.

When Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat receives groups of schoolchildren, he instructs them to go out and die. His favourite speech to children winds up with a simple, smiling message: "You must follow in the path of Farres Odeh," he tells the impressionable youngsters. A phrase he incessantly repeats in meetings with teenagers is: "Al-Quds, raiheen, shuhada bis'milaeen." (We are marching to Jerusalem, a million martyrs.) When Israeli tanks besieged his Ramallah compound in April 2002, Arafat told reporters he was not scared to die; he sent a message to young people to resist: "I'm not afraid. I'm no better than Farres Odeh, the 12-year-old boy who courageously defied the Israeli tanks."

But there are signs of a growing revulsion within Palestinian society to the way in which schoolchildren are raised. The recent deaths of two teenagers provoked particular disquiet.

One, Sabi Abu Saud, attempted a suicide bomb attack. Instead he was cornered in a West Bank field and blew himself up. His heartbroken father promised revenge. "He was just a little boy and those who sent him should have left him alone," said Kamal Abu Saud.

In January Iyad al-Masri, 17, a student from Nablus, blew himself up near an Israeli army post. He had been sent in with a suicide bomb harness but panicked when he saw the soldiers.

HUSSAM ABDO'S FAILED SUICIDE ATTACK SHOCKED THE WORLD BUT MANY SUCH YOUNGSTERS, TRAINED EVEN AS TODDLERS, ONLY AWAIT THEIR TURN; HOW KIDS BECOME WEAPONS OF MASS....

Iyad's family published a statement calling for an immediate inquiry into their son's death.

"He was dispatched on a suicide mission with no chance of succeeding and with the consequences known in advance - his life was sacrificed in vain, " said the family.

Like little Hussam on Wednesday, Iyad and Sabi came from Nablus, their suicide harnesses provided by the Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades, the terrorist wing of Yasser Arafat's Fatah group.

BUT NOW the leading Palestinian commentator Hasan Al-Batal has denounced what he calls a "culture of death" among children and has launched a scathing attack on Hamas and Islamic Jihad for recruiting teenagers and mothers.

Al-Batal says: "I fear the day will soon come when we will see 10-year-old boys and pregnant women strapped with explosive belts. How will we be able to justify to the world the death of our children by Israeli army gunfire when some of us are starting to send their children and mothers with explosive belts?"

Hafez Barghouti, editor of official Palestinian daily Al-Hayat al-Jadidah, agrees: "The family of the martyr Iyad al-Masri has the right to ask his recruiters why they sent him to his death."

"The circumstances of his death once again raises the question of recruiting youngsters in their teens, " said Barghouti. "It is known that Prophet Muhammad himself refused to recruit adolescents for the campaigns that he waged."

Hussam is now back home after a truly fortunate escape. His uncle, Abu Mohammed, does not mince words when describing what he'd like to do to the men who took such cruel advantage of his vulnerable nephew. "I wish I knew who did it and when I find out, I won't hesitate to put two bullets in his head, " he says.

Yet constant glorification of martyrdom has created a society in which there are no other heroes. Palestinian children collect badges, stickers and cards with pictures of dead suicide bombers. The Palestinian leader himself says he yearns to become one of them.

Is it any wonder that - unlike poor Hussam this week - many Palestinian children cannot wait to become murderers?

Load-Date: March 30, 2004

**GAZA EVICTIONS PROCEED WITH FORCE;
ISRAELI TROOPS CARRY OUT ORDERS AMID NEGOTIATIONS, TAUNTS,
TEARS**

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (Pennsylvania)

August 18, 2005 Thursday

SOONER EDITION

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Section: WORLD,

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Byline: STEVEN ERLANGER, THE NEW YORK TIMES

Dateline: KEREM ATZMONA, Gaza Strip

Body

Nearly 10,000 Israeli soldiers and police officers began the forcible evacuation of Israeli settlers from Gaza yesterday, carrying some screaming from their homes in scenes that moved a number of the soldiers to tears.

After months of argument and political maneuvering, the Israeli forces moved in strength, but without weapons, to carry out the will of the government to give up part of the territory that Israel conquered in the 1967 war and that the Palestinians consider a part of their future state.

The mood was somber and serious, with experienced soldiers and police officers quietly trying to negotiate voluntary departures first with sometimes-hysterical settlers, while ignoring their taunts. Only later in the afternoon did the forces resort to widespread forced evacuations in various settlements, in some cases dragging parents away in front of their frightened children.

Israeli officials spoke last evening of finishing the Gaza pullout by the middle of next week, before moving to dismantle four smaller settlements in the West Bank.

While there was little serious violence in Gaza, an Israeli settler in the West Bank grabbed a gun from a guard near the settlement of Shiloh and opened fire on Palestinian workers. The settler, Asher Weissgan, 40, killed four Palestinians and wounded one other, and the killings are bound to increase tensions further, with the Palestinian militant group **Hamas** vowing revenge.

One of Israel's prime concerns has been the possibility of pulling settlers out under Palestinian fire from mortars or rockets. The Palestinian Authority has worked closely, and thus far successfully, with Israel to keep the quiet while Israeli troops are busy with their own citizens. But the killings and the **Hamas** threat have increased the chances of a serious confrontation that could delay the pullout, which is likely to be what the Shiloh settler had in mind.

Prime Minister Ariel Sharon condemned the murders as an act of "Jewish terror." The State Department condemned the attack and called on Palestinians and Israelis to show restraint.

GAZA EVICTIONS PROCEED WITH FORCE; ISRAELI TROOPS CARRY OUT ORDERS AMID NEGOTIATIONS, TAUNTS, TEARS

The Israelis also uncovered what they called an effort by the Palestinian militant group Islamic Jihad to commit a suicide attack during the pullout, and made four arrests, the Israeli army said. An explosives belt that was to have been used in the attack was discovered in a solar-power water panel in a house in the Palestinian enclave of Mawassi, which borders the main Gush Katif southern settlement bloc.

Early today, Reuters reported that the Israeli army said Palestinian militants had fired two mortar bombs at the Gadid enclave in Gaza. There were no injuries or damage. The army moved into most of the main Gaza settlements, leaving only two of the most militant, Kfar Darom and Netzarim, completely alone.

By nightfall, the army said it had cleared the settlements of Morag, Bedolah, Kerem Atzmona, Ganei Tal, and Tel Katifa. Moreover, Gadid, Peat Sadeh, Rafiah Yam, Shalev, Dugit and Nisanit were already empty or nearly so.

Action was continuing in the largest Gaza settlement, Neve Dekalim, where several hundred young protesters, most of them there illegally from the West Bank, were taking refuge in the main synagogue.

The tactics were to move slowly, increasing the pressure on residents with a show of force. Special teams of police officers and soldiers tried negotiation first, and mostly successfully. Only later were the crowbars unpacked and doors forced open.

Large groups of protesters, like those in Neve Dekalim's synagogue, were surrounded and then isolated, and police may deal with them early today, when they are tired and many are asleep.

But in Morag, negotiations with protesters in that militant settlement's synagogue resulted in many men in prayer shawls being carried out by officers. The women then agreed to be escorted away by female officers.

In Neve Dekalim, Dikla Cohen, 41, insisted on being carried out of her spacious house, as were many of her nine children and their friends. "I feel that today was a pogrom," she said.

The family locked their large wooden front door and refused to open it to the soldiers, who eventually used a crowbar to pry it open. The operation took 90 minutes amid much drama and many insults.

In Morag, Adi Hendel left her house screaming at the officers. "You should be ashamed," she said. "You're doing a crime that the Arabs didn't do. You're puppets in the hands of this dictator Sharon!"

Her husband, Eran, in a prayer shawl, pried off the mezuzah, which contains the prayer central to Judaism, at the door of his house with a knife, then burst out crying and keening. He cut his shirt, to indicate mourning, then fell to the ground, sobbing. Four policemen picked him up and carried him away. A younger soldier, standing on the street as backup, put his hands over his face and wept.

In Kerem Atzmona, one of the most militant and religious of the settlements, more than 1,500 police officers and soldiers, some in riot gear, broke through gates and a barricade to surround fewer than 20 house trailers.

Few left voluntarily, and many houses had to be broken into, and their inhabitants carried away. Still, most of those carried screaming onto buses also had their bags packed.

Police Commissioner Moshe Karadi was there, and he said the day was hard on his officers and on the soldiers. "If you asked the police, maybe half would support the settlers, but we don't ask them," he said. "Our government has decided, and we have to do this task with the utmost sensitivity, but also with a clear and obvious will."

A police spokesman said 13 security force members were wounded in clashes with settlers and their supporters, including nine soldiers, but none seriously.

In Netivot, outside Gaza, a woman set herself on fire to protest the pullout and was in serious condition, and 2,000 other Israelis protested outside Sharon's farm near Sederot.

GAZA EVICTIONS PROCEED WITH FORCE; ISRAELI TROOPS CARRY OUT ORDERS AMID NEGOTIATIONS, TAUNTS, TEARS

Graphic

PHOTO: Thomas Coex/Agence France-Presse/Getty Images: Israeli soldiers force Jewish settlers to leave the area around the synagogue of the southern Gaza Strip settlement of Neve Dekalim yesterday.

Load-Date: August 18, 2005

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Egyptian opposition bides time

The Toronto Star

September 10, 2005 Saturday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A12

Length: 925 words

Byline: Mitch Potter, Toronto Star

Dateline: CAIRO

Body

The barren concrete stairwell spirals upward around an elevator shaft that appears not to have seen movement since the British left Egypt. And at the end of a corridor that has also seen better days, a tiny wooden sign barely whispers the power that lies within.

"Muslim Brotherhood," it reads.

If true democracy had come to Egypt, the new president might today be behind this door. But the sudden Arab spring that led to Wednesday's first-yet multi-party elections did not sprout a candidate from the Brotherhood. The country's oldest Islamic movement, founded in 1928, was forced to watch Hosni Mubarak trounce an opposition far weaker than itself, reclaiming the title of president for a fifth time.

Banned but unbowed, the Muslim Brotherhood sees time - and, by its own reckoning, as many as 40 per cent of the Egyptian people - on its side. Violence, this once bloody group now abhors. It is through evolution, not revolution, the movement patiently predicts its day will come.

And it promises that day need not be feared, not by Egypt, nor the West. Because the mellow, modern Brotherhood says it has come to realize the "Islamic democracy" of its dreams must govern with tolerance, or perish.

"We are not bitter. We are not angry. We know that freedom has its prices and burdens and this exclusion is part of it," Mohammed Habib, supreme council deputy, told the Toronto Star.

At 62, Habib is emblematic of the moderate face of the modern Brotherhood leadership. A university geography professor, Habib has spent three stints in Egyptian prisons for his activism since the 1970s, yet remains a genteel host.

He offers tea in formal Arabic, via the female translator accompanying his guest. Her head is not covered, which does not faze him. When the conversation turns to the group's vision of an Egypt that adheres to the teachings of Islam and what that might mean for women, he emphasizes his comfort with modernity.

"We are not standing with veils, waiting to cover this country," Habib says, addressing the translator as much as this reporter.

Egyptian opposition bides time

"There are some who think this way perhaps, but these ideas need to be changed. And they are changing. We believe in democracy. We believe democracy is consistent with Islam. And we believe the state is a civil institution." Such promises, Habib acknowledges, have yet to sway many Egyptians, who fear a bedrock fundamentalism lies beneath the tolerant facade.

Nor does it help that on the eve of another anniversary of the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, the Muslim Brotherhood's international reputation tends to revolve around the fact that many decades ago its ranks included Ayman al-Zawahiri, now believed to be the second-in-command of Al Qaeda.

Habib makes it plain. He unabashedly criticizes Al Qaeda.

"We consider everything they do to be crimes."

During the run-up to elections, many Egyptians remarked upon the acquiescence of the Brotherhood, which urged its membership, estimated at as many as five million people, to participate by voting for any candidate of their choosing. The decision not to formally boycott struck many as suspicious.

"Some people wondered whether there was a deal with the regime. Were there promises that the Brotherhood could field a certain number of independent candidates in the upcoming parliamentary elections in exchange?" asked Abdallah Al-Ashaal, professor of international relations at the American University of Cairo.

"We don't know. But we do know that the Brotherhood has a generation of very gifted, very enlightened leaders now. They are not dogmatic any more and they understand the dilemma. They are better off co-operating, rather than trying to fight Mubarak, who has proven he will simply arrest and put them in jail."

Ashaal said the relationship that matters more is the one between Mubarak and Washington, which he says remains ambivalent to an Egypt so democratic as to give the Brotherhood the opportunity of full participation.

"America can push hard or it can push with feathers. And the impression of most Egyptians is that we are seeing feathers," he said. "But the danger of this equation is that Mubarak will take his victory as total validation for his policies, just as (U.S. President) George Bush took his last victory, with just 51 per cent of the vote, and rushed onward with his agenda.

"If that happens, many of us believe the other part of the game will be the ascension of Mubarak's son Gamal into the seat of power, one way or another. It suits the ruling party, it suits America, and it keeps the Brotherhood at bay."

Gamal Mubarak, 40, is widely seen as the guiding hand behind his father's democratic makeover.

"But it is not the faces that matter," warns Ashaal. "It's the corruption. And the expectations that this time 70 million Egyptian people are looking for someone to address their mountain of problems."

The Muslim Brotherhood isn't likely to interfere with any such transition. But its leaders admit the frustrations of watching from the wings as it sees other Islamic groups gain political foothold elsewhere in the region. Hezbollah of Lebanon is a case in point. And even the Palestinian group **Hamas**, an offshoot of the Brotherhood, is finding stronger democratic legs.

"We watch the situation in Lebanon and Palestine and we find there is dialogue. **Hamas** and others are involved in negotiations. They have a voice.

"But that is not our situation. Here we are restricted, chased away. We don't believe in revolutions, we don't believe in violence. We can only work peacefully to keep the popular pressure. It is our only choice."

Graphic

Egyptian opposition bides time

AMR NABIL AP Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood deputy leader Mohammed Habib speaks at a demonstration in front of a "national coalition for reform" sign.

Load-Date: September 10, 2005

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First lady heckled in Jerusalem; Laura Bush sees anti-American sentiment up close

Telegraph Herald (Dubuque, IA)

May 23, 2005 Monday

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Section: National/World; Pg. a6

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Byline: ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dateline: JERUSALEM

Body

Laura Bush waded into Middle East tensions on Sunday during chaotic visits to sacred religious sites, where crowds and hecklers grew so rowdy that armed guards had to restrain them.

America's first lady said what she witnessed showed that passions are running high among Palestinians and Israelis. "The United States will do what they can in this process," she said.

Before entering the ruins of an 8th-century palace in the West Bank town of Jericho, Bush told reporters, "As you can tell from our day here, this is a place of emotion, everywhere we went, from the Western Wall to the Dome of the Rock to here."

At the Western Wall, Judaism's holiest shrine, protesters demanded that the U.S. release an American Jew imprisoned for spying for Israel. At her stop nearby at the Dome of the Rock, she faced heckling from angry Palestinians. One man yelled, "How dare you come in here! Why your husband kill Muslim?"

She said both sides in the conflict sent her the same message. "We're reminded again of what we all want, what every one of us pray for," she said. "What we all want is peace."

She placed a note in the West-ern Wall that she wrote while flying Sunday from Jordan to Israel. She wanted to keep the contents private.

Dozens of protesters stood nearby, shouting, "Free Pollard now." Convicted spy Jonathan Pollard, now serving a life sentence, was a civilian intelligence analyst for the U.S. Navy.

Some visitors that Bush encountered near the Dome of the Rock shouted at her in Arabic. "None of you belong in here!" one man yelled.

No protesters were evident when Mrs. Bush had lunch with leading Palestinian women at a hotel in Jericho, a town that Israel recently turned over to Palestinian control, or when she visited the palace ruins.

Behind the recent rise in anti-American sentiment is a now-retracted report in Newsweek that Pentagon investigators had found evidence that interrogators at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, abused copies of the Quran to unsettle suspects.

First lady heckled in Jerusalem; Laura Bush sees anti- American sentiment up close

"We in principle don't reject anyone's visit to the Al Aqsa Mosque (compound), but we see in the visit of Mrs. Bush an attempt to whitewash the face of the United States, after the crimes that the American interrogators had committed when they desecrated the Quran," the militant Islamic **Hamas** group said in a statement.

Graphic

AP Photo

Load-Date: May 23, 2005

End of Document

On the West Bank, a Hint of Resistance Without Blood

The New York Times

February 29, 2004 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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Section: Section 4; Column 1; Week in Review Desk; Pg. 1; Ideas & Trends: Tactical Shift

Length: 1458 words

Byline: By JAMES BENNET

Dateline: BUDROS, West Bank

Body

THE barrier Israel is building against West Bank Palestinians has had a striking, if unintended, effect: It has stirred a sustained, bloodless protest movement among Palestinians for the first time in more than three years of conflict.

As the bulldozers have swept south toward Jerusalem and cut deeper into West Bank land, villagers who have mostly stayed on the sidelines of the uprising have joined with Israeli leftists to demonstrate. In places, as in this hamlet, they have blocked the machines with their bodies.

"I am totally against touching civilians," said Naim Morar, 50, a leader of the movement here, as he walked hand in hand on Friday with his 5-year-old son, Mashal, for another demonstration along the 50-yard-wide gash the construction has opened through the village fields.

To that statement of principle, he added a more pragmatic consideration: "If there was shooting at the wall, it would have been finished the next day. But our peaceful resistance forced them to stop." Often, teenagers throw stones at the end of the demonstrations, but the organizers say they discourage that.

This new approach raises a basic, discomfiting question: Why should such tactics seem unusual? Why has the Palestinian national movement become defined instead by increasingly nihilistic violence, like the suicide bombing on a Jerusalem bus last Sunday that killed eight passengers?

It is to stop such suicide attacks that Israel says it needs to build this barrier. Palestinians say it is actually a land grab.

The answer to the question about tactics shines a light into several corners of the conflict, including the jihadist visions of militant Islam, the strategy of anti-colonial movements of the 20th century, the structure of Palestinian society and the nature of the Israeli occupation.

One also must not ignore the appetites of the news media. It is not as though the Palestinians just discovered the existence of peaceful tactics. Some Palestinians complain that sporadic strikes and marches get little international attention.

As the protest unfolded here -- with hundreds chanting as they faced off with about 20 Israeli soldiers and policemen at the construction site -- demonstrators at the next village, Qibiya, began throwing stones. Then from

On the West Bank, a Hint of Resistance Without Blood

the Israeli side came the inevitable booms, and the telltale gray trails of tear-gas canisters streaked toward the protesters. Most of the handful of news photographers covering this rally hurried toward that scene, a quarter-mile away.

On Thursday, in a similar anti-barrier demonstration in the village of Biddo, Israeli forces responded to stone throwers with deadly fire, killing two Palestinians.

In advocating civil disobedience, Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr. had a bedrock faith in the essential humanity of their oppressors. As this conflict grinds on, it is tempting to conclude that any chance of glimpsing a shared humanity has been blown away.

Yet demonstrations like the one here suggest that is not necessarily so. On her way to the protest, an elderly Palestinian woman in a white head scarf paused atop a heap of rocks and reached back to help a gray-haired Israeli woman. They cleared the obstacle, then kept holding hands as they walked toward the crowd.

The Palestinians have never had a mainstream leader committed to nonviolent tactics, despite their official acceptance of Israel's right to exist.

"The predominant paradigm was that this is a war of liberation," said Martin Kramer, an expert on Islam and Arab politics. "Their model was Algeria. It was armed struggle against a colonial power, and you had to bleed them."

Under American pressure last year, Yasir Arafat appointed Mahmoud Abbas, an opponent of the armed uprising, as his prime minister.

Last April, as Mr. Abbas was confirmed by the Palestinian parliament, one legislator, Abdel Jawad Saleh, said Mr. Abbas was making a mistake in trying to end the uprising without offering an alternative form of resistance. "You should be a Gandhi," Mr. Saleh told him. No Gandhi, Mr. Abbas lasted less than five months in the job.

The main political competition for Mr. Arafat's mainstream Fatah faction is even sharper-edged -- the fundamentalist groups **Hamas** and Islamic Jihad, which remain officially bent on erasing Israel.

With no one in power exhorting them to try other tactics, Fatah militants, in theory members of a secular faction, have tried to out-**Hamas Hamas**. They adopted an Islamic name for their violent wing, the Al Aksa Martyrs Brigades, and took up suicide bombing along with the language of martyrdom.

Mirroring a widespread Israeli opinion of Palestinians, most Palestinians take it as axiomatic that Israelis respond to nothing but force. "They have ample precedent to cite," Dr. Kramer said.

It is not lost on Palestinians that, during the relatively quiet days under the Oslo peace accords between the two Palestinian uprisings, Israeli settlements in the occupied territories doubled in size.

Further, it was to the neighboring village, Qibiya, in 1953 that a young commando named Ariel Sharon led a reprisal raid for the killing of an Israeli woman and her two toddlers. Mr. Sharon later said that he and his men believed that the 45 houses they blew up were empty. But 69 Arabs were killed, half of them **women** and children. People here are accustomed to the trading of an eye for an eye.

Yet there are reasons to understand why peaceful protest could catch hold in these villages and also why it may not spread far beyond them.

When Mr. Sharon raided Qibiya, it was controlled by Jordan. Now, Israeli forces can move freely here. That is a practical reason for peaceful protest: any militant would be quickly arrested or killed. Palestinian gunmen have largely retreated to the city centers and refugee camps, where they can hide more easily.

Villagers in this area of the West Bank, within sight of the towers of Tel Aviv, are rather accustomed to Israelis. Many have worked in Israel and speak Hebrew. Forming alliances with left-wing Israelis -- even the young people

On the West Bank, a Hint of Resistance Without Blood

who show up to demonstrate with multiple piercings in ears, nose and lips -- does not seem as outlandish as it does to Palestinians who have known only Israeli soldiers or settlers.

Then there is the barrier itself. It is consuming the fields and orchards of many farming families without a history of militancy, driving them to protest. It is cutting Palestinian workers off from Israeli jobs. Further, as Palestinians have taken to calling it the "apartheid wall" and foreign activists have focused their attention on it, it has emerged as a tangible, telegenic object of mass protest.

The path of the barrier, which looks like a dirt runway through the West Bank, halted in the middle of an olive orchard here in early January, after peaceful demonstrations to block the bulldozers.

Days later, Naim Morar and his brother, Ayed, were separately arrested by Israeli forces in what was seen here as an effort to break the demonstrations. In each case, an Israeli judge ordered the man's release, saying there was no evidence of ties to terrorism. "I felt that the mere reason for the arrest pertained to the anti-fence protest and nothing beyond that," wrote the judge in his order releasing Naim Morar.

Ayed Morar, 42, has a shiny, puckered scar on his left bicep from a bullet wound in the first intifada. He was throwing stones, he said.

"In my life, I experienced a lot of ways to struggle," he said. "But we are not against the Israelis, and we are not against the Jews. We are just against occupation. We have the right to struggle, but we have to choose the best way." He added that Palestinians were being seen as terrorists around the world, and that "we need international governments to be with us."

That sounds more like a pragmatic argument than a clarion call for nonviolence. Rather than pointing to a break with the past, these demonstrations increasingly offer a return to it -- to the first intifada, when protesters and stone-throwing youths stood up to heavily armed soldiers. That David-and-Goliath imagery gained the Palestinians sympathy worldwide.

As the demonstrators left the construction site and climbed the hill toward the village Friday, a few teenagers ineffectually flung stones toward the soldiers. The soldiers responded with tear gas, sending everyone off with watering eyes and stinging throats.

"The first intifada was more popular because of the stones," said Sanad Shahadi, 18, holding a sling fashioned from rope and a nylon strap.

Asked if the violence conflicted with the demonstration, he said: "It's a symbol. If you throw a stone at a soldier, you won't kill him. It's a message against occupation, not a message to kill."

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Graphic

Photos: A protester and an olive branch in Budros. (Photo by Rina Castelnuevo for The New York Times)(pg. 1)

The current uprising began with stone throwing and quickly grew much more violent. (Photo by Associated Press)(pg. 4)

Load-Date: February 29, 2004

On the West Bank, a Hint of Resistance Without Blood

End of Document

WORLD DIGEST

St. Louis Post-Dispatch (Missouri)

May 6, 2005 Friday

FIVE STAR LATE LIFT EDITION

Copyright 2005 St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Inc.

Section: NEWS; Pg. A12

Length: 415 words

Byline: FROM NEWS SERVICES

Body

WEST BANK

Palestinians vote for local councils

Palestinians voted for local councils Thursday in 84 towns and villages throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Early returns showed that the ruling Fatah party might have overcome its corruption-tainted image to win some victories.

The local voting could indicate trends in advance of July parliamentary elections. Fatah, headed by Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas, had been expected to take a beating at the hands of **Hamas**, which is running candidates for the first time. Official results are expected Sunday.

DENMARK

VE-day celebrations kick off in Europe

Denmark and the Netherlands on Thursday marked the 60th anniversary of the surrender of Nazi troops, kicking off VE-day celebrations around Europe that culminate Monday with world leaders attending a parade at Moscow's Red Square.

Events scheduled through the weekend include a ceremony in the French city of Reims, where World War II officially ended, and rallies by both far-right and left-wing groups in Germany.

In Copenhagen, Queen Margrethe and Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen took part in ceremonies at a monument to seamen killed in the war. British troops arrived in the Danish capital on May 5, 1945, to officially end the Nazi occupation.

CONGO

Airplane clips tree and crashes, killing 10

A Russian-made airplane clipped a treetop during its landing approach and crashed Thursday in central Congo, killing 10 of the 11 people aboard, officials said.

WORLD DIGEST

The Antonov-26 went down 17 miles north of Kisangani, said an official with the United Nations' humanitarian-aid coordination bureau in Congo. Four Russian crew members and six Congolese passengers, including women, died in the crash. One Congolese passenger survived.

SOUTH AFRICA

Health chief shuns advice on AIDS drugs

Stressing the benefits of olive oil, garlic and beet root, South Africa's health minister insisted Thursday that good nutrition was just as important as anti-retroviral medicines for people infected with the AIDS virus. She said her government would not be pressured into meeting U.N. treatment targets.

Manto Tshabalala-Msimang, long accused by health activists of not doing enough to combat the spread of AIDS and resisting the use of anti-AIDS drugs, said far too little was known about the drug's side effects.

South Africa has the highest number of infected people in the world. At the end of 2003, 5.3 million people carried the virus, according to U.N. figures. An estimated 600 to 1,000 people die every day.

Load-Date: May 6, 2005

FBI CHIEF HAILS HELP OF ARAB, MUSLIM NATIONS/ HE REPORTS COOPERATION AGAINST TERRORISM

St. Louis Post-Dispatch (Missouri)

February 18, 2004 Wednesday Five Star Edition

Copyright 2004 St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Inc.

