

Date and Time: Friday, May 3, 2024 3:49:00PM EEST

Job Number: 223444012

Documents (100)

1. [*Israeli envoy denies force disproportionate*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

2. [*Middle East crisis: Al-Qaida: Bin Laden's deputy calls for global war on 'crusaders'*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

3. [*Bin Laden deputy urges Muslims everywhere to fight 'crusaders'*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

4. [*Guardian Weekly: Sympathy flees as rockets rain down on Sderot*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

5. [*Iraqi PM comments on alleged marine massacre*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to
Sep 30, 2006

6. [*Iran 'terrorists' can stop mullahs' nukes*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to
Sep 30, 2006

7. [*WHAT'S AHEAD THIS YEAR: PERISCOPE Cox Newspapers' foreign correspondents and free-lancers tell you what to expect from their part of the world in 2006.*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to
Sep 30, 2006

8. [*International Briefs*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to
Sep 30, 2006

9. [*U.S. universities should be more accessible to India students: Bush*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to
Sep 30, 2006

10. [*In the World*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

11. ['Our Peace Strategy Has Failed'](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

12. [Prime minister's press conference](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

13. [Unspooling difficult truths](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

14. [World briefing: Band of Brothers](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

15. [Comment & Debate: We need to engage with all strands of Muslim opinion: The British government is making a mistake if it believes it can understand a community by talking to just one organisation](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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Sep 30, 2006

16. [Once Again, Gazans Are Displaced by Israeli Occupiers](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to
Sep 30, 2006

17. [Deal directly with Latin America, Canada urged](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to
Sep 30, 2006

18. [Muslim who ran cartoons paying the price Efforts at dialogue get overwhelmed](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to
Sep 30, 2006

19. [Palestinians forced to scavenge for food on rubbish dumps](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to
Sep 30, 2006

20. [Experts discuss Middle East in U. Iowa area](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to
Sep 30, 2006

21. [Letters](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to
Sep 30, 2006

22. [Palestinians forced to scavenge for food on rubbish dumps](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to
Sep 30, 2006

23. [OPPOSITION, GOVT JOIN HANDS IN SLAMMING ISRAELI AGGRESSION AGAINST LEBANON](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
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Sep 30, 2006

24. [Islamists assail U.S. and its 'puppets' MIDDLE EAST CRISIS / Blaming U.S. policy for rising radicalism](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to
Sep 30, 2006

25. [Arab regimes fear Islamists' political dividend](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to
Sep 30, 2006

26. [Israel says no to a ceasefire](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

27. [On the Hopes for a Mideast Truce](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

28. [Sonic boom attacks spread trauma across Gaza TERRIFYING TACTICS](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

29. [Middle East conflict puts 'Rapture Index' up high: Websites anticipating Second Coming of Christ say events in Israel are proof the Bible's prophecy is being fulfilled](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

30. [Navy warships sail to rescue Britons caught in Beirut hell MoD forced to act as 10,000 nationals are trapped in war zone](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

31. [Israel is also part of the violence in the Mideast](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

32. [*London targeted by Hezbollah bombers Sleeper cells are poised to strike throughout Europe*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

33. [*Blogosphere abuzz with tales of Rapture, end of the world*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

34. [*In Focus*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

35. [*Mirror, mirror, on the world's wall*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

36. [*Israeli PM names pro-withdrawal foreign minister: One of few women to join upper ranks*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

37. [*Smooth-Talking Saudi Ambassador Fields Gentle Questions*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

38. [*Barrier's hardships can't compare to terrorist violence*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

39. [*Top Israel court backs curb on Arab spouses Ruling blocks reunification of families*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

40. [*INNOCENTS ABROAD*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

41. [*Married, but Israel forces them to live apart*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

42. [*In Focus*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

43. [*Almost three months of captivity*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

44. [*Passionate portrayal of an insecure idealist THEATRE*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

45. [*The familiar new face of British diplomacy FOREIGN OFFICE*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

46. [*Keeping the streets safe - from threats great and bird-sized - at home and abroad*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

47. [Letters / Letters](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

48. [Tribals seek revenge for Bajour killings](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

49. [Cartoon protests hit london Threat to Danish Embassy and demo outside BBC HQ](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

50. [THE CIVILIAN CASULTIES ARE AWFUL BUT ISRAEL IS FIGHTING FOR ITS EXISTENCE](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

51. [ARTICLE: Viceroy Dubya comes calling](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

52. [Hezbollah stages a massive 'victory' celebration](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to
Sep 30, 2006

53. [*The failure of Israeli unilateralism Middle East II*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to
Sep 30, 2006

54. [*Escalation feared as 10 reservists killed SINGLE STRIKE MIDDLE EAST CRISIS*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to
Sep 30, 2006