Section: NEWS; Pg. A5

Length: 360 words

Byline: The Associated Press

Dateline: WASHINGTON

Body

Terrorist attacks in Arab and Muslim countries have led those governments to vastly improve their cooperation with U.S. authorities in the war on terrorism, particularly in cutting off financing, FBI Director Robert Mueller said Tuesday.

Bombings tied to al-Qaida or its sympathizers have proven to governments around the world that terrorism is not merely a U.S. problem, Mueller told foreign journalists.

"I think countries around the world recognize that numbers of women and children were killed in those senseless acts and don't want to see that happen anywhere in the world," Mueller said.

Although he declined to name specific countries, Mueller said Arab and Muslim countries had made significant strides in helping the United States identify and shut down sources of financing for al-Qaida, Hamas, Hezbollah and other groups.

"You take the money away from terrorists, they cannot operate," Mueller said during an appearance at the State Department's Foreign Press Center.

FBI officials have cited several examples of this cooperation in recent months, including:

- * Setting up a joint U.S.-Saudi task force to investigate and eliminate sources of terrorism financing in Saudi Arabia and elsewhere.

- * Joint investigations of terrorism financing networks with local officials in Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, United Arab Emirates, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Indonesia.

- * Action taken by both the United States and Saudi Arabia to block accounts in Bosnia and Somalia of the Al-Haramain Islamic Foundation and Wa'el Hamza Julaidan, described by the FBI as an associate of Osama bin Laden who provided financial support to al-Qaida.

- * Four occasions in which the FBI got information from unnamed foreign governments about financing of a pending terrorist attack and could provide that government with tracking information leading to the arrests of suspects.

FBI CHIEF HAILS HELP OF ARAB, MUSLIM NATIONS/ HE REPORTS COOPERATION AGAINST TERRORISM

Mueller said that despite the international gains made against al-Qaida and removal of its base in Afghanistan, the group remains a dangerous network with affiliates or sympathizers in many parts of the world. "They are a fragmented operation around the world about which all of us must be concerned," he added.

Graphic

PHOTO; Photo headshot - (Robert) Mueller, Doesn't name specific countries

Load-Date: February 18, 2004

End of Document

Muslim leader gives Cook a shaking

Herald Sun (Melbourne, Australia)

February 23, 2004 Monday

Copyright 2004 Nationwide News Pty Limited

Section: NEWS; Pg. 16

Length: 366 words

Body

I HAVE just read about Sheik al-Hilali's claim that Afghan Muslims discovered Australia before Captain Cook and supposedly converted the Aboriginal people to Islam.

The thought occurred to me that if Aborigines have been here for 40,000 years and Islam has been around for only 1500, maybe the Aborigines converted the Muslims.

Phill Cripps, Cranbourne

THE self-proclaimed grand Mufti of Australia's Muslims, Sheik Taj al-Hilali, embraces Islamic suicide bombers who kill women and children and praises Hezbollah and Hamas, the outlawed terrorist groups who organise these massacres.

Perhaps that's why attacks against Jews and Jewish property, particularly in NSW, the ACT and Victoria, have doubled since the Palestinian intifada started and since the Sheik has been inciting violence at his Lakemba mosque.

Why doesn't he come out and say in English what he says in the mosques and in Lebanon?

Better still, why doesn't he leave his Middle East hatreds out of Australia?

Michael Burd, Toorak

I WOULD like to remind all Australians that Sheik al-Hilali is not the leader of all Muslims in Australia, but was appointed by a minor group of Muslims.

He doesn't represent me or my views as an Australian-born Muslim of Turkish background.

I am totally against terrorism. The Koran, like all other religions, teaches peace, love and tolerance.

I am proud to be Australian, Turkish and a Muslim.

Adem, Broadmeadows

IT'S time our Government had a closer shufti at the Mufti. Just who does Sheik al-Hilali think he is?

He appears to have a hidden agenda and should be deported immediately.

Thelma Robinson, Glen Waverley

Muslim leader gives Cook a shaking

SHEIK al-Hilali, thinks Islam has deep roots with the Aborigines because of their customs. I would have thought a people who practiced circumcision and went walkabout in the desert would have more in common with Jews than Muslims.

John Withers, Lara

ANDREW Bolt asks why Muslims call Hilali their Mufti when he is transparently anti-Israel and the Western world and an open admirer of Islamic terrorists?

The reason is obvious: they share Hilali's views but prefer to remain silent to project a moderate front.

Samantha Lee, Doncaster

Load-Date: February 22, 2004

End of Document

The roundup

Guardian Weekly

May 13, 2005 - May 19, 2005

Copyright 2005 Guardian Publication, Ltd.

Section: The Week; Vol. 172, No. 21; Pg. 2

Length: 948 words

Body

Americas

Bombers hit consulate in New York

Two homemade bombs exploded outside the British consulate in New York. The bombs, encased in toy grenades, were placed in the soil of a large flower tub outside the building.

US soldiers held in Colombia

The US has granted Colombian prosecutors access to two American soldiers accused of selling arms to far-right death squads amid anger over Washington's refusal to allow the suspects to be tried in Colombia. Allan Tanquary and Jesus Hernandez were turned over to US authorities despite calls from lawmakers for them to face trial in Colombia.

Venezuela tops gun death table

Venezuela and Brazil have the highest gun death rates in the world, according to a UN study. In Venezuela 22.15 people out of every 100,000 are murdered with guns every year, while 21.72 are killed in Brazil.

Church sale to help abuse victims

The Roman Catholic diocese of St George's in eastern Canada plans to sell all its churches and missions to raise money to pay the victims of sexual assault by a priest who was convicted more than a decade ago.

Bus plunges into Peruvian gorge

Thirty-seven people died and 17 were injured when a bus plunged into a 300-metre gorge in Peru's central Andes, 380km north of Lima.

Europe

Russian ex-minister held over fraud

The roundup

Swiss police arrested a former Russian nuclear minister, Yevgeny Adamov, who is accused of embezzling up to \$ 10m of US aid that was meant to increase security at Russia's nuclear power plants. He was taken into custody in Bern at the behest of American authorities.

Pope defends 'pro-life' doctrine

Pope Benedict XVI made clear that he intends to maintain the "pro-life" stance of his predecessor when he said that, like John Paul, he would defend "the inviolability of human life from conception to natural death".

Holocaust memorial opens

After years of controversy and delay, Germany opened its Holocaust memorial -- a vast field of concrete slabs in the historic heart of Berlin only a few hundred meters from the site of Hitler's bunker.

Cash for Prague Spring victims

The Czech parliament's lower chamber voted to compensate victims of the 1968 Soviet invasion, overturning the senate's rejection of the bill. Those injured or raped by occupying troops between 1968 and 1991, or relatives of those killed, will receive up to \$ 6,300.

Teacher cleared on sex charge

Parents' groups and children's rights campaigners demanded changes to Spain's sexual abuse laws after the country's supreme court ruled that there was "nothing perverse or extravagant" about a teacher having sex with a 14-year-old schoolgirl.

Africa

Uganda poll on party politics

Uganda's parliament has taken the first step to re-establish multi-party politics by voting to hold a referendum on the issue in July. President Yoweri Museveni's government sponsored the motion, which was passed overwhelmingly.

Africa worst for families

Africa is the worst place to be a mother or a child, says a study of health and educational opportunities in 110 countries by Save the Children USA. Mali, Burkina Faso and Ethiopia are the worst of the worst.

President's wife storms newspaper

Kenya's first lady, Lucy Kibaki, entered the offices of the country's biggest-circulation newspaper, the Daily Nation, where she allegedly slapped a television cameraman and seized reporters' notebooks and tape recorders to protest at stories about her eccentric behaviour.

Middle East

Sharon cancels inmate release

The Israeli prime minister, Ariel Sharon, has refused to free 400 Palestinians until President Mahmoud Abbas cracks down on militants.

Fatah sees off Hamas in poll

Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas's ruling Fatah movement defeated a challenge by Hamas in local elections in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, winning 56% of the vote against the Islamist group's 33%.

Kuwaiti women in poll setback

Kuwaiti women hoping to participate in their first elections suffered a setback when Islamist and conservative tribal lawmakers in parliament created a constitutional crisis that will delay the matter long enough to keep women out of this year's race for municipal council seats.

Exiled leader returns to Lebanon

Lebanon's most prominent anti-Syrian Christian opposition leader, Michel Aoun, arrived in Beirut after more than a decade in exile in France and 11 days after the last Syrian soldier left the country.

Asia**Burma rebels deny role in bombings**

Burmese rebels and an overseas dissident group denied claims by the military that they were responsible for three bombings in the capital, Rangoon, which state media said killed at least 11 people and injured 162. Thailand's government news agency put the toll at 20 dead and more than 200 injured.

Vietnam PM announces US visit

The Vietnamese prime minister, Phan Van Khai, announced plans to visit the US next month, making him the first leader of the communist country to do so since the end of the Vietnam war 30 years ago.

Maoists shoot Hindu priest

Suspected Maoist rebels shot dead Narayan Pokharel, one of Nepal's leading Hindu priests, in a temple in southern town of Butwal, the military said.

Suharto 'seriously ill in hospital'

The former Indonesian dictator, General Suharto, was seriously ill with internal bleeding and breathing problems, a doctor treating him at a Jakarta hospital said.

The roundup

Segregated carriages halt gropers

Faced with demands to halt an alarming rise in sexual assaults, nine rail and subway firms in Tokyo introduced women-only carriages during the morning rush hour.

Oceania**Plane crash off Australian peninsula**

A plane with 18 people on board crashed in bad weather in northeast Australia, about 10km from the remote Aboriginal community of Lockhart River on Cape York peninsula.

Graphic

Picture, Children in South Korea enter a temple to experience monastic life for 15 days to mark Buddha's birthday on May 15, Photograph: Lee Jin-Man/AP

Load-Date: May 23, 2005

End of Document

The roundup

Guardian Weekly

March 18, 2005 - March 24, 2005

Copyright 2005 Guardian Publication, Ltd.

Section: The Week; Vol. 172, No. 13; Pg. 2

Length: 971 words

Body

Americas

Rice won't run for presidency

Condoleezza Rice insisted that she would not seek the presidency, disappointing those who had looked forward to an all-woman race for the White house in 2008 between the secretary of state and Senator Hillary Clinton.

Farc leader extradited to US

Omaira Rojas, a senior member of Colombia's main rebel group, Farc, who allegedly knows details of its drug trafficking operations, was extradited to the US. A federal judge in Washington indicted her in December 2003 on charges of drug trafficking and supporting illegal activities.

Venezuela to seize 'idle' land

The Venezuelan government is to press ahead with plans to expropriate land from a British-owned farm, part of the Vestey Group, after the national land institute ruled that the owners did not have a legitimate claim to the land. The takeover is part of a move to hand 96,440 hectares of land to the poor.

Manhunt after court killings

Police in the American state of Georgia arrested a man believed to have shot dead four people, including a judge, at an Atlanta courthouse, after one of the largest manhunts in recent US history. Brian Nichols was arrested at a flat in a city suburb where a young mother whom he had taken hostage at gunpoint persuaded him to surrender.

Jewish treasure claim settled

The US has agreed to acknowledge its role as part of a \$ 25.5m settlement of claims by Hungarian Holocaust survivors that American soldiers plundered a trainload of Jewish family treasures seized by the Nazis.

Europe

The roundup

Pope returns to Vatican

The Pope left hospital after speaking briefly in public for the first time since an operation last month to insert a tube in his windpipe. Although the 84-year-old pontiff has returned in time for Easter, for the first time in his papacy almost all his Easter duties have been delegated.

Freedom party loses ground

The Freedom party, formerly led by Jorg Haider, lost almost half its support in local elections in the southern Austrian province of Styria. The defeat came just a week after the party lost in local elections in Lower Austria.

Investigation into Concorde crash

A French magistrate formally placed Continental Airlines under investigation for the suspected role played by one of its jets in the Concorde crash in July 2000.

Portuguese PM takes office

Jose Socrates was sworn in as Portugal's prime minister, vowing to maintain good relations with the US despite naming a foreign minister who has compared President Bush to Adolf Hitler.

Mussolini barred from election

Alessandra Mussolini, the granddaughter of Italy's wartime fascist dictator, was barred from contesting an election after electoral referees decided that hundreds of the signatures she needed to allow her to stand had been faked.

Middle East**Mubarak lets rival out of jail**

The Egyptian government of President Hosni Mubarak has released a jailed opposition leader on bail after pressure from the US and the EU. Ayman Nour, an MP, was imprisoned in January on suspicion of forging election papers, charges that his supporters say are trumped up.

Hamas enters election battle

Hamas has announced that it will contest the Palestinian parliamentary elections, a decision that could undermine attempts by the Palestinian leader, Mahmoud Abbas, to renew the peace process with Israel.

Bigger protests in Lebanon

The battle for the streets of Lebanon reached new heights when hundreds of thousands of anti-Syrian protesters swamped the centre of Beirut. It was the biggest demonstration in the city, easily outstripping a recent pro-Syrian Hizbullah rally, which drew a crowd of about 500,000.

Africa

761,000 accused in Rwanda

The secretary general of the Rwanda justice ministry said at least 761,000 people should stand trial for their role in the 1994 genocide. General Johnston Busingye claimed that almost one in 10 of the country's population took part in the 100 days of violence in which more than 500,000 minority Tutsis and Hutu moderates died.

39 saved after quake strikes mine

After hours of frantic digging 2.5km below ground, rescuers saved 39 of 40 miners trapped in shafts that collapsed after an earthquake in a South African gold mining area.

Kenya village raid kills 30

At least 30 people, mainly women and children, were killed in their beds when rival ethnic Somali clansmen attacked a village outside Mandera on the Somali border in northeast Kenya.

Togo holds state funeral

Togo officially mourned its former president, Gnassingbe Eyadema, who ruled for 38 years, with a funeral attended by regional leaders working to calm the country's presidential-succession struggle.

Asia**Hundreds arrested in Nepal**

Police beat protesters and arrested hundreds during nationwide rallies in Nepal against King Gyanendra's emergency rule, while communist rebels set buses alight and threatened to step up their attacks against the government.

Death penalties restored

Pakistan's highest Islamic court reinstated the convictions of five men sentenced to death for raping a woman on orders from a village council. Mukhtaran Bibi was raped in June 2002 after village elders ordered the attack on her as punishment for an illicit affair by her brother.

Inmates shot in Manila jail siege

Police officers in the Philippines shot dead 22 prisoners as they stormed a Manila jail to end a 24-hour stand-off with Islamic militant suspects.

Snack kills school children

At least 27 primary school children died and another 100 were taken to hospital after eating a cassava snack during the morning break in a remote village in the southern Philippines.

The roundup

Korea gets first fish hospital

South Korea opened its first licensed fish hospital, the Yosu Fisheries Clinic, with specialists trained to treat trout with fungus and grouper with gill infections. The hospital will serve commercial fish and shellfish farms in the region.

Graphic

Picture, Council and the Climate Group that includes this picture of Mount Kilimanjaro, showing its snowy cap lost to global warming, Photo: Alex Majoli/Magnum Photos

Load-Date: March 28, 2005

End of Document

Rice tries to revive stalled peace process

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

November 15, 2005 Tuesday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; International News; Pg. 10

Length: 434 words

Byline: Ed O'Loughlin Herald Correspondent in Jerusalem

Body

The US Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice, visited Jerusalem and the West Bank yesterday to try to revive flagging hopes for the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, stalled despite Israel's unilateral withdrawal from Gaza in September.

Dr Rice had warnings for both sides before her separate meetings with the Israeli Prime Minister, Ariel Sharon, and the Palestinian Authority chairman, Mahmoud Abbas.

Referring to Israeli settlement-building in the occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem, she said: "Israel should do nothing to try and prejudice final status or the outlines of a final settlement."

The Palestinian Authority should move against armed militant groups, she said.

"You cannot build a democratic state and a foundation for peace when you have organisations that remain armed and constantly reserve the means to destroy that foundation for peace."

Dr Rice's visit comes during a week in which Israeli troops and police in the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem have killed several Palestinians.

Israeli troops were reported to have shot dead a 34-year-old member of the Islamic militant group **Hamas** in a raid on the West Bank town of Nablus yesterday.

The raids and killings come despite a "period of calm" agreed to by all parties to the conflict last February. Last month an Islamic Jihad suicide bomber killed six Israelis in an attack in the coastal town of Hadera.

Lawyers representing the Israeli Government have told an Israeli court that the use of sonic booms over Palestinian areas is justified to prevent terrorism.

The lawyers were responding to a petition from the Israeli group Physicians for Human Rights and the Gaza Community Mental Health Program, which say the practice is a collective punishment that terrorises ordinary people.

Since pulling its settlers out of Gaza in August, the Israeli Government has stepped up the practice of having jets repeatedly break the sound barrier at low altitude over Gaza at all times of day or night, creating waves of sound and concussion, similar to an explosion close by.

Rice tries to revive stalled peace process

Doctors in Gaza say children are most vulnerable to the effects, which can include panic attacks, incontinence, nose bleeds, irregular heart beat and difficulty breathing.

The head of the Gaza psychiatric group, Eyad Sarraj, said there was also evidence of increased miscarriage in women exposed to frequent sonic booms.

A lawyer for the Israeli state prosecutor's office said the booms were intended to "disrupt terror activities" and "engender fear among terrorists planning to attempt to fire rockets", describing the action as "legitimate according to international law".

Load-Date: July 17, 2007

End of Document

Israeli peace overture follows Gaza destruction

Christian Science Monitor (Boston, MA)

December 20, 2004, Monday

Copyright 2004 The Christian Science Publishing Society

Section: WORLD; Pg. 07

Length: 992 words

Byline: By Ben Lynfield Correspondent of The Christian Science Monitor

Dateline: KHAN YUNIS REFUGEE CAMP, GAZA STRIP

Highlight: At least 40 Palestinian houses were razed; Israel approved prisoner release.

Body

The sights, sounds, and emotions in Gaza Sunday were those of war, not of the turning point toward peace being hoped for and proclaimed in the Middle East and abroad.

"This is my house," says Qais Nofal, pointing to twisted metal rods and concrete, the remains of one of an estimated 40 houses destroyed by the Israeli army during a two-day operation that ended Saturday night. After the operation, the Israeli army said in a press release that Palestinians ordered to leave their houses for their own safety were now free to return home.

"What home?" asks Mr. Nofal, a bearded, brown-eyed tailor. "My brother and I lived here with our wives and children. I built it gradually, bit by bit, over seven years."

Omar Sabah, a refugee from the fighting at Israel's creation in 1948, adds: "We came here this morning and found there is nothing left. There is no house, and no existence. It is finished."

Operation Orange Iron, which the army says was aimed at halting a surge of mortar firings against Jewish settlements and army positions, was the largest military operation since Yasser Arafat's death last month. Eleven Palestinians were killed, four of them civilians, and 47 wounded, according to medical officials. One Thai worker was killed and 17 people wounded by more than 30 mortars and rockets during the week preceding the operation, the army says. One Israeli soldier was wounded during the operation, said the army, adding that troops came under fire from antitank missiles and faced explosive devices.

The army statement said that "uninhabited structures used by Palestinians to fire shells and rockets were destroyed."

From the vantage point of Palestinian analysts, the operation is an indication that Prime Minister Ariel Sharon is intent upon undermining Mahmoud Abbas, the leading candidate to succeed Mr. Arafat, who advocates an end to the armed intifada. In the perspective of Israeli analysts, the incursion had a similar objective to previous Gaza operations: avoiding the appearance that next year's planned withdrawal from the Gaza Strip constitutes a running away under fire.

The incursion came amid a tide of statements stressing that there is a unique opportunity for peace after the death of Arafat, who was viewed by Israel and the US as the main obstacle to resolving the Palestinian-Israeli dispute.

Israeli peace overture follows Gaza destruction

Sunday, in accordance with a deal struck between Egypt and Israel this month that led to the release of accused Israeli spy Azzam Azzam, Israel approved the release of 170 jailed Palestinians. Sharon said the decision to free the Palestinians was a "goodwill gesture" toward Egypt, which he says has become an important stabilizing force in the transformation to the post-Arafat Palestinian era.

Israeli officials also said the decision to release the prisoners was to show that Israel wants to "create an atmosphere of reconciliation" with the Palestinians leading to the Jan. 9 election to replace Arafat, according to the Associated Press.

In remarks published in Der Spiegel over the weekend, Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak said 2005 could become a year of "great opportunity" for peace. That followed up remarks by Sharon that 2005 poses "an opportunity for a historic breakthrough with the Palestinians."

But few Palestinians share such buoyant predictions. "The question is, is the 'historic breakthrough' to be achieved through incursions, military operations, destruction of homes, and forcing women, children, and the elderly to take shelter in schools?" wrote al-Quds, the largest Palestinian newspaper, in its editorial Sunday: "Another massacre in Khan Yunis."

The escalation began when Israel unsuccessfully attempted to assassinate a militia leader, Jamal Abu Samhadana, on Dec. 9. It included a devastating Palestinian tunnel bombing - in which Hamas militants detonated 1.5 tons of explosives underneath an army position on Dec. 12 killing five soldiers - and continued to spiral Sunday. Palestinians fired Kassam rockets into the Israeli town of Sderot, lightly wounding two people, and Israeli helicopters fired machine guns at targets in northern Gaza.

"The Israeli operation is aimed at weakening Abbas," says Mahdi Abdul-Hadi, director of the Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs.

"Palestinians are looking for a representative to put their system in order and to maintain their identity and this representative is weak and cannot stop the bleeding." Abdul-Hadi says the operation can only undercut Abbas's bid to persuade Hamas and other factions to agree to a cease-fire.

"It is clear that Sharon wants a weak Abbas, one who is crippled and naked so he can impose his agenda upon him." Abdul-Hadi says.

Lior Ben-Dor, an Israeli foreign ministry spokesman, says, however, that the operation's "only purpose was to defend our citizens and to stop attacks. As long as the Palestinians themselves do not take any steps to stop these attacks, Israel finds itself obliged to do the task."

In the view of Ephraim Inbar, director of the BESA Center for Strategic Studies at Bar Ilan University near Tel Aviv, the operation reflected a desire by the army to maintain a deterrent capability after the tunnel bombing and also was part of an attempt "to sell to the public the Gaza withdrawal so that the government is not running away from Gaza under fire. This requires stabilizing the situation before they leave."

But Inbar predicts further rounds of violence before and after the Israeli withdrawal. "I don't have any hope that Abbas will be able to control the radicals in his society," he says.

The expected agreement by the Labor Party and its leader, Shimon Peres, to join the coalition, will help Sharon continue to pursue a tough posture in Gaza, Inbar adds. "Peres will explain things to the world. Sharon could not get a better public relations person than Peres," he says.

* Material from the Associated Press was used in this report.

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Load-Date: December 19, 2004

Israeli peace overture follows Gaza destruction

End of Document

TV Choice

The Times (London)

October 15, 2005, Saturday

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Section: Features; The Knowledge 53

Length: 394 words

Byline: David Chater

Body

ISRAEL AND THE ARABS: ELUSIVE PEACE BBC Two, 9pm

The second part of this exemplary series follows the doomed attempts to promote peace during one of the bloodiest and most turbulent periods of Arab/Israeli relations. The Hamas suicide bomb that devastated the Park Hotel in Netanya during Passover three years ago put paid to the latest US peace initiative. "I had hoped that people would be killed," says an imprisoned Palestinian leader, "but I didn't dare hope for so many. I felt God's hand had guided us."

The Israelis invaded the West Bank, laid siege to Yassir Arafat (right) in his compound and flattened Jenin. "We destroyed the whole neighbourhood," says an Israeli soldier. "Simple as that."

Once again, the chaos of current affairs is forged into a clear and compelling narrative using the calm testimony of those involved.

VINCENT ITV1, 9pm

In the second episode of Vincent, the series hits its stride. Ray Winstone's performance as the private eye continues to dominate the series in the same way that Robbie Coltrane's performance defined Cracker. But by now, other members of his motley team have had the chance to establish their own personalities, and tonight's story is a heavyweight bout between Vincent and an underworld boss determined to keep his son out of prison.

"I'm right in the middle of your F***ing world," the villain snarls, "and I'll tell you for nothing I'll destroy it. I'll destroy you and the people around you."

"I'll cause you such havoc unless you leave my boy alone." As a rule, it is not a good idea to threaten Ray Winstone.

SHOCK DOCS Five, 11.05pm

People who deliberately cut themselves often do it as a distraction from emotional pain or a form of affirmation ("I hurt, therefore I am"). This is a documentary about three people who use serial sex with strangers as their razor blade.

One woman title, who worked as a prostitute, says: "It's all to do with being a loser at the end of the day. The whole thing comes down to that. I always think that I am crap." Another of the three, a retired miner in South Wales who

TV Choice

meets women on the internet, is pure Alan Bennett. But although he provides a dash of pitch-black humour, the film is mostly a chronicle of self-harm that is neither funny nor titillating.

BEST OF THE REST ...

THE BATTLE FOR BRITAIN'S SOUL BBC Two, 7pm

Atheism versus the Church in the early 20th century.

Load-Date: October 22, 2005

End of Document

Unhealthy bedfellows

The Weekend Australian

January 8, 2005 Saturday All-round Country Edition

Copyright 2005 Nationwide News Pty Limited

Section: FEATURES; Weekend Inquirer; Pg. 24

Length: 1652 words

Byline: Joshua Kurlantzick

Body

Radical Islamic groups have replaced communist governments as partners for the hard Left in western democracies, writes Joshua Kurlantzick

THE Manhattan lawyer Lynne Stewart has been wedded to activist causes since the 1960s, defending a long train of leftists who have had run-ins with the law. A grandmotherly woman with a wide, jowly pink face and graying hair in a bowl cut, she has represented anti-war demonstrators, ageing yuppies and Black Panthers.

When Stewart arrived at a US federal prison hospital in Minnesota in May 2000, however, she met a client from a very different milieu. In the visiting room, Stewart sat across from sheikh Omar Abdel Rahman, the infamous blind Egyptian cleric imprisoned for life in 1995 for inciting the 1993 World Trade Centre attack and plotting to blow up the FBI's office in Manhattan, as well as the UN and the Holland and Lincoln tunnels linking New York City with New Jersey.

MATP

Though they are roughly the same age, Abdel Rahman seems to have missed out on many of the famously tolerant ideals associated with Stewart's generation of activists. He has called for the slaughter of Jews, and for women to have little public role in society. Yet, with Abdel Rahman, Stewart allegedly took a step beyond mere legal advice. Videotapes allegedly show that Stewart loudly spoke nonsense words while her client, under the din, instructed a man travelling with Stewart and posing as a translator to execute a new terrorist plot. For this, Stewart has been charged with providing material support for terrorism, since the dangerous sheikh is forbidden from contacting his followers.

At the trial, an Egyptian reporter for Reuters testified that he had received a call from Stewart relaying a message from Abdel Rahman to his followers that they should break their ceasefire with another Islamist group. Allegations of complicity by her with known terrorists left Stewart nonplussed. "We hit it off," she gushed to The Washington Post about her interactions with the sheikh. "He's really an incredible person." Stewart has denied any wrongdoing and says she followed ethical rules. A verdict in the trial is expected soon.

Such seemingly improbable partnerships are the subject of David Horowitz's new book, *Unholy Alliance: Radical Islam and the American Left*. Calling this alliance the "Hitler-Stalin pact of our times", he warns of its potential impact, especially in undermining the war on terror.

Horowitz, the founder of the online magazine FrontPage and a former radical leftist, is at his best in documenting the intellectual connections between these strange bedfellows. He shows, for instance, how the anti-American

Unhealthy bedfellows

pronouncements of Noam Chomsky have become increasingly indistinguishable from those of the fire-breathing clerics who appear on Arab satellite TV stations.

Horowitz points to the participation of militant Muslims in some of the most publicised antiwar rallies and also provides useful historical context for this unlikely romance. Over the past century, he argues, the radical Left in Europe and the US has come to define itself as a movement against, rather than a movement for. Primarily, of course, its target has been the US, no matter what the US has stood for.

When the US declared war on terror, it was time, once again, for the Left to lionise whomever America opposed. That radical Islamists hold social and cultural values diametrically opposed to those of American leftists is not, Horowitz maintains, as big a problem for either party as it might appear. Today's radicals tend to pay tribute not to al-Qa'ida but to groups such as Hamas, whose extensive social-service network can be invoked to soften the horrors perpetrated by its terror cells. (Interestingly, though, few if any of today's leftists have decamped for Tehran or Taliban-controlled Afghanistan.) For their part, the prophets of radical Islam have not only borrowed from the Left in recent decades, they have learned to appeal to leftist sympathies. The Arab media now constantly condemn the US for victimising the Third World and supporting tyrants.

Horowitz's Unholy Alliance is among the first serious examinations of this troubling and relatively new relationship.

But he scents what is decidedly new in the developments he describes. A decade ago, a red-green (green being the colour of Islam) alliance would have seemed astounding. On campuses in Europe and the US, women's groups usually avoided Islamist organisations, which often held highly misogynistic beliefs. The primary concerns of hard-leftist groups tended to be labour rights and poverty. Few had ties to any Muslim organisations.

One powerful catalyst that changed all this was the birth of the anti-globalisation movement. The real and imagined evils of globalisation have breathed new life into the international Left, especially among the young. But radicals have not rested content with protesting the policies they dislike. They also sought villains, and they have found familiar ones: the US and the Jews. Despite the youth of many anti-globalisation activists, they have drawn upon and updated venerable tropes of traditional anti-Semitism and anti-Americanism. The Rockefellers and Rothschilds have disappeared as international bogeymen, replaced by theories of Jewish and American intrigue at the World Trade Organisation and other supranational economic agencies.

That such images should have found a ready audience in the Muslim world is no surprise. But their dissemination depended on yet another recent development: the internet. Before the advent of today's computer technology, the hard Left in Europe and the US would have had no idea how to seek out Islamist sympathisers. A generation ago, it would have been necessary for the two groups to occupy the same physical space -- an unlikely prospect. Since the 1990s, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of web homepages created by both radical Muslims and anti-globalisation activists.

In early 2003, several British left-wing parties -- Marxists, socialists, Labour radicals -- came together with Islamist groups, including the local branch of the Muslim Brotherhood, to create a joint steering committee. Its co-chairmen (to give something of its flavour) were Andrew Murray of the British Communist Party and Muhammad Asalm Ijaz of the London Council of Mosques. On the Continent, at roughly the same time, similar alliances were cemented between Islamist organisations and leftist parties such as France's Trotskyist Workers' Struggle.

These links were quickly put to use. Throughout 2003 and 2004, Islamists and anti-globalisation activists in Europe have held a number of joint protests, marches, and conferences. In France, several anti-globalisation groups helped to lead marches protesting the Government's order that headscarves could not be worn in public schools. Islamists and anti-globalisation activists have other pan-European activities planned for 2005.

More worrisome is the fact that the leftist-Islamist partnership has converted its co-operation into votes. In 2004 elections for local offices across Europe and for seats in the European Parliament, Islamic groups worked with leftists on joint lists or helped promote Left candidates in Belgium, Britain and France. The electoral advantages of this united front can only grow as immigration and high birthrates add to Europe's already sizable Muslim population.

Unhealthy bedfellows

Horowitz also singles out International ANSWER (Act Now to Stop War and End Racism), a New York-based group founded by former US attorney-general and long-time radical agitator Ramsey Clark (who has also represented the blind sheikh). ANSWER, Horowitz shows, traffics in the same anti-American and anti-Semitic vitriol as the most hateful Islamists.

In December 2003, the group helped to convene the second annual Cairo Conference, an anti-US hate fest attended by a variety of Islamists, including Osama Hamdan, a top leader of **Hamas**. ANSWER has also given a seat on its steering committee to the Muslim Students Association. This group presents itself as a benign advocate for Muslim college students. But as Jonathan Dowd-Gailey has recently documented in the Middle East Quarterly, the MSA has funnelled money to the Holy Land Foundation and other charities accused of funding **Hamas** and Hezbollah. MSA leaders have called for the death of all Jews and have spread pro-Taliban propaganda. The group advises its members that their "long-term goal" should be "to Islamicise the politics of their respective universities".

The partnership between Islamists and the international Left poses its most immediate threat to Jews. As Horowitz rightly worries, the anti-Semitic propaganda spread by the red-green alliance stokes violence against Jewish communities and makes Israel an ever more vilified object of rage. Ultimately, too, Islamists may turn some part of the anti-globalisation movement towards violence.

Indeed, many older members of the hard Left have never forsworn such tools. As Stewart told The New York Times there is nothing wrong with using "directed violence" against "the institutions which perpetuate capitalism".

In the longer term, the ideas propagated by the hard Left-Islamist alliance could also seep into the wider political culture, poisoning the mainstream Left and otherwise sane liberals. Praise for suicide bombers, Horowitz notes, can already be heard at times from members of Europe's socialist establishment. In France, Belgium and Great Britain, some parties of the moderate Left have tried to co-opt Muslim groups while sidestepping their extreme rhetoric, hoping thereby to bolster the parties' credibility with dissatisfied radical voters.

*

Joshua Kurlantzick is the foreign editor of The New Republic. This is an edited excerpt of a longer article which appeared in the December 2004 issue of Commentary.

LINKS

www.commentarymagazine.com

[www.](http://www.commentarymagazine.com) commentarymagazine.com

Load-Date: January 7, 2005

Day of bloodshed in northern Gaza Strip

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

October 1, 2004 Friday

Third Edition

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Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; International News; Pg. 15

Length: 383 words

Byline: Ed O'Loughlin Herald Correspondent in Jerusalem, and agencies

Body

An Israeli tank fired a shell at a group of Palestinians, killing seven people during heavy fighting in the Jabalya refugee camp in northern Gaza yesterday, witnesses and medical officials said.

The incident took place near Jabalya's main market, scene of gun battles between Israeli soldiers and Palestinian gunmen. The Palestinian witnesses said they believed the dead were civilians and not armed men.

Five children were among earlier casualties as violence intensified between Israelis and Palestinians around the northern Gaza Strip.

The day before a two-year-old boy and a girl, aged four, were killed and at least 13 people injured when a Palestinian rocket struck the Israeli town of Sderot, close to the northern end of the sealed-off Palestinian enclave.

Earlier on Wednesday, three Palestinian schoolboys were shot dead by Israeli soldiers in two separate incidents inside Gaza, and several more were shot and wounded.

The latest upsurge in killing comes as more than 100 Israeli tanks and armoured vehicles mount the third raid in as many months into northern Gaza in an attempt to deter the firing of homemade missiles at Israeli towns and Jewish settlements inside the strip.

Yesterday, Palestinian gunmen killed an Israeli woman jogging along a road connecting the Jewish settlements of Elei Sinai and Dugit, military sources said.

Israel Radio reported a second Israeli was also killed in the attack but provided no additional details. Soldiers who rushed to the scene returned fire and killed at least one gunman, sources said.

It was the second deadly ambush by militants in Gaza yesterday. Earlier, two **Hamas** gunmen struck an army position near the Jabalya refugee camp, killing a soldier before they were shot dead.

Earlier this week a 24-year-old **female** American immigrant became the first Gaza settler to be killed by a Palestinian missile since the present intifada began, prompting the latest incursion.

Palestinians say that an armed man was also killed on Wednesday when Israeli soldiers shot dead two boys, aged 17 and 14, as they threw stones at Israeli tanks entering Jabalya.

Day of bloodshed in northern Gaza Strip

A boy of 13 was shot dead by Israeli soldiers as he threw stones near the Gaza Jewish settlement of Netzarim.

The Israeli Government has signalled the intensification of its campaign inside the Gaza Strip.

Graphic

PHOTO: Under attack ... Israeli casualties in Sderot. Photo: Reuters

Load-Date: July 17, 2007

End of Document

Five children killed in Gaza Strip battles

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

October 1, 2004 Friday

First Edition

Copyright 2004 John Fairfax Publications Pty Ltd All Rights Reserved

Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; International News; Pg. 15

Length: 397 words

Byline: Ed O'Loughlin Herald Correspondent in Jerusalem, and agencies

Body

Five children are among the dead as violence intensified between Israelis and Palestinians around the northern Gaza Strip.

Ten Palestinians and three Israelis were killed yesterday as Israeli troops thrust deep into Gaza. The day before a two-year-old boy and a girl, aged four, were killed and at least 13 people injured when a Palestinian rocket struck the Israeli town of Sderot, close to the northern end of the sealed-off Palestinian enclave.

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A boy of 13 was shot dead by Israeli soldiers as he threw stones near the Gaza Jewish settlement of Netzarim.

The Israeli Government has signalled the intensification of its campaign inside the Gaza Strip in response to the latest Israeli casualties. The office of the Prime Minister, Ariel Sharon, said that the defence forces "would respond with severity and use all measures to respond and stop the firing of [missiles]".

Five children killed in Gaza Strip battles

The Israeli deaths from Palestinian missile fire are an embarrassment for Mr Sharon's Government, coinciding as they do with a series of raids into Gaza designed to deter rocket fire.

Graphic

PHOTO: Under attack ... Israeli casualties in Sderot. Photo: Reuters

Load-Date: July 17, 2007

End of Document

Suicide bombings in Israel kill at least 16

Prince George Citizen (British Columbia)

September 1, 2004 Wednesday

Final Edition

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 19

Length: 382 words

Byline: Associated Press; Canadian Press

Dateline: BEERSHEBA, Israel

Body

BEERSHEBA, Israel (AP-CP) -- Palestinian suicide bombers blew up two buses almost simultaneously in this southern city Tuesday, killing at least 16 passengers and wounding more than 80 in the first major attack inside Israel in nearly six months.

The explosions, for which the **Hamas** militant group claimed responsibility, ended a period of relative calm. Israel has attributed the lull to its crackdown on Palestinian militants and continued construction of a separation barrier in the West Bank. Palestinian militants have acknowledged they have faced increasing difficulties carrying out attacks.

The two buses blew up 15 seconds apart, about 100 metres from a busy intersection in the centre of Beersheba. "People were screaming and yelling. Everybody was running," said witness Tzika Schreter, 50, a college lecturer.

Rescue workers scoured the scene, cleaning up body parts and scattered pieces of the wreckage as dozens of onlookers gathered nearby. A hand with a ring lay on a charred seat, and blood was splattered on the walls of the mangled buses.

The blasts came hours after Prime Minister Ariel Sharon presented to his Likud party the most detailed timetable yet for Israel's withdrawal from the Gaza Strip, and warned party rebels the plan "will be implemented, period."

After the attacks, Sharon met with top security officials to plan a response, and more talks were scheduled later in the evening. Israel has historically struck hard at militant targets after suicide bombings.

"Israel will continue fighting terror with all its might," Sharon said, adding that he would push forward with the Gaza pullout. "This has no connection to disengagement," he said.

Police said the devastation at the scene was complicating the recovery of bodies and warned the death toll could rise. They said the 16 people did not include the bombers.

Israel's Magen David Adom rescue service said 30 of the wounded were in serious or moderate condition.

Authorities stepped up security throughout Beersheba after the attacks, placing checkpoints on major roads and snarling traffic in and out of the city.

Suicide bombings in Israel kill at least 16

In Gaza, Muslim leaders praised the "heroic operation" over mosque loudspeakers.

The attack was the deadliest since a **female** suicide bomber killed 21 people nearly a year ago in the northern city of Haifa.

Graphic

Photo: Associated Press; Israeli police officers and Zaka rescue and recovery volunteers work inside and next to a bus destroyed in a double-bombing in the southern Israeli city of Beersheba. ;

Load-Date: February 17, 2006

Middle of the road map

Australian Financial Review

December 3, 2004 Friday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS; Features; Pg. 72

Length: 1555 words

Byline: Ben Potter. Ben Potter travelled to Israel as a guest of the Israeli foreign ministry and the Australia-Israel Jewish Affairs Council.

Body

Palestinians and Israelis are hopeful they can grab a new opportunity to resolve their differences but when it comes to Middle East politics, history has shown nothing is straightforward or simple, writes Ben Potter.

In the month after the death of Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, progress towards a post-Arafat political landscape in the Holy Land had seemed surreally smooth. But this week, Israeli-Palestinian politics resumed its unpredictable pattern. Marwan Barghouti a Palestinian militant serving five life sentences in an Israeli prison for murder reversed an earlier decision not to contest elections for the chairmanship of the Palestinian Authority, casting a cloud over the prospects of moderate Fatah candidate Mahmoud Abbas. Meanwhile, Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon dissolved his Likud Party's coalition with the Shinui Party after it voted against the budget, and turned to the opposition Labour Party to form a national unity government.

Barghouti's candidacy is a challenge to the Israeli government which says releasing the murderer of four Israelis is not on and the West, both of which favour Abbas. It also endangers hopes for a smooth transition to a new Palestinian leadership and a renewal of the peace process. Sharon's political problems are a reminder of the fragility of his hold on power. But he knows Labour the second biggest party after Likud supports his policy of building the security fence and disengaging from the Palestinian territories, and is unlikely to bring the government down over the budget.

"If we topple him it's an election and there's no disengagement," says Labour whip Isaac Herzog, the son of former Israeli president Chaim Herzog. "We have to weigh the national interest."

Bipartisan support for the fence and disengagement reflects a change in Israeli psychology after the bitter experience of the intifada. Israelis are hopeful but coolly realistic about the prospects for peace after the death of the man they accuse of abandoning the Camp David peace talks of 2000 to seek a better deal by violence and terrorism.

Palestinians also see renewed hope and are wasting no time in moving on from Arafat. Two Saturdays ago in the evening, barely a week after Arafat's funeral, his gravesite in his compound in the West Bank town of Ramallah was deserted apart from half-a-dozen armed guards and nine Australian journalists and diplomats, who outnumbered Palestinian civilians three to one. At the time, the streets of Ramallah teemed with people. "You won't see people at his grave," says Ehud Ya'ari, a leading Israeli commentator on Middle East affairs.

Middle of the road map

The message from Palestinian Legislative Council members Hanan Ashrawi and Hassan Khureishe and Foreign Minister Nabil Shaath is that the supreme powers of Arafat as head of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation, its dominant Fatah movement and the PA are being divided among several people.

"It's the end of the era of larger-than-life individuals," Ashrawi says. "He is being replaced by such mundane things as functioning, efficient institutions and the rule of law. It's not so dramatic but for us we want to move on to nation building."

"We are not going to fall apart. There is not going to be a civil war. We are not a collection of tribes."

Before nation building comes elections, on January 9 for the chairmanship of the PA and later next year for the Palestinian Legislative Council. For the elections to produce legitimate leaders, Palestinians say, they need freedom of movement in the West Bank and Gaza, a relaxation of the Israeli military presence and freedom for the Palestinians of East Jerusalem to vote.

This is in both sides' interests, Ashrawi adds. "When people live in relative ease and are able to live and think and have political distance, then they can think more rationally and elect more moderate people. So we hope there'll be a mutual cessation of hostilities."

Support from the international community, including election observers, money and help with security, is also needed, says Shaath. "If we have free and successful elections, we'll bring on a new generation of leaders and we'll produce a new order interested in peace and democracy and progress," he adds. "The big majority of Palestinians believe it's time to get back to the peace process and that the suicide bombings need to stop."

If only it were that easy, say Israelis. After the bitterness of the past four years, which have brought the deaths of more than 1000 Israelis in Palestinian attacks and more than 3000 Palestinians as a result of Israel's reprisals, words will have to be matched by deeds if Israel is to make the sorts of concessions sought by Palestinians and much of the outside world.

The Sharon government is willing, even eager, to go along with the view that Arafat's death presents a "window of opportunity" to end the conflict and give peaceful co-existence a chance. The government is keen to talk peace again if acceptable new Palestinian leaders emerge. But it sees Iran, with its nuclear ambitions and dedication to the destruction of Israel, and Iraq as its real threats, and is taking out insurance by going ahead with the security fence which has sharply reduced suicide bombings and its policy of disengagement.

"We have a lot of sympathy for what's going on in the Palestinian camps but there's a limit," says Isaac Herzog. "We can not justify the suffering we have seen or the phenomenon of suicide bombings. The real tragedy, the result of this war, [is that it] has led to another generation of Palestinians willing to do acts of terror. They brought this suffering on themselves."

Barghouti's candidacy is a spanner in the works. One of the new generation of leaders, he supported the Oslo peace process, negotiated a short-lived truce with Hamas from his prison cell during Abbas's brief and turbulent prime ministership under Arafat last year, and is reportedly committed to a negotiated peace. But he also turned to violence during the intifada, and he became the second most popular Palestinian leader after Arafat after his arrest for murder.

Barghouti is the only Palestinian leader with "real authority", says Ehud Ya'ari. But it would be near impossible for any Israeli government to convince its people of the wisdom of negotiating with Barghouti if he were elected. The question is how much support he can get without Fatah's endorsement. "We want a president who is free, not a president who is in jail," says Khureishe.

Still, there is movement. The Israeli government views the arrangements for Arafat's funeral for which some travel restrictions were lifted and Israeli soldiers melted into the background and allowed Palestinian security forces to carry arms again as a success. It is willing to consider similar concessions to give the elections every chance of

Middle of the road map

succeeding too, including increased freedom of movement and allowing Palestinians in East Jerusalem to vote "absentee".

What Israelis on all sides of politics are not willing to do is compromise their own hard-won security. Nor are they willing to meet Palestinian demands to leapfrog the first two stages of the road map for peace and go straight to final status talks on contentious issues such as shared sovereignty over East Jerusalem and refugees' right of return.

First, they will require the new PA leadership likely but not certain to be led by Abbas (also known as Abu Mazen) as chairman and current prime minister Ahmed Qureia (Abu Ala) to end the incitement to hatred of, and violence against, Jews in the official PA media and education system. Itamar Marcus, director of Palestinian Media Watch in Jerusalem, recounts dozens of cases of incitement. They include a children's soccer tournament named after the perpetrator of the 2002 Passover massacre in which 31 Israelis were killed, a summer camp named after the first **female** suicide bomber, newspaper reports insinuating that Israelis caused Arafat's death and roof-raising sermons by religious leaders describing Jews as "parasitic worms" and quoting out-of-context Koranic exhortations to kill Jews.

This culture makes many Israelis pessimistic about the prospects for peace in the short term. "To talk about free and fair elections and a new openness is bogus," says Arnold Roth, an Israeli high-tech entrepreneur and lawyer from Melbourne whose 15-year-old daughter was killed by a suicide bomber three years ago. "I think it's inevitable there'll be peace because of the essential goodness of the people but there are big things to overcome." These include not just the education system and media but the "hopelessly corrupt" old guard leadership.

Another fear is that the Iranian-backed Hezbollah terrorist movement has not only taken over southern Lebanon but is forming closer links with **Hamas**, the indigenous Palestinian terrorist group based in Gaza.

Ehud Ya'ari says **Hamas** has more popular support than the old guard concedes, and pointing to a suicide bombing attempt on the Gaza border a day earlier predicts any commitment to a ceasefire will be tactical. He doubts Abbas can bring groups willing to resort to violence under his control, as Egypt's legendary leader Anwar Sadat did in the 1970s before making peace with Israel: "Can he do it? If he does have some grains of the courage and skills of Sadat, we have not seen it. I hope I am wrong."

Graphic

PHOTO: Fadwa Barghouti (centre) has registered her husband Marwan (background) to run for power. Photo: REUTERS

Load-Date: April 5, 2012

01.08.05

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

August 1, 2005 Monday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; Stay in Touch; Pg. 16

Length: 440 words

Body

News

Evacuation of the CBD and extra powers and resources for police will be part of a counter-terrorism package handed to the new premier. Page 1

Early last week, Rupert Murdoch sided with his American deputy, Peter Chernin, against his eldest son, Lachlan. On Friday, Lachlan resigned. Pages 2, 17

Sydney's water supply will be at risk if BHP Billiton begins underground mining near the upper Nepean and Cataract rivers, opponents warn. Page 3

The new premier is planning to keep cabinet changes to a minimum despite frenetic jostling by his factional colleagues for ministerial promotions. Page 4

The Ombudsman will investigate the large number of people being killed during high-speed police pursuits in NSW compared with other states. Page 5

World

The men suspected of trying to explode bombs in London on July 21 were driven by anger over the Iraq war, not religion, one has reportedly said. Page 6

Australian researchers are developing surveillance systems for public transport, capable of recognising suspicious behaviour to combat terrorism. Page 6

Uzbekistan has asked the US to withdraw from an air base backing its troops in Afghanistan, as China and Russia try to regain influence. Page 7

Oxford University's Rhodes Scholarship is embroiled in a dispute over the now unfashionable wishes of its founder, Cecil John Rhodes. Page 7

The Culture

The tenor Rhys Meirion is an animated storyteller who offers tantalising morsels about the opera world and some of its more notorious directors. Page 11

01.08.05

Business

Qantas has marked the 10th anniversary of its privatisation with its most provocative warning to unions yet that it will need to slash costs. Page 17

Natural gas reserves in the mature Cooper Basin fields have been declining faster than expected, causing headaches for producers and customers. Page 19

Sport

Angry Manly coach Des Hasler confronted referee Steve Clark in the dressing rooms after a last-minute loss to North Queensland. Liftout, page 2

Even Australia's darlings of the pool have been usurped by the new women's team and their victory in the 4x100 metres medley relay. Liftout, page 6

Opinion

The search for alien life on Earth

The vast majority of species are invisible microbes. Under a microscope, most appear similar. You couldn't tell by looking whether they were aliens. Paul Davies, Page 9

Mr Sharon's great gamble in Gaza

The greater danger is that Hamas or other Palestinian militants will launch rocket assaults on Israeli forces to show that the evacuations are a victory for the armed Palestinian resistance. Page 8

The Herald welcomes feedback, including information about errors: readerlink@smh.com.au or fax 9282 3253

Load-Date: July 17, 2007

WHO ARE YOU TRYING TO KID?

The Sun
July 10, 2004

Copyright 2004 NEWS GROUP NEWSPAPERS LTD

Length: 366 words

Byline: Clodagh Hartley and David Wooding

Body

I'm nice, rants cleric

HATE-filled cleric Yusuf al-Qaradawi tried to con Britain yesterday -by saying he's a good guy.

He accused his critics of mounting a smear campaign as he preached to 3,000 British Muslims.

Aware that undercover cops in the crowd were hearing every word, he insisted he was a man of peace and reason.

The sheik's translator claimed later: "He has only ever said two things -that you must worship God and that you have to be good to your fellow human beings."

But the sham was exposed last night after we dug up his vile teachings dating back SEVEN years.

The poisonous preacher has urged his followers to kill Jews, beat their wives - and even conquer Europe.

But yesterday Al-Qaradawi tried to paint a different picture before worshippers at the Central London Mosque.

He slammed the "venomous" portrayal of his beliefs and blamed The Sun for the uproar over his visit.

He said: "Have those who who have entered into this attack ever read my works?"

Outside the mosque angry young Muslims shouted abuse at journalists for "distorting the truth".

But we have read every word he has written -and we have distorted nothing.

He has ranted: "Islam will return to Europe as a conqueror". And in a sermon in Doha in March 2003, Al-Qaradawi said: "O God, destroy the Zionist, the American and the British aggressors."

He claimed suicide bombings were justified, whether against US troops in Iraq or women and children in Israel.

Days after the bomb attack in Bali 18 months ago, he said: "Islam does agree to such acts."

Al-Qaradawi claimed in a sermon on Qatar TV that Hamas terrorists "are the mouthpiece of the Islamic nation all over the world".

He has said: "If an innocent child is killed as a result of Jihad, it was not intended, but due to the necessities of war."

WHO ARE YOU TRYING TO KID?

He wrote that a husband is justified in beating his wife to maintain order in his home.

On his Shari'a And Life programme of October 5, 1997, Al-Qaradawi said: "Beating is permitted when the wife rebels against her husband."

But yesterday he toned down his rantings after Home Secretary David Blunkett warned he would hear every word.

Al-Qaradawi left with his head down in a silver Mercedes with tinted windows.

Load-Date: July 11, 2004

End of Document

World - Palestinians mark pullout;

Morning Star

September 13, 2005

Copyright 2005 People's Press Printing Society Ltd

Length: 443 words

Body

Joyful Palestinians flooded into empty Israeli settlements and climbed over walls into Egypt yesterday in a chaotic celebration of the end of Israeli military rule in the Gaza Strip.

Plans by Palestinian police to bar crowds from entering the settlements quickly disintegrated.

Resistance fighters hoisted flags, fired wildly into the air and set abandoned synagogues ablaze.

Egyptian border guards shot and killed a Palestinian along the Gaza-Egypt border and three Palestinians drowned off the Gaza coast.

Among those crossing the Egyptian border were purported members of radical Islamist group **Hamas**, who waved the group's green flag on Egyptian territory.

Egyptian security officials said that they had allowed the crossings to take place as a "humanitarian" gesture to families who had been separated for years.

The officials also suggested that the free, unchecked crossings would be short lived as Egypt deploys 750 heavily armed troops to secure its border with Gaza.

The last column of Israeli tanks rumbled out of Gaza just before sunrise. Troops locked a metal gate and hoisted their flag on the Israeli side of the border.

As soldiers poured out of Gaza throughout the night, jubilant Palestinians rushed into the abandoned settlements, turning the night sky orange as fires blazed.

Women shrieked in joy, teenagers set off fireworks and crowds chanted "God is great."

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas told his people that there is still a "long road" to statehood, but he said the day was one for joy.

"Today, our people have the right to celebrate their freedom, their dignity. This place was a taboo for us for the past 38 years and now we are standing here," Mr Abbas said during a tour of the Elei Sinai settlement in northern Gaza.

By midday, the situation calmed as feelings of new-found freedom began to sink in.

World - Palestinians mark pullout;

Roads were clogged with motorists on their way to the beaches, which were largely closed to Palestinians during Israeli rule.

Palestinians note that Israel's occupation of Gaza has not ended because it retains control over its borders and airspace.

Police stood by helplessly early yesterday as resistance fighter raised flags of militant groups in the abandoned settlements and crowds smashed what was left in the ruins or walked off with doors, window frames, toilets and scrap metal.

Palestinians set fire to empty synagogues in the Morag, Kfar Darom and Netzarim settlements, as well as a Jewish seminary in Neve Dekalim.

Later, a Palestinian bulldozer began knocking down the walls of the Netzarim synagogue.

Israeli Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom asserted that the burning of the synagogues had been "a barbaric act."

Load-Date: September 13, 2005

End of Document

Time for the truth about this sinister brotherhood

The Times (London)

August 11, 2004, Wednesday

Copyright 2004 Times Newspapers Limited

Section: Features; 16

Length: 957 words

Byline: Anthony Browne

Body

The Left's love affair with the Muslim Association hides a frightening agenda.

WHAT SORT of mind could believe that the Holocaust, the industrialised murder of six million civilians, was an act of God to punish Jews? And what sort of people would promote him?

Sayyid Qutb, an Egyptian scholar, wrote in his essay *Our struggle with the Jews* that Jews have been punished for their "unprecedented abominations", but "then the Jews again returned to evildoing and consequently Allah sent against them others of His servants, until the modern period. Then Allah sent Hitler to rule over them."

Qutb, born in 1906, dedicated his life to making the world a fundamentalist Islamic state, and is seen as the spiritual inspiration of al-Qaeda. He is also promoted by the Muslim Association of Britain (MAB), our most active Islamic political group. The MAB has on its website a glowing account of Qutb's life, concluding that he died smiling "showing his conviction of the beautiful life to come in paradise -a life he definitely and rightfully deserved".

The MAB says that it is opposed to anti-Semitism, but this is as convincing as the British National Party's saying it is opposed to racism. The MAB published an article calling Jews "vampires", claiming that it was written by Benjamin Franklin; in fact it was a forgery. The MAB's high-profile spokesman, Azzam Tamimi, a Palestinian academic, wrote: "If they want to be as human as anybody else, Jews must wake up before it is too late."

On its website, MAB has equated Israel with Nazi Germany. The Internet Watch Foundation (a partnership between the Government and service providers) has referred the website -along with that of the BNP -to the Home Office for containing allegedly criminally racist material.

The MAB was founded in 1997 by Kamal el-Helbawy, then the London-based spokesman in Europe for the Muslim Brotherhood, a pro-terrorism group that has been largely responsible for the rise of militant Islam in recent decades, and claims to have taken part in most pro-Islamic conflicts including Afghanistan and Kashmir. The brotherhood's objective is: "Mastering the World with Islam", and its motto concludes: "Dying in the way of Allah is our highest hope." Anas al-Tikriti, a past president of the MAB, is the son of Osama al-Tikriti, the leader of the Muslim Brotherhood in Iraq.

It has branches in 70 countries, often under different names. In Palestine it is **Hamas**, which pioneered the use of suicide bombers, and whose aim is to destroy Israel. **Hamas** is banned as a terrorist organisation in both the UK and the US, but Dr Tamimi has said he not only supports it, but has also advised it on its public relations strategy.

Time for the truth about this sinister brotherhood

The MAB was more than just founded by the Muslim Brotherhood's European spokesman, according to the Labour MP Louise Ellman, who told Parliament last year: "The Muslim Association of Britain itself is a branch of the Muslim Brotherhood."

Ahmed Sheikh, MAB's president, says they are "not ashamed" to admit that they share some of the teachings of the Muslim Brotherhood, but insists: "We have no link with any international organisation outside this country."

It was the MAB that invited the controversial cleric Dr Yusuf al-Qaradawi, the Muslim Brotherhood's spiritual leader, to London last month. Dr al-Qaradawi is editor-in-chief of Islamonline.net, which insists that it is the duty of Muslims to "achieve supremacy on earth and put their enemies to rout" and "the means for doing so is taking up arms in addition to preparation, financing and planning strategies".

The MAB says it wants to help Muslims to integrate in the West, but it doesn't believe in liberal democracy. Dr Tamimi wrote this month in a Lebanese newspaper that it is "a futile effort to try and reformulate Islam in order to espouse liberalism; this would simply be the end of Islam as a divine revelation". Dr Tamimi, who shocked a Cambridge University debate by saying that many Arab women ask for domestic violence, insisted that the punishment for thieves must be amputation because the Koran "tells us in the clearest possible terms faqtaw aydiyahuma (cut off their hands)".

THE MAB rose to national prominence in co-organising the Stop the War Coalition, and launched the pro-hijab campaign to oppose the banning of the Islamic veil in schools. Many leftwingers have joined the campaign on the ground of women's right to choose, even though they are joining forces with Dr al-Qaradawi, who insists women must be forced to wear the hijab.

Like the BNP, the MAB presents a moderate face to hide its extremism. Just as the BNP says it represents mainstream Britain, MAB says it represents mainstream British Muslims. But there the similarity ends. Unlike the BNP, which is rightly tackled at every turn, the MAB is uncritically accepted by the liberal Left, including the BBC, The Guardian and The Independent.

When I debated on the BBC with MAB last week, I briefed the producer on MAB, but I was told not to bring it up. When I did the presenter silenced me.

The liberal Left need to ask themselves what they hope to achieve by giving such uncritical support to Islamic extremism. They may believe, in their naivety, that they are helping to combat Islamophobia, which is indeed a real problem. But instead they are encouraging it. The hijacking of legitimate Muslim political activity by extremists will not reduce community tensions in Britain, but exacerbate them.

Islam has contributed a lot to the world, Britain's Muslim community has contributed a lot to Britain and Muslims should definitely get involved politically. But the rise of Islamic extremism in the UK is one of the biggest challenges Britain faces, and it is Britain's moderate Muslims who have most to lose.

Correction

See letter in response, 'The Muslim Association of Britain, from Anas Altikriti, August 17, p17.

Load-Date: August 25, 2004

14 firefighters die tackling blaze

Western Morning News (Plymouth)

July 18, 2005

Default Edition

© Copyright 2005 Western Morning News

Section: News; Other; Others; Pg. 31

Length: 437 words

Body

At least 14 firefighters died yesterday while trying to control a forest blaze that destroyed about 5,000 hectares (12,000 acres) of woodland and forced hundreds of people to evacuate their villages in drought-stricken Spain, an Interior Ministry spokesman said. The 14 went out in two groups to try to bring the fire under control in the central province of Guadalajara, the spokesman said. The fire began on Saturday afternoon in the Cueva de los Casares natural park. It was still raging out of control last night. Leader's appeal PALESTINIAN leader Mahmoud Abbas appealed to militant groups to halt their attacks on Israel and recommit themselves to a Middle East ceasefire left in tatters by a wave of violence over the past week. Meanwhile, Israeli troops massed outside Gaza as Hamas militants in the coastal strip launched mortar shells and home-made rockets at Israeli targets for the third straight day. Abbas said the ceasefire agreement was in the best interest of the Palestinians.

Woman accomplice AN AUSTRALIAN serving a life sentence for murdering seven young backpackers, including two British women, was helped by a woman accomplice who was never charged, his lawyer has claimed. Ivan Milat killed the travellers - three Germans, the two Britons and two Australians - between 1989 and 1992. Their bodies were later found in shallow graves in a forest south west of Sydney.

Companies sued RELATIVES of two US Navy sailors killed in a helicopter crash two years ago are suing the companies that built the aircraft, accusing them of negligence. The lawsuits against United Technologies, its subsidiary Sikorsky Aircraft, and General Electric, each seek £5.5 million in damages. Lt Peter Ober, 27, of Jacksonville, Florida, and Samuel Cox, 21, an aviation electrician's mate from Kansas City, Missouri, were aboard a MH-53E Sea Dragon helicopter that went down near the Navy base at Sigonella, Italy, in July 2003.

Tribal leader hanged SUSPECTED Taliban gunmen kidnapped and hanged a pro-government tribal leader in southern Afghanistan, in the latest killing of an ally of President Hamid Karzai. Agha Jan was kidnapped along with his two sons, a brother and two nephews from his home in the Ataghar district of southern Zabul province on Thursday, said local police chief Gul Habib Jan. Agha Jan's relatives were freed unharmed but the tribal chief's body was found on Friday.

Pilots strike PILOTS at Asiana Airlines, South Korea's second-largest carrier, began a full-scale strike yesterday after negotiations with management failed. The airline says it expects no flight disruptions in the first few days.

Load-Date: July 19, 2005

14 firefighters die tackling blaze

End of Document

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Western Morning News (Plymouth)

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Section: News; Other; Others; Pg. 31

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Load-Date: July 19, 2005

14 firefighters die tackling blaze

End of Document

**Israeli troops tread lightly in Gaza They help some pack, clash with others as
eviction notices go out**

St. Louis Post-Dispatch (Missouri)

August 16, 2005 Tuesday

FIVE STAR LATE LIFT EDITION

Copyright 2005 St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Inc.

Section: NEWS; Pg. A1

Length: 909 words

Byline: By AMY TEIBEL The Associated Press

Dateline: NEVE DEKALIM, GAZA STRIP

Body

On the first day of Israel's Gaza pullout, soldiers handed out eviction notices to sobbing Jewish settlers and helped some pack. But troops also scuffled with protesters who barricaded their communities with burning tires and locked arms.

Army commanders took pains to avoid serious clashes and refrained from forcing their way into settlements where opposition was heavy -- a display of sensitivity before unleashing the military's muscle to forcibly remove holdouts starting Wednesday.

"Your pain and your tears are an inseparable part of this country's history," Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon told settlers during a nationally televised address, in which he called the pullout a painful but essential step for Israel's future.

He said previously that it had become too hard to defend the Gaza settlements and their 8,500 residents in an overcrowded area of 1.3 million Palestinians, and that the presence of so many Arabs under Israeli control was threatening the Jewish character of the state.

Sharon has repeatedly said the withdrawal is designed to allow Israel to hold on to all of Jerusalem and major parts of the West Bank -- a position that raises questions about the prospects for peace because the Palestinians claim those areas for a state.

Nevertheless, Palestinians celebrated the beginning of the end of the 38-year occupation of the Gaza Strip, and militant factions competed for credit for expelling the Israelis with their violent five-year uprising.

In his speech, Sharon urged Palestinian leaders to control extremists. "To an outstretched hand of peace we will respond with an olive branch, but fire will be met by fire more intense than ever," he said.

Sharon spent most of his career as a champion of Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Gaza, saying just two years ago that Israel would not give up even small, isolated Gaza settlements.

Israeli troops tread lightly in Gaza They help some pack, clash with others as eviction notices go out

"But the changing reality in the nation, region and world made me change my mind and change my position," he said. "We cannot hold Gaza for good. More than a million Palestinians live there, doubling their numbers every generation."

Over the next three weeks, Israel plans to dismantle all 21 Jewish settlements in Gaza and four small ones in the West Bank. The withdrawal marks the first time Israel will give up land captured during the 1967 Mideast War that is claimed by the Palestinians for a future state.

Monday was the first day of a 48-hour grace period during which settlers can leave voluntarily without losing any of their government compensation. It became illegal for Israelis to live in Gaza at midnight Sunday, and on Wednesday troops will begin dragging out any settlers still there.

Eviction notices were distributed in about two-thirds of the settlements to be evacuated, police said.

Officials said two West Bank settlements scheduled for evacuation -- Ganim and Kadim, with about 170 residents each -- had already been evacuated. By Monday night, hundreds of settlers had left Gaza or were preparing to do so, though exact numbers were not known. One senior official, Eival Giladi, predicted that half of Gaza's settlers would be out by Wednesday's deadline.

Complicating the army's mission, about 5,000 pullout opponents from outside Gaza came to the coastal area in recent weeks and promised to resist.

Throughout the Gaza settlements Monday, soldiers trudged through temperatures above 100 degrees to distribute leaflets or slide them under closed doors, warning settlers that they had until midnight today to leave voluntarily.

About 200 families accepted the army's help to load their belongings into trucks and move out immediately.

"We don't have any more tears left," Michal Yahieli said while packing her belongings in Neve Dekalim.

Protesters burned tires -- a protest tactic often used by Palestinians -- in the industrial zone of Neve Dekalim, Gaza's largest settlement with 2,700 residents.

Angry settlers at Neve Dekalim heckled the Gaza military commander, Maj. Gen. Dan Harel, and police escorted him away. The army chief of staff, Lt. Gen. Dan Halutz, met similar outbursts and had to be hustled away.

But in most places encounters were less hostile. Soldiers, both women and men, comforted and hugged civilians who broke down when it came time for them to go.

Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas said he was filled with hope but insisted that Israel must hand over more land.

Many Palestinians are wary of Israel's intentions, especially if it retains control of Gaza's borders and the territory's access to air and sea travel.

"It's great they are getting out, but I am getting a bad feeling that we will remain under their control," said Jihad Safi, 37, the owner of a clothing store in the Palestinian town of Khan Younis, which overlooks the Morag settlement.

There have been worries that militants would attack Israelis during the pullout to make it look like a retreat. But with ordinary Palestinians looking for positive changes out of the withdrawal, the extremist groups might refrain from major violence.

Hamas spokesman Sami Abu Zuhri said the group would hold its fire.

"Hamas is committed to the quiet," he said. "The ball is on the Israeli side now. If they will evacuate the Gaza Strip quietly, I think that there is no one among our people who will obstruct or violate this evacuation."

Israeli troops tread lightly in Gaza They help some pack, clash with others as eviction notices go out

STLtoday.com Talk about the withdrawal from Gaza in our Current Affairs forum, online at STLtoday.com/current, and keep up with the latest developments at STLtoday.com.

Notes

"YOUR PAIN AND YOUR TEARS ARE INSEPARABLE PART OF THIS COUNTRY'S HISTORY." FOCUS ON THE MIDDLE EAST

Graphic

PHOTO

PHOTO by ARIEL JEROSOLIMSKI / THE ASSOCIATED PRESS - A Jewish settler confronts an Israeli army officer Monday in the Gaza Strip settlement of Morag. Many settlers locked the gates to their communities, formed human chains and burned tires to block troops from delivering eviction notices. PHOTO BY TSAFRIR ABAYOV / THE ASSOCIATED PRESS - A woman comforts her daughter Monday as army officers remove the seats of a synagogue in the settlement of Nissanit in the northern Gaza Strip. Soldiers and police joined residents in dismantling the synagogue. PHOTO BY ODED BALILTY / THE ASSOCIATED PRESS - Settlers cling to the gate of the Neve Dekalim settlement as they try to prevent Israeli security officers from entering Monday. Neve Dekalim is Gaza's largest settlement, with 2,700 residents.

Load-Date: August 17, 2005

Fighting rages in Gaza Strip: 3 dead, homes razed as troops seek dead comrades

Windsor Star (Ontario)

May 15, 2004 Saturday Final Edition

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Section: News; Pg. D2; News

Length: 352 words

Byline: Tamer Ziara

Dateline: RAFAH, GAZA STRIP

Body

RAFAH, GAZA STRIP -- Heavy fighting was reported in this refugee camp Friday, killing two Israeli soldiers and a Palestinian man and trapping frightened residents in their homes, the army and witnesses said.

Troops seized several houses and army bulldozers knocked down at least nine buildings on the edge of the camp, trying to secure the area for soldiers searching for the remains of five others killed there in a blast earlier in the week.

Military officials said that once this search was over, the army could launch a wide-scale move to expand a military patrol road between the camp and the Egyptian border -- a move that would see hundreds of houses in Rafah flattened.

The Associated Press

During Friday clashes, gunmen moved through the narrow alleys of the camp, firing homemade rockets and rifles at the troops.

The Israelis responded with missiles launched from helicopter gunships and heavy machine-gun fire.

One soldier was shot as he escorted a Palestinian women out of a house troops had commandeered, the army said. A force who tried to evacuate him were hit by sniper fire that killed another soldier and wounded two others, the army said.

Helicopters airlifted the wounded soldiers to hospital in Israel.

The militant Islamic group Hamas claimed responsibility for the shooting and said they would release footage of the attack.

On the Palestinian side, one man was killed in a missile strike and a second died when an explosive device blew up prematurely. Eight Palestinians were wounded, two seriously.

Residents were trapped in their homes by the heavy fighting. Hisham Mohammed, 35, said he was stuck on the third floor of his apartment building and the rest of his family on the ground floor. "I am not able to go downstairs because bullets tore a big gap in the wall near the stairs," he said.

Fighting rages in Gaza Strip: 3 dead, homes razed as troops seek dead comrades

Local officials in Rafah said bulldozers tore down nine homes Friday close to the patrol road that runs between Rafah and the Egyptian border.

On that road, an armoured personnel carrier transporting a tonne of explosives was blown up by a homemade rocket Wednesday, killing five soldiers

Graphic

Colour Photo: Nasser Nasser, AP photo; SITTING AMONG THE RUINS: Palestinian Mohammed Abu Daher sits at his family's demolished house in the West Bank town of Ramallah. The Israeli army demolished the family house of Palestinian prisoner Raed Abu Daher in Israel early Friday.

Load-Date: May 15, 2004

End of Document

**Mideast PR move backfires as;
First Lady met by jeers**

Northern Territory News (Australia)

May 24, 2005 Tuesday

Copyright 2005 Nationwide News Pty Limited

Section: WORLD; Pg. 10

Length: 411 words

Byline: By JOEL GREENBERG in Jerusalem

Body

On a goodwill mission to the Middle East, US First Lady Laura Bush was met by protesters yesterday as she visited shrines in Jerusalem sacred to Muslims and Jews.

The groups of protesters were small, held back by a cordon of guards, but their shouts were a reminder of the cauldron into which Mrs Bush has ventured.

Near the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem's Old City, about two dozen Palestinians gathered around Mrs Bush's entourage, and one shouted in English: "How dare you come in here. Why your husband kill Muslims?" wire

Others in the group shouted in Arabic "Get out" a witness said, identifying the hecklers as members of Hizb ut-Tahrir al-Islami, a radical Islamist supremecist group.

Mrs Bush's visit to the Middle East is intended to help defuse anti-American sentiment inflamed by a Newsweek magazine report, now retracted, that US interrogators at Guantanamo Bay flushed a copy of the Koran down a toilet.

The protests were the first she had encountered on her five-day visit to the region.

Wearing a black headscarf in deference to Muslim tradition, Mrs Bush went to ground zero of the conflict here, the Dome of the Rock, sacred to Jews, and the Al-Aqsa Mosque, the third-holiest shrine in Islam.

The area is known to Jews as the Temple Mount, the site of the first Jewish temple, built by King Solomon and of the second temple, destroyed by the Romans in 70AD.

The contested area has been the site of deadly clashes and is carefully guarded.

Taking off her shoes in keeping with Muslim custom, Mrs Bush toured the gilded Dome of the Rock, built over the rock where Muslims believe the Prophet Mohammed ascended to heaven.

The terrorist group ***Hamas*** called the visit a public relations exercise. "We ... see in the visit of Mrs Bush an attempt to whitewash the face of the US after the crimes that the American interrogators committed when they desecrated the Koran," a statement on their website said.

Mideast PR move backfires as; First Lady met by jeers

On her tour, Mrs Bush met with prominent Israeli women, and visited Yad Vashem, Israel's Holocaust memorial, where she laid a wreath.

In the West Bank town of Jericho, she met leading Palestinian women, including Hanan Ashrawi, a well-known advocate of the Palestinian cause.

Echoing her husband's vision of a peace settlement, Mrs Bush said: "The chance we have right now to have peace, to have a Palestinian state living by a secure and safe Israel, both living in democracy, is as close we have been in a long time.

"... The US will do what they can in this process."

Load-Date: May 23, 2005

End of Document

Gaza violence breaks out as Israel publishes prisoner list

Prince George Citizen (British Columbia)

May 31, 2005 Tuesday

Final Edition

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 15

Length: 446 words

Byline: Associated Press

Dateline: GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip

Body

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip (AP) -- An Israeli aircraft fired missiles near a Palestinian refugee camp Monday, destroying two rocket launchers and wounding three people, while Israel published a list of 400 Palestinian prisoners to be released later this week.

The prisoner release, which was set for Thursday, is part of a February ceasefire agreement, but has been repeatedly delayed.

Israel's foreign minister, meanwhile, said Prime Minister Ariel Sharon plans to meet with Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas soon in Jerusalem to co-ordinate security in the Gaza Strip after Israel has withdrawn from the area.

Israeli Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom gave no date for the Sharon-Abbas meeting, which would be the first since the two met at a Feb. 8 summit in the Egyptian Red Sea resort of Sharm-el-Sheikh that produced the truce.

Israel is trying to work out security concerns with the Palestinians in order to make sure the Gaza Strip does not come under the sway of **Hamas** or other militant groups, Shalom said outside a European-Mideast conference in Luxembourg.

Israel plans to begin withdrawing from Gaza and parts of the West Bank in mid-August.

The army said it carried out the air strike as militants were preparing to fire rockets or mortar shells from northern Gaza. It said two launchers were destroyed, but militants preparing the attack left the scene before the strike.

Hospital officials said a man and two **women**, apparently bystanders, were wounded by shrapnel.

Islamic Jihad, a militant group, said one of its cells, which minutes earlier had fired three rockets at an Israeli village just outside Gaza, was the target of the air strike.

During more than four years of fighting, Israel carried out dozens of air strikes on militant targets in Gaza. But violence has dropped dramatically since the ceasefire went into effect, although fighting has begun to flare up in recent weeks.

Gaza violence breaks out as Israel publishes prisoner list

Israel published a list of the Palestinian prisoners to be released on Thursday, which included 93 detainees serving terms of five years or more on charges including attempted shootings, the preparation of explosives and assisting attempted murder.

In the past, Israel has refused to release prisoners who have not served two-thirds of their terms, but the list published Monday included several who have completed only a small fraction of their sentences.

The list was published on a government website to give Israeli opponents a chance to appeal to courts. In the past, such appeals have delayed release of some prisoners.

Israel had insisted that first, Abbas' Palestinian Authority must disarm militants and halt all violence before Israel continues steps agreed to under the February truce.

Graphic

Photo: (Ariel) Sharon ;

Load-Date: February 17, 2006

End of Document

**13-year-old dazzles Gaza worshippers;
Devotion, not division, is his text**

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

July 28, 2005 Thursday

Home Edition

Copyright 2005 The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

**The Atlanta
Journal-Constitution**

Section: News;

Length: 981 words

Byline: CRAIG NELSON

Body

Gaza City, Gaza Strip --- At first glance, it would be hard to take Amjad Abu Sido for a celebrity. But the 13-year-old, pimply-nosed Amjad is a phenom, the hottest thing going in the Gaza Strip's preaching circuit.

With his commanding stage presence and mastery of the Muslim holy book, the Quran, Amjad is captivating crowds of young and old alike at mosques and meeting halls across this mostly Palestinian enclave.

"He makes me want to study the Quran so that perhaps one day I can be like him," gushed Mohammed Arafa, 13.

Arafa was one of scores of worshippers who lingered after Amjad's latest sermon at the al-Qaqa Mosque to catch a glimpse of the 87-pound, 5-foot-tall preacher.

Amjad wowed the more than 800 listeners who had spilled out the doors and into the street to hear him. **Women** and girls, separated from male worshippers according to Muslim custom, wept.

Elders applaud influence

The youthful enthusiasm gladdens older Gazans, who say Palestinian youths crave something fresh after four years of intense violence, and Israeli military occupation for as long as they can remember. Last year, a study of 1,000 young Gazans between the ages of 10 and 19 showed that 97.5 percent were suffering from post-traumatic stress syndrome. The study, carried out by Dr. Iyad Saraj, director of the Gaza Community Mental Health Program, also found that 94.6 percent of the children had attended a funeral and 61.6 percent had seen a relative killed or wounded.

"It has been a tough time, and Amjad's a sign of hope for the future," said Ayman Anraty, 24, a calligrapher in Gaza City.

13-year-old dazzles Gaza worshippers; Devotion, not division, is his text

His homilies, delivered without notes, are a well-crafted mixture of warnings ("If you don't cry, you don't fear God. A tearless eye is a sign of built-up sin"), platitudes ("Whenever life seems to close in on you, just repeat: 'There is no God but one God' ") and fire and brimstone ("Loving the profane and earthly life is the source of all sin").

In a recent sermon at a Gaza City mosque, Amjad reserved most of his wrath for a target that seems slightly incongruous, given both his age and a voice that still sounds more soprano than tenor: disobedient children.

"Shall I tell you of the gravest sins? Shall I mention worshipping other gods? Shall I mention bearing false witness? What about disobeying parents? Obeying parents is the same as obeying God."

Since delivering his first public address 18 months ago, Amjad has given 130 speeches to thousands of worshipers in some 40 mosques across the Gaza Strip.

Not surprisingly, in the battle for popularity among Gaza's religious and political factions, Amjad has become a sought-after commodity, especially as an enticement to young Gazans to embrace the faith.

The Palestinian Authority's Ministry of Religion operates the madrasa, or Islamic school, where Amjad is a ninth-grader and has outfitted him with the \$150 suit he wears when he preaches. It also plans to put him on a \$200 monthly stipend starting next month and to organize a speaking tour abroad, according to the ministry's Dr. Nedal Esa.

Message noncontroversial

But Amjad often preaches to the fundamentalist faithful. As the posters inside and green flags on the lampposts outside attest, the al-Qaqa Mosque, where Amjad delivered his latest sermon, is in a district whose allegiance tilts heavily toward **Hamas**, the Islamic militant group that has called for the elimination of Israel and is wrestling with the Palestinian Authority for political control of the Gaza Strip.

In an interview in the sparsely furnished sitting room of a third-floor walk-up where he lives with his mother and 20-year-old brother (his father lives with a second wife a block away), Amjad denied any ties to **Hamas** or Islamic Jihad and condemned the intrusion of factional politics into the mosque.

Unlike some Muslim preachers in the Gaza Strip and West Bank, Amjad has not delivered the poisonous anti-Jewish, anti-Israel sermons that Israeli officials routinely condemn and Palestinian Authority officials have taken faltering steps to curb.

"I don't speak about politics. People are filled with politics. They're sick of politics. People need religion more than politics. Mosques were not built for politics and factions," he said, adding only that he hoped someday to preach at the al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem, Islam's third-holiest site, now under the control of Israel.

He prefers to deliver his message of Muslim unity and family values. And his grasp of the Quran is impressive; he recites verses with ease.

The Muslim scripture and its 114 chapters are especially important to Islam because it is a faith that insists on the impossibility of seeing or representing God. The words of the Quran, therefore, are the closest that most Muslims get to experiencing the divine. To hear them uttered by so fresh a face leaves the elderly in awe and the young vowing to emulate him.

"He's one-in-a-thousand, a divine, gift from God," said a worshiper, Ibrahim al-Batesh, 75.

Amjad does not yet enjoy the fame of Amr Khaled, an Egyptian-born former accountant who has become the most popular Muslim preacher in the Arab world by adopting the methods of Christian televangelists in the United States to spread his moderate message of personal piety.

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Nor does he have the influence of the Qatar-based Yusuf al-Qaradawi, a socially moderate, politically extreme sheik whose "Sharia and Life" program on the Al-Jazeera television network is avidly watched across the Middle East.

Amjad shies away from addressing the divisive issues of personal morality --- sex, alcohol, marriage, women's rights --- that preoccupy many young Muslims across the Arab world. He also says he wants nothing to do with controversial calls among some Muslims for a more open-minded approach to the Quran.

"Look, all I'm trying to do is plant hope and love," said the teenage preacher. "When I'm not doing that, I enjoy playing soccer and Ping-Pong."

Graphic

CRAIG NELSON / Staff Sido, who has preached 130 times in the past 18 months in 40 mosques across the Gaza Strip, accents platitudes and faithfulness to the Quran, not divisive politics or hatred of Israel. ; CRAIG NELSON / Staff Palestinian boys listen, fascinated, to the words of Amjad Abu Sido, at 13 not much older than they. Sido preaches in Gaza mosques.

Load-Date: July 28, 2005

End of Document

Women queue up to be suicide bombers

DAILY MAIL (London)

April 22, 2005

Copyright 2005 Associated Newspapers Ltd.

Section: ED_SC1; Pg. 29

Length: 445 words

Body

SCORES of women were among 400 Iranian volunteers who signed up for suicide attacks in 'occupied Islamic countries'.

As they queued in Tehran to enrol a hardline cleric told them 'martyrdom operations' were permissible as a weapon of war against modern armies.

'As a Muslim, it is my duty to sacrifice my life for oppressed Palestinian children,' said Maryam Partovi, a 31-year-old mother of two.

The registration session was the latest organised by a group called the Committee for the Commemoration of Martyrs of the Global Islamic Campaign, which claims to have enrolled 35,000 volunteers for possible attacks since last year.

Iran's pro-reform government insists it would not allow such attacks and no Iranians are thought to have blown themselves up in Israel or elsewhere in recent years.

But the presence of president Mohammad Khatami's adviser on women's affairs and a representative of supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei lent official backing to Wednesday's event.

The volunteers queued to fill out registration forms in a dark hall decorated with pictures of women Palestinian bombers.

A banner over the main entrance quoted Khamenei, saying: 'Sacrificing oneself for religion and national interest is the height of honour and bravery.' A decree by hardline cleric Grand Ayatollah Hossein Nouri-Hamedani's was read over a loudspeaker. It said: 'Any martyrdom-seeking operation is a holy war for God.' Videos of Israeli army attacks on Palestinians were shown on a wide screen. Books and CDs on the Palestinian uprising were also for sale.

Hamid, a 20-year-old student who lost his father in the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war, said he was ready to sacrifice his life. 'I want to kill Zionists and free my Palestinian brothers,' he declared.

Since its 1979 Islamic revolution, Iran has refused to recognise Israel and supports Palestinian terror groups such as Hamas.

'Our enemies are Zionists and other occupiers of Islamic countries,' Mohammad Samadi, spokesman for the group of volunteers, said.

Women queue up to be suicide bombers

'America is definitely considered an enemy.' Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon last night urged the world to put diplomatic pressure on Tehran to stop it developing nuclear weapons.

'I am troubled by the fact that the world is getting used to the notion of the day coming when Iran becomes a member of the nuclear weapons club,' he said.

Asked whether Israel might launch an air strike against Iran's nuclear program, Sharon said: 'I don't think Israel has to lead this struggle.

'This is the stage for economic and diplomatic pressures on Iran.' Iran has denied it is developing nuclear weapons, explaining that its reactors would be used for peaceful purposes.

Load-Date: April 27, 2005

End of Document

Unlikely hero in Gaza Strip: With his commanding stage presence and knowledge of the Islamic holy book on the Gaza's preaching circuit. Which is good news for parents (he preaches obedience) it's hard to think of Amjad Abu Sido as being just 13 years old. But he's the hottest thing and moderates (he thinks the mosques are places for religion, not politics)

The Gazette (Montreal)

July 10, 2005 Sunday

Final Edition

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Section: INSIGHT: GLOBAL VILLAGE; Pg. D4

Length: 965 words

Byline: CRAIG NELSON, Cox News Service

Dateline: GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip

Body

At first glance, it would be hard to mistake Amjad Abu Sido for a celebrity. But the 13-year-old, pimply-nosed Sido is a phenom, the hottest thing going in the Gaza Strip's preaching circuit.

With his commanding stage presence and mastery of the Muslim holy book, the Quran, Sido is captivating crowds of young and old at mosques and meeting halls across this mostly Palestinian enclave.

"He makes me want to study the Quran so that perhaps one day, I can be like him," gushed Mohammed Arafa, 13.

Arafa was one of the scores of worshippers who lingered after Sido's latest sermon at the al-Qaqa Mosque to catch a glimpse of the 87-pound, 5-foot-tall preacher.

Sido wowed the more than 800 listeners who had spilled out the doors and into the street to hear him. **Women** and girls, separated from male worshippers according to Muslim custom, wept.

The youthful fawning is music to the ears of older Gazans, who say Palestinian youth crave something fresh after four years of intense violence and Israeli military occupation for as long as they can remember.

Last year, a study of 1,000 young Gazans between the ages of 10 and 19 showed 97.5 per cent were suffering from post-traumatic stress syndrome. The study, carried out by Iyad Saraj, director of the Gaza Community Mental Health Program, also found 94.6 per cent of the children had attended a funeral and 61.6 per cent had seen a relative killed or wounded.

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Graphic

Colour Photo: COX NEWSPAPERS; Amjad Abu Sido (left) has given 130 speeches in about 40 mosques across Gaza in the past 18 months. Many of his peers want to be just like him.;

Colour Photo: COX NEWSPAPERS; Amjad Abu Sido is just 13, but he has a big ambition: He wants to preach in the al-Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem, Islam's third-holiest site.

Load-Date: July 10, 2005

Murder in the guise of honour

Ottawa Citizen

February 12, 2004 Thursday Final Edition

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Section: News; Pg. A19; Opinion

Length: 409 words

Body

Disgusting: The following commentary was published in the Feb. 9 edition of The New Republic.

Ideology is notoriously incapable of describing reality truthfully, which is why its career is regularly marked by disappointment; but sometimes the description is so false that it seems not so much a mistake as a wilful misrepresentation based on a dogma or a desire.

The recent history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has provided a textbook lesson in the confounding of progressivism by the particulars of history. How, after all, can the Palestinians, so hallowed on the left, allow their noble anti-Zionist cause, their magnificent road to statehood, to be advanced by such means as suicide bombing -- worse, by suicide bombing animated by the supremely regressive spirit of militant Islam?

The New Republic

This is not exactly what Fanon had in mind. But it gets worse. Consider the recent horror of Reem Salah Al Reyashi, the 22-year-old mother of two small children, who blew herself and four Israelis to bits at a border crossing in Gaza on Jan. 14. Is this how Palestinian women are supposed to discover their historical agency? (Hamas is turning increasingly to terrorist women because terrorist men are more easily spotted by the Israeli police.) Where is the wrath of the feminists?

Then the Israeli paper Yediot Aharonot reported that this twisted woman's action had nothing whatsoever to do with historical agency: She was forced to do the deed as penance for an extramarital affair.

Strictly speaking, those four Israelis died not in a suicide bombing but in an honour killing.

The details are breathtaking. The woman's lover strapped the bomb around her waist, and the woman's husband drove her to the scene. Her family did not set up the customary tent of mourning for her, since her religious and political glory was born of sexual and familial disgrace.

Her husband subsequently denied the story of his wife's adultery, praising her as "an honourable woman who sacrificed her life for the sake of Islam and Palestine." Oh, and as a good mother.

Who are these "activists" for whom adultery is more heinous than murder? Is such a mentality not as repulsive, not as much of an obstacle to peace, as an "outpost" on a hill near Nablus? But the progressives of the day, the peace-processors and the road-mappers, the diabolizers of Israel (or -- this is the more measured view -- of Ariel Sharon), have somehow managed to stifle their disgust.

Load-Date: February 12, 2004

Murder in the guise of honour

End of Document

***U.S.-Israeli link outrages Arabs;
Palestinians, Iraqis decry their 'occupiers'***

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

April 14, 2004 Wednesday

Home Edition

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**The Atlanta
Journal-Constitution**

Section: News;

Length: 951 words

Byline: MARGARET COKER

Body

Jerusalem --- For those concerned with America's image in the Middle East, today's scheduled meeting between President Bush and Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon couldn't come at a worse time.

Images of U.S. soldiers fighting Iraqis last week flooded the Middle East and fueled enraged comparisons of the U.S. military occupation of Iraq to Israel's hold on the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

It's a dismaying portrayal for a White House concerned with reshaping the Middle East. But it's a characterization that could stick if Bush agrees with Sharon's request to annex major swaths of the West Bank. Palestinians likely would see that move as killing their vision of statehood, and Arabs would view it as confirmation of their fear that America and Israel are waging war against Muslims.

Cox International Correspondent

"They are both occupiers, and all that they are interested about is controlling the Muslims' wealth," said Hussein Baker, a 40-year-old fisherman living in the Gaza Strip.

Perception in Arab world

Many in the Bush White House dispute the widely held view that the problems of security and modernization in the Middle East revolve around a just solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. But as it tries to quell violence in Iraq, the administration might not be able to sidestep the perception so easily.

Ordinary Arabs have long viewed the Palestinians as an underdog worthy of their moral and financial support. This perspective is fueled by stories of penniless refugees hounded from their homes by Israeli soldiers in 1948. And it is bolstered by modern tales of the Israeli armed forces, equipped with U.S. weapons, destroying Palestinian homes and killing children.

U.S. - Israeli link outrages Arabs; Palestinians, Iraqis decry their 'occupiers'

So the leap from Palestinian suffering to Iraqi suffering is not far-fetched for Arab observers who don't see a clear political strategy by the United States in Iraq and don't believe America's promises of bringing a better life to the Iraqi people.

At a rally after last Friday's prayers in Gaza, the Islamic Hamas movement --- the group that has claimed responsibility for the majority of suicide bombings against Israelis --- praised the Iraqi fighters for their steadfast resistance against the "occupiers." Until the U.S. campaign in Iraq began, this word was reserved only for "the Zionist State," as militants call Israel. Last week, papers in Turkey, Syria, Egypt and Sudan applied it to America, too.

"The Palestinian people are with you. You are fighting the American terrorism as we fight the Zionist terrorism," Hamas' Gaza leader Ahmed Rantisi said at the rally. "You are there in the frontier because you are fighting the enemies of God and Islam, the murderers Bush and Sharon."

Millions of viewers in the Middle East use Arabic-language television stations as their only source of news. Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya both had television cameras rolling inside Fallujah last week, and coverage of the fighting was heavy on the death toll among citizens of the city. Nearly 700 Iraqis were estimated to have died in the week of fighting. That compares to more than 850 Israelis and 2,200 Palestinians dead during the last 3 1/2 years of conflict.

Last Wednesday's bombing of a Fallujah mosque was met with special outrage. Reports conflicted about what actually transpired, but the event was widely condemned as a "massacre" in mainstream papers like the London-based Al-Quds Al-Arabi.

Similar language was used during Israel's assault in 2002 on the West Bank town of Jenin. A news blackout amid heavy fighting between the army and Palestinian militants fueled rumors of hundreds of Palestinians dead.

After days of hyper-inflated headlines in the Arabic and international press, it became clear that 53 Palestinians had died --- far fewer than the roughly 500 that had been widely claimed. However, the term "Jenin massacre" still is used in major speeches by Palestinian leaders.

Distorted reporting to blame?

Despite the public uproar that has hit even America's staunch Arab allies in the region --- Jordan's King Abdullah sent humanitarian aid to Fallujah, saying the people there were victims of "blockade, killing and destruction" --- U.S. spokesmen deny they have acted brutally. Spokesmen in Baghdad have downplayed the Iraqi civilian death toll in Fallujah, saying most of those killed were fighters. They also criticized Arab media for their coverage of events.

"We have reason to believe that several news organizations do not engage in truthful reporting," coalition civilian spokesman Dan Senor said, referring to Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya. "In fact, it is no reporting."

Yet video replays showing dead and injured Iraqi women and children put America's Arab allies in a tight corner. Under pressure from their own population to condemn American actions, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, who met with Bush on Monday, and King Abdullah, who will go to Washington next week, will have a hard time selling any Israeli military withdrawal plan to Palestinians or the public at large.

Mubarak said that, while Sharon's plan to remove Israeli troops and settlers from Gaza "would be highly appreciated, it will not be accepted by public opinion in the area" unless it is done in connection with renewed negotiations to withdraw soldiers and settlers from the West Bank as well.

Fears of more backlash against Americans in the region and pressure on these Arab leaders could moderate Sharon's hope of a speedy agreement for his territorial expansion plans.

Israeli officials said negotiations were continuing Tuesday over whether the United States would explicitly support Sharon's request to retain a number of settlement clusters in the West Bank and near Jerusalem in any final negotiated agreement on its borders.

Graphic

Photo: Israeli soldiers on Tuesday evacuate a fellow soldier who injured his ankle when trying to disperse demonstrators who gathered to protest the construction of the controversial Israeli security barrier in the West Bank village of Bidu. / GIL YOHANAN / Associated Press (METRO ONLY); Photo: Israeli soldiers and police Tuesday evacuated the illegal settlement of Hazon David in Hebron. / RINA CASTELNUOVO / New York Times

Load-Date: April 14, 2004

End of Document

Political oxymorons

University Wire

February 12, 2004 Thursday

Copyright 2004 The Easterner via U-Wire

Section: COLUMN

Length: 401 words

Byline: By Curtis Campbell, The Easterner; **SOURCE:** Eastern Washington U.

Dateline: CHENEY, Wash.

Body

I don't like to assail the words of my fellow writers, but after reading Dave Imus' "Miserable failure" column on Jan. 29 I feel that I must. I was not startled by the criticism of the Bush administration, for that also dominates many newspapers these days; rather I was appalled to see Imus refer to Palestinian terrorists as "suicide martyrs."

I heard this type of opinion before when a former professor referred to the Israelis as "terrorists." Being the first time I had heard that outrageous statement, I brushed it off as an isolated incident. It seems that this warped mindset may be more prevalent than I thought.

I'm confused about Imus' definition of a martyr. To me a martyr is someone who sacrifices his/her life on the basis of a sound principle, not someone who straps a bomb to their body and kills innocent men, women and children. That is a terrorist, not a martyr.

Sacrificing one's life to kill innocent people is not martyrdom: it's murder. What is the difference between a suicide bomber and the 9/11 hijackers? Absolutely nothing. Are they too martyrs? Perhaps "homicide bombers" might be a more appropriate label for these terrorists, certainly not "suicide martyrs."

History shows that the Palestinians were the ones who rejected the land partitions after WWII and brought war upon Israel. Palestinian terrorists consistently target civilians. To this day Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat continues to undermine the peace process. Why? Because it's not about land; it's about hatred. I will concede that the Israelis do harm innocents when they retaliate against these gruesome "homicide" attacks. But they do not actively seek out the killing of civilians, as the terrorists do. If you observe the tactics of both sides, there is no question about which of the two is the transgressor in this conflict.

My point is reiterated in a 170-page report released by Human Rights Watch. The report states suicide-bombing groups, such as Hamas, that target civilians are guilty of war crimes and must be brought to justice. It also admonishes Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat for creating an environment where these crimes against humanity are accepted, if not encouraged. I don't know if Imus truly believes that these terrorists are "martyrs" or if it was just a poor choice of words. In any case, these killers should be given titles of condemnation, not of honor.

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Load-Date: February 12, 2004

Political oxymorons

End of Document

World

Christian Science Monitor (Boston, MA)

January 15, 2004, Thursday

Copyright 2004 The Christian Science Publishing Society

Section: NEWS IN BRIEF; Pg. 20

Length: 428 words

Body

A Palestinian mother exploded a terrorist bomb at the busy Erez crossing point between Israel and the Gaza Strip, killing herself and four other people and wounding seven more. Hamas quickly claimed responsibility for the attack - believed to be its first by a female - and vowed there would be more. Israel's first response was to announce the closure until further notice of the crossing, which is used daily by thousands of Palestinians who work at factories on the Israeli side.

US forces in Iraq captured No. 54 on their list of most-wanted fugitives from the regime of former dictator Saddam Hussein, plus four nephews of No. 6 - Izzat Ibrahim al-Douri, who is believed to be orchestrating terrorist attacks by resisters of the American presence. The announcements were balanced against more attacks, however. A car bomb explosion in the restive city of Baquoba killed at least two people and hurt 29 others, most of them Iraqi policemen. Near Tikrit, Hussein's hometown, gunmen ambushed a US civilian contractor's convoy, killing two drivers and wounding others.

By unanimous vote, 80 protesting members of parliament in Iran rejected President Mohamad Khatami's appeal to end their four-day sit-in. Khatami sought the move to help him in trying to resolve the crisis arising from the disqualification of thousands of would-be political reformers as candidates in next month's legislative election. He criticized the ban by the hard-line Guardian Council, which issued it last weekend. Councillors were meeting with Khatami on the matter Wednesday, but said they would not be pressured into overturning the bans. Spokesmen for the protesters said Khatami lacked "sufficient legal powers" to apply such pressure anyway.

An appeal by NATO for more troops to swell the ranks of its peacekeeping mission in Afghanistan was answered by Italy, Norway, and Sweden. The alliance maintains a 5,500-man force in the capital, Kabul, and last week began to extend its reach into provincial cities. The UN's top representative in Afghanistan said in an interview Sunday that 10,000 more foreign troops are needed to underpin security as the country prepares for its presidential election in June.

All 37 people aboard a passenger jet were killed as it crashed in heavy fog while trying to land late Tuesday in the former Soviet republic of Uzbekistan. Among the casualties: the chief of the UN's mission in Tash-kent, the capital. Uzbek authorities opened an investigation into the accident but said no evidence pointed to terrorism.

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Load-Date: January 14, 2004

World

End of Document

Don't play with Tigers

National Post (f/k/a The Financial Post) (Canada)

January 14, 2005 Friday

National Edition

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Section: EDITORIALS; Pg. A17

Length: 401 words

Byline: National Post

Body

Ordinarily, it would be hard to quarrel with a Member of Parliament touring a tsunami-ravaged corner of South Asia to ensure that Canadian aid is arriving as it should. And if the MP in question were coming in with a clean slate, it might be possible to get past the fact that the area he was touring is controlled by the terrorist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam -- better known as the Tamil Tigers. But because the MP happens to be Jim Karygiannis, alarm bells should be ringing.

Mr. Karygiannis, recall, has made headlines for his connections to the Tamil Tigers before. In addition to appearing -- alongside Paul Martin (then the finance minister) and fellow Liberal MPs Maria Minna, Roy Cullen and Bryon Wilfert -- at a 2000 dinner hosted by a Sri Lankan group that was documented as a front for terrorists, Mr. Karygiannis showed up at a Toronto party celebrating the Tamil Tigers' recent campaigns and proudly hoisted the Canadian flag alongside the Tigers' flag. So as he tours northern Sri Lanka meeting with leaders of the Tigers' political wing, Canadians have ample reason to be concerned.

Representing the riding of Scarborough-Agincourt, Mr. Karygiannis likely has more Tamils in his constituency than any other Canadian MP -- and most of them, no doubt, have no connection to any terrorist group. It is only reasonable for him to work diligently to represent their interests -- especially at a time when their friends and family back home are still recovering from a horrific natural disaster. But that does not give Mr. Karygiannis licence to cozy up to one of the world's most brutal terrorist groups.

While they do not tend to get as much ink as Hamas, al-Qaeda and other terrorist organizations, and while their fundraising efforts within Canada have inexplicably not been outlawed, the Tamil Tigers are responsible for a staggering amount of carnage. The world's most prolific suicide bombers, they have exacted a death toll of more than 60,000 over the past two decades. Known for targeting civilians, the Tamil Tigers routinely stage attacks on villages in which they ruthlessly slay women and children.

Mr. Martin, who took considerable heat for attending the dinner in 2000, has declined to visit Sri Lanka's Tiger-controlled regions in the wake of the tsunami. If going there means making nice with some of the world's worst terrorists, Mr. Karygiannis should have made the same decision.

Graphic

Don't play with Tigers

Black & White Photo: P. Nedumaran, left, an extremist implicated in violence in Sri Lanka, is shown with Liberal MP Jim Karygiannis in this photo on the Eelamweb Web site.

Load-Date: January 14, 2005

End of Document

Abu Mazen's Two Faces, II

New York Sun (Archive)

December 31, 2004 Friday

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Section: EDITORIAL & OPINION; Pg. 10

Length: 440 words

Body

Say what you will about Warren Christopher, but don't ever accuse him of lacking an exquisite sense of timing. No sooner had President Clinton's discredited secretary of state fetched up yesterday on the New York Times op-ed page describing Yasser Arafat's heir apparent, Mahmoud Abbas, as "the moderate Palestinian leader" than Mr. Abbas himself fetched up in Jenin on the shoulders of Zakaria Zubeidi, a man the Associated Press described as "a prominent West Bank gunman" who is the local leader of the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades.

The Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade has been designated a terrorist group by the American state department, which reports, "Al-Aqsa has carried out shootings and suicide operations against Israeli civilians and military personnel and has killed Palestinians suspected of collaborating with Israel. At least five American citizens - four of them dual American-Israeli citizens - were killed in al-Aqsa's attacks. In January 2002, al-Aqsa claimed responsibility for the first suicide bombing carried out by a *female*." The AP reports that Mr. Zubeidi, who appeared yesterday with Mr. Abbas amid a frenzied crowd waving guns, "is wanted by Israel for organizing attacks and sending suicide bombers into Israeli cities."

It's not as if it should have been a surprise to Mr. Christopher. In our December 15 editorial, "Abu Mazen's Two Faces," we noted that Mr. Abbas, who is also known as Abu Mazen, had recently visited Damascus, where he met with leaders of the ***Hamas*** and Islamic Jihad terrorist groups. The Jerusalem Post reported that an aide to Mr. Abbas emerged from that meeting and pronounced that between the Palestine Liberation Organization and the other blood-drenched terrorists, "There are no differences over the objectives."

Mr. Abbas is a longtime close aide to Arafat. In his campaign speeches, Mr. Abbas has called for a "right of return" for Palestinian Arab "refugees" to Israel, code for the destruction of the Jewish state. He had vowed to follow Arafat's line.

Mr. Bush is expected to invite Mr. Abbas to the White House in February after his leadership is ratified in a sham election that is scheduled for January 9. As Carolyn Glick reports on The New York Sun's foreign page today, intimidation by Mr. Abbas's Palestinian Authority is such that Arab voters are afraid even to be seen with the campaign literature of Abbas's rivals. America already this week, in advance of the election, released \$23.5 million in taxpayer dollars to the Abbas-controlled Palestinian Authority, but not a dime to Mr. Abbas's election rivals. Surely Mr. Bush is wise enough to avoid Warren Christopher's errors. Isn't he?

Load-Date: December 31, 2004

Abu Mazen's Two Faces, II

End of Document

*Three women, three faiths, one hope;
Speaking tour examines conflict in Holy Land*

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

March 24, 2004 Wednesday

Home Edition

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**The Atlanta
Journal-Constitution**

Section: Atlanta & the World;

Length: 853 words

Byline: SHELIA M. POOLE

Body

Charlotte --- As Michal Sagi travels the United States promoting peace, she waits for an explosion of violence back home in the wake of Israel's assassination of the founder of Hamas.

"It will create such a mess in Israel," said Sagi, part of a national speaking tour of three women from the region --- one Jewish, one Muslim and one Christian --- sharing their experiences and dreams for peace. "If Israel wanted to weaken Hamas, it did the opposite."

Sagi still holds out hope, however, for an end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict despite Monday's killing of Sheik Ahmed Yassin. "It's going to be part of the point I'm trying to make that violence doesn't lead you anywhere," she said. "This is yet another horrible example of how stupid it all is."

AJC

Sagi, 35, is part of the seventh "Jerusalem Women Speak: Three Women, Three Faiths, One Shared Vision" tour sponsored by the Washington-based nonprofit Partners for Peace. Participants this year are:

* Sagi, who is Jewish and a member of Checkpoint Watch, a women's human rights group that monitors Israeli police and military at checkpoints in the West Bank and around Jerusalem;

* Nahla Assali, 65, a Palestinian Muslim and co-founder and chairwoman of Project Loving Care, a child sponsorship program;

* Nuha Khoury, 41, a Palestinian Christian and deputy director of the Dar al-Kalima Academy in Bethlehem.

Their tour began March 17 and ends April 2. They have spoken before Jewish and Muslim groups and at university campuses. They will be at Kennesaw State University tonight.

Three women, three faiths, one hope; Speaking tour examines conflict in Holy Land

In an interview Sunday, they hoped that their visit would help Americans understand the toll the conflict has taken on both sides.

Sagi, for instance, worries each time there is a suicide bombing or attack in Jerusalem. She and her family and friends have devised a calling system to let each other know they are safe.

Assali experienced the loss of her family's original home in West Jerusalem after the 1948 Deir Yassin massacre. On April 9 that year, commandos with the radical Jewish groups Irgun Zeva'i Le'umi and the Stern Gang attacked the village of about 750 Palestinian residents. Reports put the number killed at more than 100 men, women and children.

Precious minutes

For Khoury, a U.S. citizen, the Israeli occupation took a particularly tragic turn in January. Her father suffered a heart attack and was being rushed from his home in Bethlehem to a hospital in East Jerusalem. An Israeli officer refused to let the ambulance through at a checkpoint because her father did not have the correct permit. Khoury's brother called the hospital, which sent its own ambulance. The ordeal took four hours. Khoury said the trip should have taken only 10 minutes. Her father later died.

All three women decry suicide bombings by Palestinian terrorists, but also condemned violence by Israeli soldiers -- airstrikes in Palestinian areas in which militants and civilians are killed.

'Fair hand' needed

The only answer is a "fair and just" solution to the conflict, Khoury said. That would include an end to the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories seized during the 1967 Six-Day War and the dismantling of Jewish settlements, she said.

But first, both sides have to be willing to talk. Assali said it was clear that Israelis and Palestinians won't be able to do it alone and hoped for the intervention of a third party with a "fair hand." Is that party the United States? "We have had a very bad and disappointing experience with the United States doing this task," she said.

Sagi said she hoped to convince American Jews that the United States being "a fair broker is not [tantamount to being] anti-Israeli. It's very pro-Israeli. If I manage to convince some Jews in the States that calling for internationalizing the conflict is for the benefit of Israel, then my work will be done," she said.

But there have been moments on the tour that indicated just how hard such work will be, even among the three women, who have been together for several weeks and established a bond.

Uncertain future

When asked whether they would keep in touch when they returned to their own homes, Assali paused.

"Our conflict is not resolved," she said. "I just don't feel comfortable to be received at a Jewish home or to have Jewish guests at my home. I can work in a structured situation [like this] but not in a social situation. This is an honest answer."

Sagi listened quietly. She said she thought she could understand Assali's feelings but wanted to think such an effort wouldn't be impossible. "I wouldn't like to impose anything although I would have been happy to hear a different answer," she said.

Khoury was more pragmatic.

"My answer would be even if we wanted, it would be very difficult," she said. "Michal [Sagi] is a sweetheart. I hope things would be good enough to see each other. . . . I hope that one day we will be able to socialize and talk about her grandmother and my grandmother --- where we will really have a relaxed atmosphere. Where we don't have

Three women, three faiths, one hope; Speaking tour examines conflict in Holy Land

this conflict in the back of your mind. . . . I'm realistic enough to know it might not ever be, but we'll see. I never say never."

Graphic

Photo: Sitting at right, from left, Israeli Jew Michal Sagi, Palestinian Christian Nuha Khoury and Nahla Assali, a Palestinian Muslim, speak to a group at a private home Sunday in Charlotte. They will appear tonight in Atlanta. / RICK HAVNER / Special; Photo: Discussing their personal experiences with the political tensions in the Middle East will be (from left) Michal Sagi, Nahla Assali and Nuha Khoury. / RICK HAVNER / Special; Graphic: IF YOU GO

* What: "Jerusalem Women Speak: Three Women, Three Faiths, One Shared Vision"

* Where: Clendenin Building, Room 109, Kennesaw State University, 1000 Chastain Road, Kennesaw

* When: 8 p.m. today

* Cost: Free. Information: 770-423-6435

Load-Date: March 24, 2004

End of Document

Law: Defence or murder?: Does Israel have a legal right to assassinate its enemies - or are such executions war crimes? After two years deliberating, its supreme court is set to decide.

The Guardian (London) - Final Edition

March 30, 2004

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Section: Guardian Features Pages, Pg. 16

Length: 1579 words

Byline: Anthony Dworkin

Body

A half-blind man in a wheelchair is blown apart on a crowded city street. An insecure 16-year-old boy is coaxed into donning an explosive vest. Are the events of last week in Israel a preview of the future of warfare in the age of "asymmetric" conflict? And if so, what rules of law and morality should govern such a conflict, bringing its conduct into some semblance of conformity with recognised humanitarian principles?

When Israel killed the ***Hamas*** founder and spiritual leader Sheikh Ahmed Yassin with a missile launched from a helicopter, it provoked a storm of criticism. As one Israeli commentator put it, this was the mother of all targeted assassinations. From Kofi Annan to Jack Straw to the European Union's Javier Solana, international statesmen lined up to denounce the strike as unlawful. Among the western liberal democracies, only the United States stood partly aside from the chorus of condemnation - its muddled response a telling reflection of its own contentious anti-terrorist war.

Israel countered by describing Yassin as the "godfather of the suicide bombers" and giving notice that its campaign of targeted killings would be intensified. Anyone involved in the terrorist war against Israel should know there is no immunity, said the country's public security minister the day after the attack.

The morality and legality of assassinating terrorist suspects is being argued out around the world, and is one of the hottest topics in the field of international law. Such discussions often seem merely theoretical, unlikely to have any impact on the actions of the governments involved. But in the case of Israel, there is one body whose assessment of the question could have real and immediate consequences - the country's own supreme court. Within months, the court is likely to deliver its decision in a case brought by two non-profit groups seeking a declaration that the Israeli government's policy of targeted killing is contrary to international law and should be halted.

"I believe this may be the most important case that the supreme court has yet been asked to consider," says one of the lawyers for the petitioners, Michael Sfard. In line with the significance of the moral, legal and security issues at stake, the court has not rushed to a decision. It has had the case before it for two years. Nevertheless Sfard is confident that the case is now in "the final few metres". The groups he represents and the Israeli government have been asked to submit their final briefs.

The first targeted killing in response to the violence of the current Palestinian intifada took place in November 2000, when the Fatah activist Hussein Abayat was killed in a helicopter attack near Bethlehem. Since then, well over 100

Law: Defence or murder?: Does Israel have a legal right to assassinate its enemies - or are such executions war crimes? After two years deliberating, its suprem....

Palestinian militants have been the victims of such attacks (not counting the roughly equal number of bystanders who have also died).

At first the assassinations were directed at people who were said to be "ticking time bombs" - individuals who were actively involved in organising terrorist attacks. But more recently the Israeli military has shifted to a wider range of targets, including figures such as Sheikh Yassin, who are leaders of militant groups rather than actual bomb-makers. The government of Ariel Sharon openly acknowledges these targeted strikes as an essential part of its armed struggle to protect Israel's citizens against terrorism.

According to Sfard, though, the killings are not merely unjustified - they are war crimes, perhaps even crimes against humanity. However much we may castigate terrorists, he argues, we must accept that they are not soldiers but civilians, and must be fought with law enforcement methods. That means they can be killed only when there is no other way to prevent them from carrying out an attack that would endanger human life. Otherwise suspected terrorists should be detained and put on trial before they can lawfully be punished for their actions.

"If a terrorist - or any criminal - is threatening someone's life, then you can do everything necessary to stop him," says Sfard. "But these assassinations target people at home, sleeping in their beds, or when they're simply driving in their cars - they're not endangering anyone at the time when they're killed." To kill under these circumstances is simply execution - but carried out without any trial or proof of guilt.

Not surprisingly, the Israeli government and its supporters present the matter in an entirely different way. They argue that Palestinian militants may not be soldiers, but they are still participants in an armed conflict - determined fighters who aim to kill Israeli civilians and who have engineered a concerted campaign of atrocities.

"These targeted killings are almost always legitimate," argues Yoram Dinstein of Tel Aviv University, one of the country's foremost authorities on the laws of war. Under these, he points out, civilians who join in a conflict by directly participating in hostilities make themselves a lawful target for enemy forces. And that doesn't just mean the people who carry out terrorist missions, but also those who equip and send them. "There is no difference in this respect between the person who blows himself up and the dispatcher," Dinstein argues.

Are the leaders of **Hamas** criminals or combatants? The terms of the question echo a familiar argument over Guantanamo Bay and America's proclaimed war against al-Qaida. In the Israeli-Palestinian case, though, few would deny that there is an armed conflict going on. The crux of the case is therefore likely to come down to a dispute about what it means for someone to take a direct part in hostilities. In the law, this is a notoriously slippery and contested concept - all the more so in the age of low-intensity terrorist warfare.

Like much of the modern law of war, the guiding principle here can be found in the horrific experience of "total war" in the second world war. The aim was to make sure that it was no longer acceptable to target civilians assisting in the general war effort - which in a modern society could be taken to cover almost any adult. But are those who train and equip suicide bombers taking part in hostilities? What about those such as Sheikh Yassin who approve strategic decisions - for instance by giving the go-ahead for **women** to be used in suicide missions?

And if these people lose their immunity from attack, is that true only while they are directly engaged in terrorist activity? Or do they forfeit their civilian status indefinitely - so that they can be attacked not just when they're fitting an explosives belt or poring over a list of targets, but when they're sleeping, driving, or leaving a mosque? And what about the inherent problem of targeting suspects who don't admit that they are fighters? These are the issues that Israel's supreme court will have to grapple with.

There is no clear legal precedent, and the court will have to base its decision on a view about how the underlying principles of the law should be applied in this unforeseen kind of war. But there are a couple of factors that it might fall back on. The court might make a distinction between the military and political wings of organisations such as **Hamas** - so that it might rule that only those involved in the military chain of command could be attacked. And it might specify that targeted killings are never permissible when the suspected terrorists can be apprehended without the risk of serious loss of life.

Law: Defence or murder?: Does Israel have a legal right to assassinate its enemies - or are such executions war crimes? After two years deliberating, its suprem....

In such an emotive case, though, the factors shaping its decision may not be entirely legal. Sbard believes the biggest obstacle he and his colleagues face is a political one. "The justices are in a very problematic position," he argues. "I am sure that they don't want to be the first judges from a liberal democratic country to authorise a policy of execution without trial - but if the policy was put to a popular vote, it would certainly win. It may be difficult for the court to take a step that would be seen by much of the public as harming the government's power to defend the nation's security."

In fact, there may be a middle way the court could choose, as Dinstein points out. "I don't believe the court will rule against the government in total," he says. But he adds that the present supreme court is notoriously activist: it won't want simply to give the government free rein. Therefore the judges may set some guidelines on the practice of targeted killing, and at the same time extend a wide degree of deference to the Israeli army as to how it applies these guidelines in practice. For instance, they might say that military commanders are best placed to judge whether a particular killing is militarily necessary to defend the country against the risk of future attacks.

Whenever it comes, the court's decision is likely to be minutely scrutinised and passionately disputed. Judges on the American supreme court have already said that they may look to the Israeli legal system for precedents when they consider the ground rules for the US war on terror. The new international criminal court (though it is unlikely to have jurisdiction over Israeli or American actions for the foreseeable future) may also have to consider the use of force against terrorists at some point. Israel's justices will be the first to enter this legal minefield, but they will certainly not have the final word on the subject.

Anthony Dworkin is editor of the Crimes of War website (www.crimesofwar.org).

Load-Date: March 31, 2004

Emptiness lurks in wake of Arafat era

Lincoln Journal Star (Nebraska)

November 8, 2004 Monday

City Edition

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Section: B; Pg. 6

Length: 455 words

Body

Yasser Arafat, hospitalized in intensive care, will be remembered primarily for two things. First, his leadership gave legitimacy to the concept of a separate state for Palestinians.

Second, he could have done more for his people. In the end his rule was more about staying in power than in creating a nation.

It's symbolically fitting that his departure left a power vacuum. Inevitably there will be struggle for power, with Arafat's Fatah organization and the terrorist organization **Hamas** two of the principle players. The only question is how violent the struggle for power may become.

Possibly the closest Arafat came to creation of a separate Palestinian state was in 2000 when he rejected Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak's offer during peace talks brokered by then-President Bill Clinton.

Admittedly, as journalist Gwynne Dyer noted in a column in last week's Journal Star, that peace agreement might never have been implemented. Barak's government might have disintegrated before its terms were ratified. But history will record instead that Arafat killed the deal.

Still, when Arafat first came to the world's attention, few would have imagined that he one day would become a player on the world's stage, meeting with U.S. presidents and heads of state, and winning the Nobel Peace Prize in 1994 with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres.

Arafat began a terrorist and guerrilla. Under his leadership the Palestinian Liberation Organization that he headed sent terrorists to assassinate Israeli athletes at the 1972 Olympics in Munich.

Arafat seemed to adopt a more statesmanlike pose in the 1990s, when he worked with Rabin on the Oslo accord, but in the closing years of his life the PLO seemed to look the other way as men, **women** and even teenagers embarked on suicide bombing missions to kill civilians in Israel.

In a bitter twist Arafat found himself at the end of his life facing nemesis Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, who employed vast military superiority to destroy PLO government buildings, assassinate suspected Palestinian terrorists and leave swaths of destruction through Palestinian neighborhoods.

While his critics believe that Arafat ruled essentially by the use of force, Arafat himself pointed to another source of legitimacy. Why was he the person with whom Israelis should negotiate? "I was elected," Arafat said.

Emptiness lurks in wake of Arafat era

To fill the power void that now exists in the occupied territories with Arafat gone, the best thing the world could hope for is that his successor could come to power by similar democratic means. The international community should help Palestinians work toward that goal. Arafat had the right objective, but horrible tactics.

Load-Date: November 30, 2004

End of Document

Municipal polls set wheels of Palestinian democracy in motion

Financial Times (London, England)

December 24, 2004 Friday

London Edition 2

Copyright 2004 The Financial Times Limited

Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS; Pg. 4

Length: 447 words

Byline: By HARVEY MORRIS

Dateline: JERICHO

Body

Palestinians cast their votes yesterday for local councils in 26 towns and villages of the West Bank, opening an election season that officials say will underline the Palestinian Authority's commitment to democracy.

It was the first election in the PA in the eight years since the late Yassir Arafat was overwhelmingly chosen as its president, and the first at which Palestinians have had an opportunity to elect municipal representatives since 1976.

"We need democracy and this is just the beginning," said Amjad Jaber, official scrutineer at a polling station in a Jericho high school where voters were choosing a town council of 15 from a 51-strong candidate list.

He said yesterday's poll would be a test-run for presidential elections throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip in January to choose a successor to Arafat as president of the PA. The virtually unchallenged front-runner is Mahmoud Abbas, the new chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organisation.

Parliamentary elections, considered by reformists to be even more vital than the presidential poll, will take place later next year. Arafat agreed to municipal elections some months before his death in November.

In Jericho, an oasis town in the Jordan valley surrounded by Israeli-controlled territory, voters' concerns appeared to be principally domestic. Those questioned in the polling queues said they hoped an elected council would build a sewage system and rehabilitate the road network in what was, until the outbreak of the Palestinian uprising, a big tourist destination.

In the first stage of municipal polls yesterday, 140,000 voters were choosing from among more than 800 candidates, about one in six of them women. Palestinian election law guarantees that 16 per cent of seats will go to women candidates. "There is a sense of excitement among women that at last they will have someone to represent them," said Maysoon Barahime, a woman candidate of the Jericho Bloc for All.

There were no party lists but many candidates were from Mr Abbas' ruling Fatah party. Candidates associated with Hamas, an Islamic group that is boycotting January's presidential vote, were standing for the first time yesterday in elections in the PA.

Electoral officials protested against Israel's recent arrest of four Islamist candidates and a representative of the leftwing Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestinian.

Municipal polls set wheels of Palestinian democracy in motion

Ahmed Qurei, PA prime minister, voting in Abu Dis near Jerusalem, said: "This is the first step towards establishment of a Palestinian state. This is the start of the democratic process."

Official results of the election, which was monitored by foreign observers, were due to be declared tomorrow. www.ft.com/mideast

Load-Date: December 23, 2004

End of Document

***Border tensions for U.S., Syria;
Nations spar over foreign fighters' entry into Iraq.***

The Philadelphia Inquirer

MARCH 2, 2005 Wednesday CITY-D EDITION

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The Philadelphia Inquirer

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Section: NATIONAL; Pg. A01

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Byline: Michael Matza INQUIRER STAFF WRITER

Dateline: WADI SHA'ALAN, Syria-Iraq Border

Body

Windswept and flat as a skillet, the desolate 450-mile frontier between Syria and Iraq is the focus of an increasingly strident debate over the quality of Syria's efforts to prevent foreign fighters from entering Iraq.

The demand for greater border cooperation comes as the Bush administration is placing unprecedented pressure on Syria to stop interfering in its neighbors' affairs.

"The fact that there might be someone who might infiltrate into Iraq doesn't mean the Syrian government wants that or is not trying its best to prevent that," Syrian cabinet minister Buthaina Shabaan says.

But U.S. Marine Cpl. Robert Stephenson, 22, a native of Philadelphia's Wynnefield section assigned to this dusty border crossing on the main road to Baghdad, has a different view.

"The Syrians are not patrolling their side of the border the way they should," he said, pointing to the nine-foot-high berm that stretches to the horizon across the barren landscape.

A few months ago, under increasing international pressure, Syrian forces used bulldozers to extend the sandy barrier that runs parallel to the border. But now, Stephenson said, they are not doing enough to monitor it for breaks.

Syria insists that the berm is sound and that the nation is doing all it can, with limited resources and manpower, to maintain its integrity. Moreover, Syrian officials say, there is another berm on the Iraq side of the border that is supervised by U.S. and Iraqi forces, who the Syrians say should share the blame for any infiltrations.

"Iraq is a big problem for the United States - but not because of Syria," Shabaan said.

Border tensions for U.S. , Syria ; Nations spar over foreign fighters' entry into Iraq .

The five-year-old government of President Bashar al-Assad is under intensifying pressure to end Syria's 30-year military presence in Lebanon, to withdraw its hospitality to such anti-Israel groups as Hamas and Islamic Jihad, and to better monitor Syria's banking system to prevent financing of insurgents in Iraq.

This week, the government arrested and handed over to Iraq more than 30 fugitives from the former regime of Saddam Hussein, including his wanted half-brother. Nevertheless, there is widespread sentiment here that nothing Syria does can satisfy an ever-rising bar of U.S. demands.

"We closed the offices [of Hamas and Islamic Jihad]," Shabaan said. "We are withdrawing [from Lebanon]. But they always come up with something else."

U.S. officials and soldiers here say that's a bit disingenuous, pointing to the speed with which Syria rounded up the Hussein loyalists when the pressure on Assad's regime became too much.

"All they have to do is make an honest effort. . . . It's not impossible," said Aubrey Wrenn, 23, a sergeant in Stephenson's platoon.

About two miles back from the border is Syria's passport control office at At-Tanf, where Col. Ahmed Mohammed el-Mohammed supervises security.

Asked about the frequency of Syrian patrols along the berm, he said that was not his responsibility. He did not say whose it was. "We are doing our best not to let people sneak in," he said, declining to be interviewed. "What you've seen speaks for itself."

Tension was palpable Monday at the crossing, where more than 1,500 trailer trucks carrying food and building supplies had been waiting for days in a 20-mile line for clearance to enter Iraq. Sophisticated truck-scanning equipment that had been out of commission for more than a week had compounded the usual delays.

The trucks' drivers, unable to replenish their travel supplies of food and water, were becoming desperate. To keep the line near the crossing from becoming unruly, U.S. troops used a police dog on a short leash to force the men back into their vehicles.

Under new rules promulgated three months ago by Iraq's interim government, border inspections are much more stringent. Even native Iraqis who fled the war or took temporary jobs in Syria have been barred from returning; males between the ages of 15 and 50 are denied entry unless traveling with a close female relative.

"The situation is very chaotic," said Bashar Dulami, 30, a trucker hauling tons of powdered milk. He said that his family lived in the Iraqi city of Ramadi and that he had been stuck in Syria for nearly two weeks trying to deliver his load.

In Dulami's view, the border is very secure and U.S. complaints about its porousness are a subterfuge.

"Not even a pussycat can get through," he said. "They want an excuse to make us all terrorists."

Stephenson acknowledged that the situation was difficult and that many of the people attempting to cross illegally "are just trying to get home."

They hide in truck compartments, under stacked newspapers and in one case amid tons of bagged potato chips, he said. He said his platoon had caught nine such people in the last six months; he declined to say how many others had been caught at breaks in the berm elsewhere along the border.

At a London conference on international support for the Palestinian Authority, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice kept up the pressure yesterday. She laid the blame for Friday's deadly suicide bombing in Tel Aviv, Israel, at Syria's doorstep and, with the French foreign minister, called again for removal of the 15,000 Syrian troops in Lebanon, to comply with the U.S.-France-sponsored Security Council Resolution 1559 passed last fall.

Border tensions for U.S. , Syria ; Nations spar over foreign fighters' entry into Iraq .

A day earlier, the Syrian-backed government of Lebanese Prime Minister Omar Karami had been forced to step down as tens of thousands of anti-Syria demonstrators protested in Beirut. A caretaker government replaced it; new elections are expected by May.

In an interview published on Time magazine's Web site yesterday, Assad said Syrian troops would leave Lebanon "very soon and maybe in the next few months." Such statements, like the roundup of Hussein loyalists, seemed to indicate Washington's message was finally getting through.

"Right now this regime feels much threatened and is trying to appease the United States however it can," said Syrian writer Ammar Abdulhamid, 38, a prominent government critic. "Had they done these things a year ago, they would have been welcome, they would have been revolutionary, they would have been a sign of real reform in Syria," he said.

"But when they take these steps after a U.N. resolution, after the kind of popular pressure" shown on the streets of Beirut, "then they are nothing," Abdulhamid said. "People expect you to leave today."

Contact staff writer Michael Matza at 215-854-2405 or foreign@phillynews.com.

Graphic

PHOTO AND MAP;

MICHAEL MATZA, Inquirer Staff

Marine Cpl. Robert Stephenson (left) of Philadelphia said, "Syrians are not patrolling their side of the border the way they should."

MAP

Wadi Sha'alan, Syria-Iraq Border

Load-Date: September 8, 2005

Children killed by Israeli military;

Irish News

January 05, 2005

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Section: Pg. 18

Length: 430 words

Body

TWO Israeli tank shells slammed into a field in response to Palestinian mortar fire yesterday, killing seven Palestinians, including at least two children, in the deadliest single incident in three months.

In condemning the deaths, Mahmoud Abbas, the front-runner in the campaign for Palestinian leader, called Israel the "Zionist enemy", a marked escalation in anti-Israel rhetoric for the relative moderate.

Mr Abbas later came very close to the fighting, with two loud explosions going off as he was about to visit survivors of the shelling at a northern Gaza hospital.

Palestinian security officials said the explosions were set off by tank shells, a response to home-made rockets launched by Palestinian militants. Mr Abbas' motorcade sped away.

The fighting began yesterday morning with militants firing mortar rounds that injured an Israeli woman.

In response Israeli tanks fired two shells.

The Israeli army said the shells were aimed at nine masked militants involved in firing the mortar rounds.

There were conflicting reports on the ages and identities of the dead.

Dr Mahmoud al-Asli, director of the Kamal Adwan Hospital in the northern town of Beit Lahiya, said the dead were between the ages of 11 and 17.

He named the seven victims and said six were from the Jaben family, including three brothers.

However, the Israeli military said Palestinian liaison officers gave them similar names of the dead but different ages.

The military said it was told that six of them were 17 and older, and that four or five of them were members of the Islamic militant group **Hamas**.

Six people were wounded, including four in critical condition, doctors said.

At the Beit Lahiya hospital, the floor of the emergency room was covered with blood, and several **women** fainted at the entrance to the morgue.

Children killed by Israeli military;

A Palestinian farmer said the militants were just leaving the area when the Israeli tank fired machine guns and shells.

"I was lying on the ground when the shooting started, " the farmer said.

"After it stopped, we ran and found body parts spread all over. One man I helped evacuate had lost his leg."

The incident was the single deadliest in Gaza since September 30 when an Israeli tank fired a shell at a group of gunmen in the Jebaliya refugee camp in northern Gaza, killing seven Palestinians and wounding 23.

Palestinian militants have stepped up mortar and rocket fire on Israeli settlements in Gaza and border towns in recent weeks as rival militant groups jockey for power ahead of a planned Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and try to portray the pullback as a retreat under fire.

Load-Date: January 13, 2005

End of Document

News in Brief

Hamilton Spectator (Ontario, Canada)
September 23, 2004 Thursday Final Edition

Copyright 2004 Metroland Media Group Ltd

Section: CANADA/WORLD; Pg. A13; Brief

Length: 471 words

Body

Arctic double whammy could speed global warming

OTTAWA Dramatic results made public today from a unique 20-year American experiment are raising the spectre of runaway warming above the Arctic tundra that would accelerate global climate change.

The findings -- if confirmed with additional studies -- could also doom Canada's Kyoto-plan targets for reducing emissions of carbon dioxide, the leading greenhouse gas.

This double whammy arises from the U.S. researchers' discovery that climate warming might trigger conditions where decomposition of the tundra will dump carbon dioxide into the atmosphere faster than it's soaked up by accelerated plant growth.

Spectator wire services

This extra carbon dioxide could trigger a "positive feedback," speeding up the rate of global warming even more, warns a study published today in Nature, the influential British research journal.

The results also add extra urgency to a planned November meeting of ministers from Canada and the seven other circumpolar countries

Group claims to have killed kidnapped Italian aid workers

CAIRO, EGYPT An Internet statement purportedly by a group which claimed to have kidnapped two Italian aid workers in Iraq said yesterday it killed the women hostages. The claim could not be immediately verified.

Simona Pari and Simona Torretta, both 29, were seized from their Baghdad offices by armed militants Sept. 7. They were involved in school and water projects in Iraq. In a separate development, a videotape posted on an Islamic website yesterday showed a man identifying himself as British hostage Kenneth Bigley pleading for British Prime Minister Tony Blair to help save his life.

Tawhid and Jihad, the militant group led by Jordanian terror mastermind Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, has threatened to kill Bigley unless Iraqi women held in U.S. custody are released.

The group has already killed two Americans it kidnapped along with the 62-year-old Bigley from their Baghdad residence last week.

Two Israeli police die with teen suicide bomber

News in Brief

JERUSALEM A Palestinian teenager blew herself up at a busy Jerusalem bus station yesterday, killing two Israeli policemen who stopped her for a security check and wounding 16 bystanders in an attack that evaded Israel's clampdown on the West Bank for the Jewish holidays.

Hours later, an Israeli helicopter fired a missile at a Gaza refugee camp, wounding 12 people, Palestinians said.

The Al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades, a violent group with ties to Yasser Arafat's Fatah movement, claimed responsibility for yesterday's bombing.

Prime Minister Ariel Sharon hinted that Israel might one day assassinate Arafat, as it did with two leaders of the Islamic militant group **Hamas** responsible for scores of suicide bombings. But Israel has not carried out earlier threats despite attacks with dozens of casualties.

Spectator wire services

Load-Date: September 23, 2004

End of Document

ISRAEL TO RELEASE 400 PALESTINIAN PRISONERS AS 'GOODWILL GESTURE'

The Independent (London)

May 30, 2005, Monday

Copyright 2005 Independent Print Ltd

Section: First Edition; FOREIGN NEWS; Pg. 18

Length: 458 words

Byline: BY ERIC SILVER IN JERUSALEM

Highlight: Mahmoud Abbas made the release deal with Ariel Sharon, the Israeli Prime Minister, right, in February

Body

Israeli ministers have agreed to release 400 Palestinian prisoners as a goodwill gesture to the Palestinian leader, Mahmoud Abbas. A spokesman said they would be set free later this week after their names were put on the internet.

Officials said that none of them was involved in killing Israelis. The government had considered releasing some convicted of terrorism before the 1993 Oslo peace agreement, but dropped that under pressure from the Shin Bet internal security service.

Ra'anan Gissin, media adviser to the Prime Minister, Ariel Sharon, insisted: 'We are not in the business of a wholesale release of prisoners. Those sentenced before Oslo will have to serve their full term.'

The Israelis did include some post-Oslo prisoners who had not completed two-thirds of their sentences.

Sufian Abu Zaydeh, the Palestinian prisoner affairs minister, told The Independent: 'This step does not meet our minimal demands. Our main interest is the release of prisoners sentenced to long terms before Oslo. We also want them to release women, teenagers and those who are sick.'

According to the Palestinians, Israel is holding 8,000 prisoners. Of these, 240 are serving pre-Oslo life sentences, 400 are teen-agers, 120 are women, and 76 are in hospital. The latest batch completes the commitment to free 900 prisoners which Mr Sharon made to Mr Abbas in February.

Mr Sharon said that the latest release was aimed at supporting 'Abu Mazen [Mr Abbas] and the moderate forces' at a time when Palestinian parliamentary elections and Israel's planned withdrawal from Gaza were 'liable to strengthen the forces of extremist terrorism'.

But General Giora Eiland, Mr Sharon's national security adviser, said that Israel would not resume peace talks until Mr Abbas began to dismantle Hamas and other Islamist militias.

Also yesterday, in the West Bank city of Hebron, a Palestinian man tried to stab Israeli soldiers at a junction, but troops opened fire and killed him, the military said. The man ignored the soldiers' order to stop and warning shots had been fired in the air, the military said. Military sources said that the attacker was carrying three suicide letters explaining his action to relatives.

ISRAEL TO RELEASE 400 PALESTINIAN PRISONERS AS 'GOODWILL GESTURE'

n Israeli police investigating industrial espionage involving leading companies have detained 18 people, including company executives and private detectives.

The inquiry by the Tel Aviv fraud squad began several months ago and found evidence that 'Trojan horses', viruses designed to spy on computer systems, had been planted in the computers of leading companies, the spokesman said.

Police were investigating work for firms including Israel's top mobile phone operator, Cellcom, and two subsidiaries of the dominant phone company, Bezeq Israel Telecom.

Load-Date: May 29, 2005

End of Document

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The Independent (London)

May 30, 2005, Monday

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Load-Date: May 30, 2005

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Reporters on the Job

Christian Science Monitor (Boston, MA)

April 19, 2004, Monday

Copyright 2004 The Christian Science Publishing Society

Section: WORLD; Pg. 06

Length: 428 words

Body

* Safer at a Distance: While tension is fairly high in Baghdad, reporter Dan Murphy realized how easy he's got it as a print reporter (this page). He attended a going-away party for several photographers this past week. "They were leaving in part because it's become so difficult and dangerous to get pictures of the action," he says. "One women had thousands of dollars in equipment stolen after stopping on the road to photograph an attack on US forces. Another complained that some average Iraqis are now hostile these days when the lens is pointed in their direction. A third photographer, who's only been in Iraq for a month, displayed a small wound on his arm, where a bullet had grazed him. He's been embedded with the US Marines in Al Anbar Province.

"As bad as it gets, I can always get someone on the phone to comment for a story. But without the pictures themselves, these guys have nothing," says Dan.

* Controlling Access? A month ago, when the Israeli army assassinated Hamas leader Ahmed Yassin, reporter Ben Lynfield and several other journalists working were barred from going to Gaza by the Israeli military on the grounds that they had Israeli residency (though not citizenship, in Ben's case) and this was for their protection. This left the army with a monopoly of information coming out of Gaza to the Israeli public.

Ben, and any other Israeli resident who enters Gaza, always signs a form that the army is not responsible for his safety. "We sign despite reservations, so that we can go in and see what is actually going on there. When I was interviewed about all this on state-run Israel Radio recently, I called attention to the harm to people's right to know in the US, Britain, and Israel when journalists are barred from Gaza. I received a less than sympathetic response from Prime Minister Sharon's spokesman, Government Press Office director Daniel Seaman, who called me immediately after the interview and called me a 'bad journalist' among other things. But the Israeli army also called and said I could enter Gaza.

"I thought the problem had been solved. Last night, however, the Israeli army reimposed the ban - for the same reason. Hence the Jerusalem and not the Gaza City byline in today's story. In the afternoon, they changed their minds but by then it was too late to get there and make the deadline, so we relied instead on a freelancer, Mohammed Ali."

David Clark Scott

World editor

Let us hear from you.

Reporters on the Job

Mail to: One Norway Street, Boston, MA 02115 via e-mail: [world\(at\)csmonitor.com](mailto:world(at)csmonitor.com)

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Load-Date: April 18, 2004

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Harbour Views

The Daily Telegraph (Sydney, Australia)

April 20, 2004 Tuesday

Copyright 2004 Nationwide News Pty Limited

Section: FINANCE-COLUMN- HARBOUR VIEWS; Pg. 25

Length: 417 words

Byline: IAN LOVETT

Body

* THE unwillingness of corporate chieftains to put their hands up to replace former hamburger king Bob Mansfield at Telstra has resulted in some lateral thinking.

Wags at the stock exchange have proposed the Hamas solution.

Under this plan Telstra would appoint a chairman, but not tell anyone.

MATP

The ASX might be a tad upset, but at least the new chairman might remain at his post.

Failing that Roy and HG have suggested Lonhro, now that he is being put out to pasture, would make a perfect chairman. In all senses.

* THE latest bunch of Australians caught in the net flung by Swiss banking authorities must be cursing their luck.

Who would have thought the head of Bank Leumi Le-Israel would have been a tea leaf? ... Damn it.

Rene Rivkin and Trevor Kennedy are already squirming from the investigation.

* THERE is at least one person who must be over the moon about the stamp duty change on first home buyers.

And he certainly doesn't fall into that category, far from it.

Meriton boss billionaire Harry Triguboff has 1000 new unsold units ideally suited to first home buyers.

* BACK in the '60s, the Club of Rome warned the world's population was growing faster than food could be produced.

Due to the Green Revolution food surpluses, not shortages, characterised the next 30 years.

The latest warning from the doomsayers is that women in the developed world are not breeding fast enough so there will be no one to look after old folk.

It's hard to argue against this, but the Club of Rome is an example of the dangers of projecting from the present into the future.

Harbour Views

For example should a cure or a treatment to slow the onset of Alzheimer's disease happen, half our old people homes would be empty and wouldn't that be just great.

No sooner had the thought crossed Harbour's mind than the following press release emerged from the bowels of the Australian Stock Exchange.

Biotechnology's Prana's PBT-1 drug for 18 months markedly slowed the decline in cognitive function associated with Alzheimer's disease compared with the level of decline predicted in scientific literature. Also, Prana's treatment has been well tolerated.

* PUBLICITY-SHY Griffin Group chief Ric Stowe has emerged from deep cover.

The low profile WA entrepreneur surfaced to tell the world his heart was set on taking over his coal mining rival, Wesfarmers' Premier Coal.

Stowe said that, though Griffin wanted to buy out its rival Premier Coal, he suggested such a merger might not be embraced by local utility Western Power or the ACCC.

Load-Date: April 19, 2004

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Muslim-Jewish peace walk today faces a gantlet of emotions

The Philadelphia Inquirer

MAY 2, 2004 Sunday CITY-D EDITION

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The Philadelphia Inquirer

Found on Philly.com

Section: CURRENTS; Pg. C04

Length: 1010 words

Byline: Jim Remsen

Body

They hope to walk through walls today in North Philadelphia. Walls of fear and mistrust.

A contingent of area religious activists will press their high hopes in a grassroots street event billed as "An Interfaith Peace Walk for Jewish-Muslim Reconciliation." Clad in white and displaying "Peace," "Shalom" and "Salaam" placards, they plan to cover a three-mile route from an Arab American mosque to a Reform Jewish synagogue.

It is an extraordinary idea, coming at a time of entrenched animosity between Jews and Muslims worldwide over the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Anticipating hecklers, the organizers have deputized several dozen members to be "peacekeepers" along the route.

"We can't prevent people with other agendas from shouting, but we can encourage those in the walk not to engage in it, too," said Lance Laver of Congregation Mishkan Shalom in Roxborough, who helped plan the event.

The organizers see this as a beginning step in a long process of coalition-building. At this stage, they are stepping around the Mideast impasse and focusing on a more upbeat homefront agenda.

"We want to make sure those [Mideast] tensions don't get moved over to the local level because we are all Americans, we're all Philadelphians, and on 99 percent of domestic issues, most Jews and Muslims have much more in common than disagreements," said Marwan Kreidie, who helped coordinate the walk for the Al-Aqsa Islamic Society mosque. Kreidie cited immigration reform, refugee rights, hate-crime monitoring, and "the litany of schools and safe streets" as areas of cooperative action.

Al-Aqsa, starting point of the walk, is a growing Arab congregation of several thousand, about 65 percent of them Palestinians.

Chukri Khorchid, the Syrian-born school director, said Al-Aqsa's leadership has taken the stance that "we are mainstream and that's the way we have to react, to live in peace in the city of Philadelphia."

There are signs of peace there. Khorchid's 300-pupil school brings in a local Jewish poet, Cathleen Cohen, to teach poetry-writing - and a bit of Jewish customs and values. His bookshelf includes volumes of the Zohar, the Jewish

Muslim-Jewish peace walk today faces a gantlet of emotions

mystical text. Unlike in some Muslim schools, Israel is not blotted off the wall maps in Al-Aqsa classrooms. Khorchid said many of his vendors are Jewish-owned businesses.

Because the congregation comprises more than a dozen nationalities with a variety of perspectives, Al-Aqsa's leadership instructs the Egyptian-born imam not to preach about politics.

"We do not want inflammatory rhetoric," Khorchid said.

Coexisting with Al-Aqsa's official amity, however, is widespread anger at Israel and its policies under Prime Minister Ariel Sharon.

"People here are very supportive of the PLO and [Yasir] Arafat," said Kreidie, who runs the Arab American Development Council out of rented space in the mosque. "I'm sure some people support Hamas [which advocates the destruction of Israel], but I'm pretty sure they don't support terrorism."

Emotions aside, most are "pragmatists," he said, who would accept a "two-state solution" of a Palestinian nation adjacent to Israel.

In recent weeks, as area Jews considered whether to join the peace walk, a news story has circulated about a pro-Palestine march in Washington in 2002. The article quoted two women from Al-Aqsa as saying they would support their sons if they became suicide bombers, and a third as shouting through a bullhorn, "Sharon and Hitler are the same, the only difference is the name."

Adab Ibrahim, the mosque's point person for the peace walk, said that she attended the Washington rally, and that she knows one of the women, who was misquoted. "She wouldn't sacrifice her son," said Ibrahim. "She meant she understood why people do anything to liberate Palestine."

Ibrahim, a Palestinian, said reconciliation is "a touchy subject" in her community. "You have people who are for peace, a just peace, and others who think they [Israelis] are the enemy, holding our people under occupation and killing them on a daily basis."

She said she counters with "examples of our prophets and how they brought peace, and how the best-loved people by God are the peacemakers. That is a quote from the Koran."

In the end, she said, most people at Al-Aqsa would probably accept a two-state solution. As would most of the Jews who planned the walk with her, she said: "That is our common ground."

Rabbi Aaron Bisno of Congregation Rodeph Shalom, end point of the walk, said he had heard only positive feedback about the event's "potential for bringing like-minded people together."

But Burt Siegel, head of the Jewish Community Relations Council, has grown "disheartened" by Muslim-Jewish dialogue and is wary of today's walk.

"I have found more people in the Jewish community who are willing to be critical of the leadership of the government of Israel than leaders in the Arab American community willing to be critical of Arafat and Hamas," Siegel said. "After several years of terrorism, it makes us wonder, are their sensibilities what we hope they are, that murdering civilians is never legitimate?"

Cantor George Mordecai of Beth Zion-Beth Israel, long a peace activist, said he had gotten grief "from Jews all over the community" because of his participation. "They think I'm naive, that the peace term is loaded," he said.

"Maybe I'm being overly optimistic and foolish," Mordecai said, "but I think it's primarily about fear, and that the more people see of the other, the more they walk or talk or go to concerts or even barbecues, the more they work on activities that bring people together, little by little the fear erodes. Hopefully."

Contact Faith Life editor Jim Remsen at 215-854-5621 or jremsen@phillynews.com.

Muslim-Jewish peace walk today faces a gantlet of emotions

If You Go

The Jewish-Muslim reconciliation walk begins at 1 p.m. today with prayers at the Al-Aqsa mosque, 1501 Germantown Ave. It heads south to St. Augustine Church, Fourth Street south of Vine; the Liberty Bell, Sixth and Market Streets, and Congregation Rodeph Shalom, 615 N. Broad St., where concluding festivities will be held. Information: 215-765-2743, Ext. 13.

Notes

Faith Life

Load-Date: August 25, 2005

End of Document

14 Palestinians Killed in Battle As Israelis Raid Camps in Gaza

The New York Times

March 8, 2004 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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Section: Section A; Column 4; Foreign Desk; Pg. 1

Length: 1014 words

Byline: By JAMES BENNET

Dateline: NUSEIRAT REFUGEE CAMP, Gaza Strip, March 7

Body

Israeli armored forces raided the outskirts of two neighboring refugee camps in the Gaza Strip on Sunday, igniting a gun-and-grenade battle that lasted for hours and left 14 Palestinians dead.

At least 10 of the dead were gunmen, but Palestinians said 3 were unarmed youths. They included a 9-year-old boy who had told his mother he was going to school but apparently went to watch the fighting instead. No Israelis were wounded.

It was the deadliest single Israeli raid in more than a year. Witnesses and the army described a bedlam of gunfire and explosions of grenades and firebombs after Israeli tanks and helicopter gunships moved on the camps, and mosque loudspeakers summoned gunmen to jihad.

After dawn, hundreds of children and teenagers, some of them flinging stones from improvised slings, swarmed the uncertain edges of the congested battlefield, a mix of orange orchards in fragrant bloom and fetid, sandy camp lanes.

Eighty-three people were injured, including 40 under the age of 18, according to the Palestinian Health Ministry.

The Israeli Army said soldiers were searching for weapons and for militants responsible for firing mortar bombs and antitank missiles at nearby Jewish settlements. The Israeli forces eventually withdrew under what the army described as extraordinarily heavy Palestinian fire, including antitank missiles, mortar bombs and rocket-propelled grenades. They did not make any arrests or seize any weapons.

The raid came a day after a brazen suicidal Palestinian assault on an Israeli-controlled boundary crossing from Gaza. That attack on Saturday killed the four assailants and two Palestinian policemen without harming any Israelis. It suggested a new daring by militants here as the governing Palestinian Authority crumbles and the Israeli prime minister, Ariel Sharon, speaks of an eventual, unilateral withdrawal from most or all of the Gaza Strip.

Raanan Gissin, spokesman for Mr. Sharon, said of the raid on Sunday, "This is a signal to show that even though there are talks about disengagement, we are not going to let them use these camps to launch their attacks."

He said soldiers tried to avoid hurting civilians. He expressed regret for the deaths of the children but said: "The children flock to the gunmen. No doubt the gunmen are using them."

14 Palestinians Killed in Battle As Israelis Raid Camps in Gaza

Palestinians accused Israel of staging the attack in hopes of drawing out and killing militants.

"I think the Israelis did this so that the militant people would come and confront them, and they could get them all at once," said Awad Quader, 27, a chicken farmer who lives near the center of where the fighting was.

In a statement, the Islamic militant group **Hamas** identified nine of the dead as members of its violent wing. Two were known to be particularly active in firing mortar bombs and rockets at Israeli targets.

Nuseirat and the neighboring Bureij camp held a ritual on Sunday that is grimly familiar to the residents. Middle-aged and elderly men gathered to sit quietly on plastic chairs outside the homes of the dead, **women** gathered to sit on the floors inside, and young men and boys lofted the bodies through the streets in roiling crowds, shouting that God is great.

The body of Mahmoud Younis, 9, his face rigid and yellow, was wrapped in a bright green **Hamas** flag as it was carried to the low door of his cinder-block home. One man repeatedly fired a silver pistol into the air outside as the body was borne in and then carried away for burial.

Mahmoud's mother, Jamila Younis, 35, said her son had gotten up at 6, put on his school uniform and said he wanted to go to class despite the fighting. "Instead of going to school, I think he and his friends went to the place where there was the incursion," she said, her eyes red. "His friends came and said, 'Your son died.' He got a bullet in the head and also in his foot."

Outside the Younis home were more than a dozen members of Al Aksa Martyrs Brigades, a militant group connected to the mainstream Fatah faction. They wore black hoods with black or green mesh over their eyes. Some had rocket-propelled grenades strapped to their waists along with the Kalashnikov rifles in their hands.

Their leader, a man of 40 who did not wear a hood and gave the nom de guerre Abu Jandal, said Mr. Sharon was confused about his own intentions but added, "The pressure of resistance from here will force him to withdraw from Gaza and the West Bank."

He said the Israeli raid would recruit more militants for him. "All these young kids are asking to be martyrs," he said, gesturing at dozens of boys who crowded around him and his gunmen. "They want to be bombs."

Judging by their route of withdrawal, the Israeli forces began their raid from just north of here at the Israeli settlement of Netzarim. Palestinian witnesses said that, at the start of the raid, soldiers seized at least two tall buildings and set up sniper posts.

The army said soldiers were seeking to track down a militant cell centered at the Bureij camp that has fired dozens of mortar bombs during the past two months at Netzarim and the settlement of Kfar Darom, south of here. Those attacks have not caused injuries, but an army spokesman said they could have caused great harm.

The Israeli Army frequently enters Palestinian cities in the West Bank in what it says are searches for wanted men, and gunmen now seldom resist those raids. But in Gaza, militants continue to fight back. An Israeli raid into Gaza City on Feb. 11 left 12 Palestinians dead, and another on Jan. 28 left 8 dead. In both cases, most of the dead were gunmen.

The army said the fight here was unusual in that the Palestinians responded so quickly, and with considerable firepower.

The Palestinian fire actually intensified during the withdrawal, the army said. At least one armored vehicle was partly disabled and had to be rescued. Some children climbed onto halted armored vehicles, the army said.

After the Israelis withdrew at midmorning, a hole four feet deep and six feet across gaped in Salahadin Road between the camps, where militants had detonated a mine.

14 Palestinians Killed in Battle As Israelis Raid Camps in Gaza

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Graphic

Photos: Residents of the Nuseirat Refugee Camp took cover as Israeli troops and Palestinians exchanged fire. (Photo by Agence France-Presse--Getty Images)(pg. A1)

A wounded Palestinian boy was carried yesterday during the raid on the Bureij refugee camp in the Gaza Strip. Palestinians said 3 of the 14 killed were unarmed youths, including a 9-year-old boy. (Photo by Getty Images)(pg. A9)Map of Israel highlighting the Nuseirat refugee camp: The Nuseirat refugee camp held a ritual to commemorate the dead. (pg. A9)

Load-Date: March 8, 2004

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Democracy drive: But the US must learn to accept whatever it produces

Financial Times (London, England)

June 22, 2005 Wednesday

London Edition 1

Copyright 2005 The Financial Times Limited

Section: LEADER; Pg. 16

Length: 488 words

Body

When George W. Bush first sounded the trumpet call for Arab democracy a couple of years ago, some of the reaction was cynical. The president was seen as trying to find a rationale for invading Iraq in the absence of any mass destruction weapons there, or giving in to US neo-conservative pressure to make the Middle East a safer environment for Israel, or both.

Yet it is becoming a consistent theme of his administration. His secretary of state, Condoleezza Rice, recently claimed establishing democracy in the Middle East will be "the historical test" for Mr Bush's entire presidency. This week she took the policy beyond vague generalities by delivering a blunt speech on it in Egypt, a country whose alignment with the US and pharaonic approach towards democracy epitomise Washington's dilemma.

She welcomed the move by Hosni Mubarak, the president, to allow contested presidential and parliamentary elections. But she went on to call for an end to long-standing emergency laws and arbitrary justice, and for objective standards and outside monitoring of elections. In the same speech, Ms Rice praised "brave citizens" for demanding accountable government in Saudi Arabia, and criticised the kingdom's decision to jail three Saudis for petitioning for a constitutional monarchy. After meeting Ms Rice in Riyadh, the Saudi foreign minister retorted that the pace of Saudi reform would be dictated by "the judgment of its people", a phrase of unwitting irony.

So, contrary to some initial suspicion, the US appears not to be sparing its friends in the region from its democracy drive, nor letting security or oil interests blatantly take precedence over its freedom campaign. But its barbs about Iran's current presidential election still lay it open to the charge that it is operating a double standard against its enemies. Ms Rice claimed that the disqualification of some 1,000 candidates and all women from Iran's presidential poll showed democracy was "moving backwards" there. That may be true, in the sense that no reformist candidate has survived to contest Friday's run-off vote, but hardly in terms of the initial vetting procedure for candidates that is no more draconian than Mr Mubarak has arranged in Egypt.

The US also has to face the awkward prospect that Islamist parties will prosper in free elections. This reflects the appeal that religion has to people in stifled societies and the fact that Islamist-oriented parties are increasingly turning to politics in the Middle East - whether it is the triumph of the Shia in Iraq's January election that was so lauded in Washington, or the electoral plans of Hamas in Palestine or Hizbollah in Lebanon.

This may be discomfiting to many in the west, not just in Washington. But if the peoples of the Middle East are to have their say, their verdict must be respected. Or, as Ms Rice said in Cairo, "the fear of free choices can no longer justify the denial of liberty".

Democracy drive: But the US must learn to accept whatever it produces

Load-Date: June 21, 2005

End of Document

As Pullout Approaches, Sharon Orders Closure in Gaza; THE SITUATION

The Forward

July 15, 2005

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Section: News; Pg. 5

Length: 1236 words

Byline: Ofer Shelah

Dateline: TEL AVIV

Body

With barely a month left before the official beginning of Israel's withdrawal from Gaza - the August 15 date isn't likely to change, despite last-ditch efforts by right-wingers inside and outside Ariel Sharon's government - the fate of the disengagement plan is now more in the hands of the people in the field than in those of the decision-makers. As the events of last few days made clear, there is much that can still go wrong, some of it impossible to control. Still, the message from those in charge of implementing the plan, both military and civilian, was clear: The evacuation will take place - and perhaps with less opposition than feared.

July 18 will mark what security officials call the first major test of the two sides' patience, resolve and ability to communicate. Opponents of disengagement have called for a massive three-day rally at the Kissufim Crossing, the southernmost crossing between Gaza and Israel proper. The army, fearing that the rally would turn into an attempt at mass infiltration into the Gaza settlements, decided to declare the entire Gaza district a closed military zone, opening it only to residents. Sharon made the declaration Wednesday.

The closure was something the army had resisted up till the last minute. Just a day earlier, a senior officer in the Southern Command had told the Forward that closure would be instituted only as a last resort, given the burden it would place on the settler community. However, the growing pace and intensity of confrontations between the army and anti-disengagement extremists appears to have brought events to a head.

The July 18 rally is aimed at creating pressure on wavering Likud members, notably Finance Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, in advance of a scheduled July 20 Knesset vote on postponing the evacuation.

But Defense officials were convinced that the rally's unstated purpose is to position thousands of militants near the Gaza separation fence for a mass infiltration. Opposition leaders, sensing that resistance among settlers inside Gaza is weakening as evacuation time approaches, openly aim to place as many of their own people as possible inside the district. The recruits will be drawn from residents of settlements in Judea and Samaria and of pre-1967 Israel. The hope is twofold: to make the evacuation itself more difficult by maximizing active resistance, and, security officials fear, to provoke clashes with Palestinians in hopes of fueling an explosion that will cancel the evacuation altogether.

The army is concerned that some of the infiltrators may even cut the security fence between Israel and Gaza to enable unmonitored passage into the district.

As Pullout Approaches, Sharon Orders Closure in Gaza THE SITUATION

Defense officials were alarmed by the proliferation of incidents of violence and near violence in the last week. On Monday, Jerusalem's central bus station was evacuated after police found what turned out to be a dummy bomb placed there by disengagement opponents as a warning. The incident infuriated the country's leaders, with Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz declaring that the opposition had crossed a line "from protest to a reality of near-terrorism."

The following day, a melee erupted between police and Jewish militants in Gaza after police set up a makeshift encampment and arrested an opposition leader, Noam Livnat, the brother of Israel's education minister. Livnat had been barred from Gaza by a restraining order. Settlers surrounded the police and tried to prevent his arrest by force.

Army officials for weeks had resisted calls for a closure of Gaza. The senior officer called closure a "nightmare scenario" for the district's settlers, who have been free of the sort of burdensome lockdown that Palestinians have experienced repeatedly over the past four years.

A full closure was imposed on Gaza settlers last month, following clashes with Jewish extremists from outside Gaza who had set up a stronghold at a beachfront hotel at Neveh Dekalim. It took only 18 hours for the militants to capitulate.

In general, those in charge of the evacuation said, the Gaza settler leadership is caught in a vise. After months of unbending defiance, many of those to be evacuated have given up hope of a last-minute miracle and are secretly preparing to leave. Many, the officer said, are now concerned mainly with "mundane" matters, such as future jobs and their children's fall schooling. They are also aware of a new government ruling that those who do not vacate or at least remove their belongings by August 17 - 48 hours after the evacuation officially begins - will lose everything, down to furniture and appliances. Many, he predicted, will remove their effects, send their children to their new homes and remain in Gaza to put up one last, symbolic protest.

Yonatan Bassi, head of the Evacuation Administration, this week publicly made a similar prediction. In an interview with Ha'aretz, Bassi claimed that two of the four settlements to be evacuated in the northern West Bank, Ganim and Kadim, are already nearly empty. He predicted a "great wave" of residents leaving Gaza on their own as August 15 approaches, and estimated that only 2,500 people, about one-third of the Gaza total, would be in their homes when troops arrive.

This may seem unduly optimistic, given the dark predictions of massive resistance and pitched battles that have filled the mainstream Israeli media in recent weeks. However, a military source noted, Bassi and the military command are in closer touch than most prognosticators with the actual activists in the field - the settlers' "battalion commanders," as one officer called them.

What they cannot predict, some officials admitted, are the actions of a small, secretive and dangerous minority of extremists. Scenarios of what can be expected from those people - most of whom are not Gaza residents - include intentional clashes with Palestinians, perhaps even deliberately falling hostage to terrorist organizations, so as to divert public opinion and military forces away from the evacuation.

One whole army brigade - the brigade that led the fighting against the Palestinians in the area during the last five years - will be deployed to create a buffer zone between the evacuation operation and the Palestinians. Its twofold task will be to prevent the "evacuation under fire" scenario that terrorists hope for as well as to forestall provocation by Israeli extremists.

However, the Palestinian side continues to be highly undependable. Palestinian Authority Chairman Mahmoud Abbas is described by military sources as "terribly weak." Hamas, the largest and most powerful of Palestinian opposition organizations, has indicated that it supports the Israeli withdrawal, which Hamas leaders view as a victory for the armed intifada. It has held firmly to the cease-fire signed in Cairo in February. But several smaller organizations, most notably Islamic Jihad, have not signed on. Abbas seems powerless to stop them.

The tragic results of the impasse became evident in Netanya on Tuesday. After months of calm inside Israel itself, four Israeli women were killed outside a shopping mall in the first suicide bombing in Israel in almost six months.

As Pullout Approaches, Sharon Orders Closure in Gaza THE SITUATION

The return of the horror to the heart of sovereign Israel strengthened the popular view, held even by some who support the disengagement, that the withdrawal will be followed by a new surge of violence. It also made the opposition to the plan even more determined to try and stop it.

Graphic

IMAGE

Load-Date: June 14, 2006

End of Document

LONDON BOMBINGS: WHAT MAKES A SUICIDE BOMBER?

The Independent (London)

July 13, 2005, Wednesday

Copyright 2005 Independent Print Ltd

Section: Final Edition; NEWS; Pg. 9

Length: 1169 words

Byline: DONALD MACINTYRE

Highlight: Clockwise from top: A Palestinian militant with explosives; Abdul Rahman Makdad, a recruiter for suicide missions; Marwan al-Shehhi and Mohamed Atta, two of the 9/11 hijackers, and Reem Raiyshi, a suicide bomber, with one of her children REX FEATURES/EL MUNDO/GETTY

Body

Abdul Rahman Makdad, the man who organised two bus bombings in Jerusalem that killed 19 people, calmly described how he and the bomber Mohammed Za'ul, 23, had eaten breakfast before Za'ul set out on the first mission in January last year.

In an interview with The Independent in April 2004, he said they had had 'ordinary conversation' as Makdad prepared the explosives the night before the bombing. He added coolly: 'There was no need at all to convince this man to carry out the operation. He himself chose to be a martyr. The easiest thing [about such operations] is to find a martyr. In our nation we have thousands of people who want to be martyrs.'

It is during the Israeli-Palestinian conflict over the past five years that suicide bombing has been most studied.

On the one hand, the Israeli experience provides some answers " not least through the frequent arrests and interrogation of failed suicide bombers and the dispatchers and organisers of successful ones " to the still deeply disturbing question of why young men, or, increasingly among Palestinian militants at least, young women, are prepared so readily to sacrifice their lives, even for a cause in which they believe.

On the other hand, that research " extensive though it is " may give fewer clues in what motivated the quite different West Yorkshire cell who now appear to have perpetrated the first suicide bombings in Britain.

It is true that techniques like the videos made by Palestinian " and in some cases Iraqi " suicide attackers before a mission, or the last dinner enjoyed by their Tamil Tiger counterparts with a revered idol from the movement, may be ways of locking the bomber in and preventing second thoughts. All the evidence, however, is that most attackers approach their missions with relatively light hearts, confident of its absolute rightness, in the way that Makdad described.

That doesn't, of course, mean that suicide bombers in different countries are motivated in the same way. Nevertheless, Boaz Ganor, the head of the Herzliya International Policy Institute for Counter-Terrorism, believes that counter-intuitively the bomber has taken 'an entirely rational' decision based on his indoctrination in a version of Islam which bars suicide but which encourages 'martyrdom' and which explicitly ensures that the martyr will go straight to paradise " bringing, at least in the Palestinian case, honour among his peers in the process.

LONDON BOMBINGS: WHAT MAKES A SUICIDE BOMBER?

And although there is little tradition of martyrdom in Sunni Islam, religion and the concept of a translation from a frequently miserable earthly world for a heavenly one certainly plays a central part in many cases. It is a fact that a note left in an airport car park from Mohamed Atta, the leader of the suicide bombers who in September 2001 did most to change the world order, exhorted his comrades to remember the 72 virgins they would encounter in paradise. But most of the recent literature on the subject " three books have been published in the past few months " shrinks from providing one simple explanation. The earthly benefits of money for the 'martyr's' family from the Palestinian armed factions " and, until his toppling, Saddam Hussein " may be part of the explanation on occasions.

You didn't have to stay long at the pitifully dilapidated home in the West Bank village of Rantis of the 17-year-old militant who bombed a bus stop outside Tel Aviv, on the day in September 2003 that saw two bombings in quick succession, to realise that his family " the mother deeply grieving, the aunt less convincingly professing her 'pride' in her nephew's sacrifice " was desperately poor. But that, too, is no more than one of many elements of the story even among Palestinian militants and is unlikely to figure at all in the machinations of al-Qa'ida.

In an attempt to render the multiple complexities of a suicide bombers' motivation, two authors, Anne Marie Oliver and Paul Steinberg, suggest: 'What the rank-and-file [of Hamas] seemed to live and die for, in the end, was neither hospitals nor politics nor ideology nor religion nor the Apocalypse, but rather an ecstatic camaraderie in the face of death on the path of Allah.'

Another expert, Louise Richardson, the executive dean at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard University, pointed out that among suicide bombers there was often 'more interest in the dying than the killing, as evidenced by the sometimes remarkable lack of attention to deploying the suicide bomb to maximum effect.'

Although this is no doubt true on occasions, the terrible flip-side is often an apparent indifference to the death of victims in cases like last week's, where the bombers have tried to maximise the killing. Abdul Rahman Makdad was at his most chilling 15 months ago when he claimed he could not even remember the numbers of the buses whose bombing he had organised in Jerusalem in January and February 2004.

But Ms Richardson questions whether the motivation for suicide bombing is really as unique as it is made out to be, adding: 'In all our societies we reserve the highest honours for those who have given their lives for their country. Having read these studies one is left wondering whether suicide bombers are so different. Had the members of the Hamas cell whose final videotape is depicted by Oliver and Steinberg ever learnt Latin, and had an eye for dramatic effect, One could imagine them ending their video reciting in unison Horace's ode into the camera: 'Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori.'

And yet this does nothing to explain, much less confront, a network like al-Qa'ida, which unlike the Palestinian factions does not even have a comprehensibly focused national goal and yet which has the power to kill innocent civilians on a global scale. Much less could it help with the rootless individuals who may be connected to extremist organisations by the internet, as depicted by Dr Rosemary Hollis since last Thursday's carnage.

Nor, finally, does it do justice to the deeply disturbing crises posed to free societies by suicide bombers, problems that genuinely can be described as unique. They cannot easily be described as 'cowardly' " the word routinely used to describe the Irish Republican bomber who slips a carrier bag under a chair in a pub before making his escape; or 'evil', when he may think he or she is doing something good. They cannot be 'hunted down' by the forces of law and order when they have died with their victims and when their names may even be proudly proclaimed by their comrades. They cannot be subject to punishment, let alone vengeance.

Dr Ganor rightly points out that almost all modern suicide bombings are highly organised, rather than the alternative of what he calls 'personal initiative attacks', and argues that it is the organisations which therefore have to be confronted.

True though that may be, it is far from clear how easy that confrontation is going to be in the case of the slaughter in London's first suicide bombing.

LONDON BOMBINGS: WHAT MAKES A SUICIDE BOMBER?

Load-Date: July 13, 2005

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TERROR IN LONDON: WHAT MAKES A SUICIDE BOMBER?

The Independent (London)

July 13, 2005, Wednesday

Copyright 2005 Independent Print Ltd

Section: First Edition; NEWS; Pg. 7

Length: 1175 words

Byline: DONALD MACINTYRE

Highlight: Clockwise from top: A Palestinian militant with explosives; Abdul Rahman Makdad, a recruiter for suicide missions; Marwan al-Shehhi and Mohamed Atta, two of the 9/11 hijackers, and Reem Raiyshi, a suicide bomber, with one of her children REX FEATURES/EL MUNDO/GETTY

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TERROR IN LONDON: WHAT MAKES A SUICIDE BOMBER?

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TERROR IN LONDON: WHAT MAKES A SUICIDE BOMBER?

ISRAELI BOMB ATTACK, PAGE 23

Load-Date: July 13, 2005

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Israeli officials downplay threat against Arafat: Declare no immediate plans to kill him. 'I'm not afraid to die,' Palestinian leader says, but security around him has tightened

The Gazette (Montreal, Quebec)

April 26, 2004 Monday Final Edition

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Section: News; Pg. A16

Length: 403 words

Byline: LAURIE COPANS

Dateline: JERUSALEM

Body

Israel has no immediate plans to kill Yasser Arafat despite Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's latest threats against the Palestinian leader, Israel's vice-premier said yesterday.

Sharon said Friday he was no longer bound by a pledge he made to the United States not to harm Arafat. The comments infuriated Palestinians, and the White House said U.S. President George W. Bush remains opposed to attacks on Arafat.

AP

Arafat said yesterday he isn't afraid to die.

Ahead of an Israeli cabinet meeting yesterday, Vice-Premier Ehud Olmert and Minister Gideon Ezra said Sharon has no immediate plans to expel or assassinate Arafat. Instead, they said, Sharon had repeated a long-standing Israeli position.

"The prime minister doesn't intend to carry out anything next week or today or tomorrow," Olmert, a Sharon confidant, told Army Radio. "He just repeated a general principle regarding Arafat, regarding the immunity that he thought he had."

Last September, Israel's cabinet decided Arafat should be "removed" after a pair of suicide bombings killed 15 Israelis. While Israel has repeatedly threatened Arafat since then, Sharon took the threats to a new level Friday by revealing he had discussed the Israeli position in a meeting with Bush.

Israel has killed dozens of terrorists, including the leaders of the Islamic group Hamas, in targeted attacks during 31/2 years of fighting. But under U.S. pressure, it has left Arafat alone, confining him instead to his headquarters for two years.

About 400 Palestinian schoolchildren visited Arafat at his West Bank headquarters yesterday, chanting anti-Sharon slogans and calling for an end to Israel's siege of the Palestinian leader.

Speaking to reporters afterward, Arafat said he is not afraid to die.

"Our destiny is to be martyrs in this holy land," he said. "We stand fast here until the end of our lives."

Israeli officials downplay threat against Arafat: Declare no immediate plans to kill him. 'I'm not afraid to die,'
Palestinian leader says, but security around

Nonetheless, Palestinian officials said Arafat is taking the threats seriously. Hani al-Hassan, a senior official in Arafat's Fatah movement, said the group had decided to boost security around Arafat.

Sharon's threats appear to be aimed at winning support for his plan to withdraw from the Gaza Strip and four West Bank settlements.

An estimated 700 Arafat supporters, including about 300 gunmen, rallied in the Gaza town of Rafah yesterday. They hoisted Palestinian flags and Arafat posters, and a group of children burned an effigy of Sharon.

Graphic

Color Photo: BRENNAN LINSLEY, AP; Israeli border police arrest a woman who joined a march by 200 women yesterday against Israel's separation barrier in West Bank village of Bidou. Officers on horseback chased other protesters.

Load-Date: April 26, 2004

Four views of the opposition to U.S.

Star Tribune (Minneapolis, MN)

April 11, 2004, Sunday, Metro Edition

Copyright 2004 Star Tribune

Section: NEWS; Pg. 15A

Length: 470 words

Byline: Eric Black; Staff Writer

Body

Michael Rubin of the American Enterprise Institute just returned from Iraq, where he worked for the U.S. Defense Department and advised the Coalition Provisional Authority.

"The Sky Is Not Falling," was the headline on the analysis he wrote in National Review Online, after the fighting began between U.S. troops and Al-Sadr's militia.

The outbreak of open combat with Al-Sadr will lead to a spike in violence but will ultimately make the U.S. mission more successful by removing an anti-democracy outlaw and demonstrating to Iraqis that the United States stands for the rule of law, Rubin said in an interview.

Rubin sees Al-Sadr as a hireling of the Iranians, a mullah of little religious legitimacy, and a leader with few followers.

During his time in Iraq, Rubin saw evidence that Al-Sadr was steadily losing influence because he was unable to provide jobs or other makings of a better life for his followers, because his goal of establishing a theocracy is out of sync with the wishes of most Shiites, and because Al-Sadr, who tried to declare himself president in January, is too greedy for power himself.

Al-Sadr's thugs have threatened women for violating strict Islamic dress codes, broken into homes and smashed television sets, Taliban-style, to shelter Iraqis from un-Islamic messages.

Many Iraqis with whom Rubin spoke were angry that the Sadrists could get away with such conduct and demanded that the Americans do something about it.

"A lot of our adversaries have lost their fear of us and believe that they can get away with what they're doing. By taking on Al-Sadr, we prove that that is not the case and we demonstrate that we're serious about defending the interim constitution," Rubin said.

In the Sunni region, Rubin believes, Baathists are less of a problem than last year because the United States had much unheralded success at rolling up the Baathist cells. On the other hand, it leaves Sunnis, for the first time in Iraqi history, without a clear leadership structure. Much of the current trouble around Baghdad is the result of would-be leaders trying to establish their credentials by demonstrating their opposition to the occupation, Rubin said.

Four views of the opposition to U.S.

He also believes that followers of Wahhabism - an extreme Saudi-based fundamentalist form of Islam - have taken over some Baghdad mosques and are converting some angry young Iraqis to the message that killing foreigners will be rewarded by God.

Like Schanzer, Rubin believes foreign terrorists are operating in Iraq. And Al-Sadr, who has embraced Hezbollah and **Hamas** - both considered terrorists by the U.S. government - could be called a terrorist. But the real reason fighting Al-Sadr is part of the war against terrorism is that "establishing the rule of law is the antidote to future terrorism," he said.

Graphic

PHOTO

Load-Date: April 13, 2004

End of Document

Gaza rocked by fighting, demolitions

The Record (Kitchener-Waterloo, Ontario)

May 15, 2004 Saturday Final Edition

Copyright 2004 Metroland Media Group Ltd

Section: FRONT; Pg. A18; NEWS

Length: 441 words

Dateline: RAFAH, GAZA STRIP

Body

Heavy fighting raged in the Rafah refugee camp yesterday, killing two Israeli soldiers and a Palestinian man and trapping frightened residents in their homes, the Israeli army and witnesses said.

Troops seized several houses and army bulldozers knocked down at least nine buildings on the edge of the camp, trying to secure the area for soldiers searching for the remains of five others killed in a blast earlier in the week.

Military officials said that once this search was over, the army may launch a wide-scale move to expand a military patrol road between the camp and the Egyptian border -- a move that would see hundreds of houses flattened.

Associated Press

During yesterday's clashes, gunmen moved through the narrow alleys of the camp, firing homemade rockets and rifles at the troops. The Israelis responded with missiles and heavy machine-gun fire.

One soldier was shot as he escorted a Palestinian women into a house troops had commandeered, the army said. Soldiers who tried to evacuate him were hit by sniper fire that killed another soldier and wounded two more, the army said.

The militant Islamic group Hamas claimed responsibility for the shooting.

On the Palestinian side, one man was killed in a missile strike and a second died when an explosive device blew up prematurely. Eight Palestinians were wounded, two seriously.

Local officials in Rafah said bulldozers tore down nine homes yesterday close to the patrol road that runs between Rafah and the Egyptian border.

Since the outbreak of fighting in September 2000, the Israeli military has razed 1,026 houses in Rafah and damaged 767, local officials say.

As armoured bulldozers descended on their homes yesterday, frantic residents waved white flags, removed valuables in cartons and plastic bags, and carted away furniture.

Palestinian cabinet minister Saeb Erekat called for American intervention to halt the destruction.

Gaza rocked by fighting, demolitions

"This is a catastrophe. At a time when the Israelis are speaking of disengaging from Gaza this is really re-engaging," he said. "I hope that President (George W.) Bush, who says he is encouraged by disengagement, will interfere to stop the demolitions."

The latest violence has triggered hot debate over Israel's presence in the area, which is home to 7,500 Israelis and 1.3 million Palestinians.

Also in Gaza yesterday, Israeli troops shot at a car travelling near the northern settlement of Netzarim, medics said. A Palestinian women, 27, was seriously wounded and her three small children were lightly wounded.

Violence also continued in the West Bank. In the Tulkarem refugee camp, soldiers shot and wounded three Palestinians, the army and witnesses said.

Graphic

Photo: ASSOCIATED PRESS; A Palestinian boy carries belongings as an Israeli armoured bulldozer demolishes a house in the Rafah refugee camp in the Gaza Strip yesterday.

Load-Date: May 15, 2004

EVERY ONE A LOSER IN LAND OF BEAUTY

Birmingham Evening Mail

March 26, 2004, Friday

Copyright 2004 Midland Independent Newspapers plc

Section: C1 Edition; NEWS; Pg. 28

Length: 457 words

Body

IT'S a bit much for world leaders to condemn Israel for wiping out Hamas leader Sheikh Yassin.

Were Britain or America to have captured Osama bin Laden dead or alive, jubilant 'gotcha' messages would have dominated headlines.

But that's the trouble with disputed territories, isn't it? One man's freedom fighter is another's murderer.

What emerges from the Middle East this week is the life and death necessity of preventing Arabs and Jews tearing each other apart: the most pressing territorial problem on Earth and my heart is touched by both sides.

I know every inch of Jerusalem and the West Bank as well as I know Birmingham.

I've come to love its disparate peoples and recognise it as the most beautiful and spiritual region in the world - but the current hatred, exacerbated by Yassin's murder, seems baked into walls and paving stones.

How can there be tranquillity between two factions when one claims the land is their God-given right, while the other, dispossessed and povertystricken, live and die in refugee camps?

And Israel and Palestine share their tragedy. Both have right on their side.

My Jewish friends shrug off the notion that Israeli settlements on the West Bank are provocative.

'We make the desert bloom,' they say. 'Arab men sit in their coffee shops all day. You have only to see the state of what is now Israel back in the 1940s to realise the Arabs left it fallow.'

The Arabs shake their heads. 'It's our homeland,' they say. 'We have been robbed of everything.'

Both speak the truth. This is a stage that to the watching world throws up no good men or bad men. Only victims.

About ten years ago, during a relatively untroubled time, you could walk through East Jerusalem to the Arab bus station.

There you'd climb aboard a rickety vehicle and find a perch among families travelling with chickens and goats and, for just a shekel or so, you'd be driven through Manger Square in Bethlehem and up the dusty road to the West Bank.

EVERY ONE A LOSER IN LAND OF BEAUTY

Old women with henna coloured hair and black dresses with embroidered bodices would appear by the roadside from nowhere to climb aboard with grandchildren.

As the road looped like a dusky pink ribbon through greyish olive groves on hills that Christ would have walked, the passengers would pluck at Western sleeves, wanting to know, in halting English supplemented by gestures, where you came from.

Then it would be Ramallah and everyone would decant for tiny cups of black Arab coffee before the bus moaned and complained its way up to Nablus, heartland of Arab nationalism.

Now there is terrible anger here, sending out tentacles of terror to Tel Aviv and Jerusalem where the Israelis - many of them Arabs, don't forget - hold their breaths and pray.

God help them all in the weeks ahead.

Load-Date: March 26, 2004

End of Document

SHARON FREES 500 PALESTINIANS TO AID ABBAS

The Independent (London)

February 14, 2005, Monday

Copyright 2005 Independent Print Ltd

Section: First Edition; FOREIGN NEWS; Pg. 23

Length: 513 words

Byline: ERIC SILVER IN JERUSALEM

Body

ISRAEL APPROVED the release of 500 Palestinian prisoners yesterday in what Prime Minister Ariel Sharon called a goodwill gesture to bolster the new Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and build mutual trust. Officials began compiling a second list of 400 to follow within three months.

The prisoner release was in a package of gestures Mr Sharon said could increase mutual trust between Israel and the Palestinian Authority after last week's ceasefire agreement, which was endorsed on Saturday by Hamas and Islamic Jihad on condition that Israel kept its side of the bargain.

In an attempt to broaden popular support for Mahmoud Abbas, also known as Abu Mazen, 25 per cent of prisoners in the first batch belong to the radical militias and 75 per cent to his mainstream al-Fatah. Israel waived its earlier insistence that only those who had completed two-thirds of their sentence would be eligible, but it is still refusing to free any who killed Israelis. But an organisation supporting the 8,000 prisoners protested that the release was inadequate. Its leader, Ramzi Najjar, said: " Most are prisoners who had almost completed their sentences. We want women and sick prisoners released, as well as those who have spent many years behind bars."

Mr Sharon has also agreed to allow 56 gunmen expelled to the Gaza Strip to return to their homes on the West Bank. They include 26 who barricaded themselves in Bethlehem's Church of the Nativity for a month in 2002. "We are freezing all proceedings against them as long as they refrain from terrorist activity," officials said. They added that 13 others, who were exiled to Europe after the Bethlehem siege, would be reviewed on a "case-by-case basis."

This week Israel is expected to begin restoring five West Bank towns to Palestinian security control. The first will be Jericho, which has been relatively quiet during the four and a half years of intifada violence. Tulkarem, Qalqiliya, Ramallah and Bethlehem will follow, but Israel is waiting to see how effective the Palestinian forces are before pulling back from hotspots that include Nablus, Jenin and Hebron.

On Mr Sharon's domestic front, he ordered law-enforcement agencies to crack down on pro-settler extremists threatening ministers and backbench supporters of his plan to evacuate the Gaza Strip and the northern West Bank.

Dalia Rabin, whose father Yitzhak was gunned down by a far-right fanatic in 1995, warned yesterday: "If we don't do enough now to stop the deterioration, we will again see the terrible spectacle of a prime minister assassinated." Meir Sheetrit, the transport minister, complained that he had received death threats to himself, his wife and children. But Mr Sheetrit, a defiant Likud dove overseeing the financial aspects of disengagement, said that he was not afraid.

SHARON FREES 500 PALESTINIANS TO AID ABBAS

Binyamin Ben-Eliezer, an Iraqi-born Labour Party minister, showed cabinet colleagues a letter, which read: "Arab blood is flowing through your veins. You must return to Iraq to defend Saddam Hussein."

Mr Ben-Eliezer, a retired brigadier- general, left Iraq as a teenager in 1950.

Load-Date: February 14, 2005

End of Document

Cynicism ignores positive possibilities

University Wire

November 2, 2005 Wednesday

Copyright 2005 Independent Florida Alligator via U-Wire

Section: COLUMN

Length: 560 words

Byline: by Andrew Bare, Independent Florida Alligator; **SOURCE:** U. Florida

Dateline: GAINESVILLE, Fla.

Body

Some centuries ago, Francois-Rene de Chateaubriand, a French author and politician, told a colleague, "You are not superior just because you see the world in an odious light."

Too often we forget that. Too often we become so entangled in the atrocities of the world, so overwhelmed by our seemingly innumerable woes, that the mere thought of optimism seems quaint and laughable.

For Americans, the rest of the world often seems to be a mere compilation of tragedies, death on top of death on top of death - a neverending series of failures. Feeding children, curing disease, halting wars, these are difficult enough without even thinking about spreading democracy.

The recent past has only fed the increasing pessimism of this country. Unfortunately, when we say "this country," we increasingly mean "the left." Because in (justifiably) opposing the Iraqi war or criticizing the conduct of the war on terror, many Democrats and other leftists have descended to a level of cynicism that's no better than the rah-rah jingoism of Fox News.

What we've forgotten is that cynicism is not a virtue; it's a trait forced on us by necessity. We've begun to take so much pride in our sneering pessimism that it doesn't occur to us that good can still be done.

We live in a world of death and destruction and tyranny, but we also live in a world where great things can happen.

In war-torn and poverty-stricken Liberia, young citizens carried George Weah, a former soccer star, to a first-place finish in the initial round of their extraordinary elections Oct. 11. Weah will face Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf in a runoff election Nov. 8.

The government of Afghanistan announced two weeks ago the results of successful parliamentary elections. Sixty-eight of the 249 seats went to women.

Other historical dictatorships have taken the initial steps toward free governance. Iraqi voters approved a new constitution Oct. 15 and will choose their parliamentary representatives in December. Palestinians are ironing out the details of their own parliamentary elections.

Cynicism ignores positive possibilities

None of these cases would necessarily make inspiring additions to a "Democracy on the March" film. Weah is exceptionally popular but lacks political experience or much in the way of formal education. It is a combination that has, in the past, shown a tendency to produce tragedy.

A number of seats in the Afghan elections were won by warlords or religious fundamentalists.

And unfortunately, the terrorist group **Hamas** will be allowed to run in the Palestinian elections.

But the creation of a democracy is almost always an evolutionary process, not a revolutionary one. The Magna Carta hardly resembles a modern constitution in its liberality. The Declaration of Independence was inspiring but holds no force of law. And we forget our first ruling document, the Articles of Confederation, proved to be a thoroughly ineffective attempt.

None of the above should be read as a Pollyanna-ish approval of the Bush administration's foreign policy. And there must always be room for healthy skepticism from an opposition party.

But for the left to close its eyes to the possibilities inherent in nascent democracies, simply because those governments come into being during this administration, is intellectually dishonest. And worse, it constitutes a betrayal of the very ideals of liberalism.

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THE VENT

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Body

What's the big deal about Iowa? Georgia has larger turnouts for yard sales.

I've always loved the classics, especially cornflakes, shredded wheat and Rice Krispies.

My feelings are hurt that Georgia was about the only state not mentioned by Howard Dean during his "victory" tirade.

For the Journal-Constitution

Only in Atlanta could the Baptist Tabernacle become a nightclub and the Gold Club become a church.

Quick, some Ritalin for Howard Dean --- and make it industrial strength! Either that or ready the committal papers.

Mike Luckovich is not a comic. He is a political satirist, sort of like President Bush.

I don't know which Waffle House you go to, but my Waffle House waitress would put a Hooters' girl to shame.

Why is it that lemon juice is made with artificial flavor, while dishwashing liquid is made with real lemons?

Fellow flu victims: Does the cough ever go completely away, or is this the new soundtrack to my life?

I couldn't figure out why my chicken wrap was so hard to eat until my server informed me that the "deli paper" was still on there.

Sometimes I get the sudden urge to run around naked. But then I drink some Windex. It keeps me from streaking.

Men are like fine wine. They start out as grapes, and it's up to women to stomp the crap out of them until they turn into something acceptable to have dinner with.

I now need reading glasses to see "The Lockhorns."

In one visit, President Bush raised \$1.3 million. If Atlanta could get him to come once a week, its sewer problems would soon be solved.

THE VENT

The Vent is basically a better comics section without the drawings.

Sometimes the good you do doesn't do you any good at all.

I stayed up all night trying to win a date with Tad Hamilton. My wife was not happy.

To all teacher bashers: I invite any of you who have the guts to come and teach my third-graders for one day! I guarantee you will never bash us again, if you make it out alive.

I don't know why you Democrats hate Bush so much. He's one of you.

Just when I was starting to love Atlanta again, I hear the worst possible news --- Cynthia McKinney is coming back!

Hungry wildlife is invading! Yesterday in an Atlanta newsstand, I saw a 7-foot-tall black bear flipping through the illustrated restaurant guides.

A mother of two young children blows herself up, killing four, and **Hamas** calls this "a new tactic" in its war against Israelis. Let that sink in.

Ashton Kutcher's career is starting to look eerily like Keanu Reeves'.

The good news about the several hundred Bush protesters last week is that only about seven of them had to actually take time off from work.

Need to Vent? Call 404-222-8338; e-vent@ajc.com

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