55. [*NAVY GO IN CARRIER TO EVACUATE BRITS FROM ISRAELI BLITZ 15 CHILDREN DIE AS JETS
POUND VILLAGERS HEZBOLLAH MUST BE REINED IN, SAYS BUSH*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to
Sep 30, 2006

56. [*Israeli phone calls mean attack is on the way*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to
Sep 30, 2006

57. [*CHILDREN KILLED IN AIRSTRIKE MASSACRE MIDDLE EAST 'JUST DAYS FROM OPEN WAR'*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to
Sep 30, 2006

58. [How Canadian labour can truly help Palestinians](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to
Sep 30, 2006

59. [Fire rains down in endless war](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to
Sep 30, 2006

60. [ADVANTAGE HIZBULLAH](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to
Sep 30, 2006

61. [13 killed as fighting intensifies in Gaza](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to
Sep 30, 2006

62. [Another lady who is not for turning CRISIS IN LEBANON](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

63. [*Arab world's reaction to alleged killing is muted American troops often commit such acts, many believe. Two U.S. probes are under way.*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

64. [*World briefing: Egypt finds democracy can wait*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

65. [*The world is not black and white even for one-eyed ignorants*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

66. [*At Home With the Olmerts in Israel 's Corridors of Power*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

67. [*WORLD IN BRIEF*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to
Sep 30, 2006

68. [Carroll: Statements on video made under captors' threats Former hostage arrives in Germany on a U.S. military transport plane](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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News

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Sep 30, 2006

69. [Letter - Evil men are using religion to pursue their own global agenda:](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
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Sep 30, 2006

70. [Cherie's sister: How I was strip searched by Israeli police ... and given just a piece of loo paper to cover up my modesty](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to
Sep 30, 2006

71. ['Radical Islam Week' sparks campus furor: University of Toronto](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to
Sep 30, 2006

72. [A candidate called Hitler: Jamal Abu Roub, running in the West Bank, doesn't mind his controversial nickname](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

73. [*Washington State U. group brings Jewish students together*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

74. [*Frankly, my dear, I do give a damn*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

75. [*Radical Islam seminar puts U of T on alert: Muslims urge boycott on grounds lectures will 'demonize and vilify'*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

76. [*Harper unlikely to ever be called 'Stevemeister'*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

77. [*'Radical Islam week' sparks U of T furor*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

78. [Danish leader draws battle lines Outrage is mixed with faith in allies and confidence in path](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

79. [Revealed: civilian toll of a deadly assault that has ravaged Gaza PALESTINIAN CRISIS](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

80. [Hopes grow for Kember's freedom](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

81. [And Now, Islamism Trumps Arabism](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

82. [Immigration Tiff in Israel Splits Justices DATELINE JERUSALEM](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

83. [*Bravo to pro-war monks*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

84. [*Our vital role in Iraq 's road to freedom*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

85. [*Thinking Right Complacency won't subdue ruthless foe*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

86. [*DEATH AT QANA: The world reacts*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

87. [*Complacency won't subdue ruthless foe*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

88. [*Statue attack fuels fears of an Islamist Egypt*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

89. [*'Nobody here is a terrorist ... But we are all ready to fight'*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

90. [*Irresistible force, immovable object*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

91. [*Syria : lift the veil and discover an enigma*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

92. [*International Briefs*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

93. [*Impeded by blinkers and blindfolds*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

94. [*Creative Chaos Checkmated*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

95. [*regional news Around the North ...*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

96. [*East Carolina U. graduate studies in the Middle East*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

97. [*A Democratic Catch-22*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to Sep 30, 2006

98. [*Palestine Awareness Week needs to advocate peace*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to
Sep 30, 2006

99. [Israel 101](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to
Sep 30, 2006

100. [TO SERVE THE NATIONAL CITY AND THROUGH IT THE NATION Solomons mission going nowhere](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to
Sep 30, 2006

Israeli envoy denies force disproportionate

Canberra Times (Australia)

July 27, 2006 Thursday

Final Edition

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Section: A; Pg. 2

Length: 554 words

Byline: Paul Maley

Body

Israel's Ambassador to Australia has rejected accusations his country is using disproportionate force in its war against Hezbollah militants.

Meanwhile, his Syrian counterpart has denied Syria has armed the group and refused to condemn its rocket attacks on Israeli civilians.

Speaking just a day after Israeli forces bombed a United Nations observation post, killing four peacekeepers, the Israeli Ambassador Naftali Tamir told The Canberra Times that Israel was using the "utmost care" in its strikes, which he said were aimed solely at Hezbollah fighters and infrastructure.

"I do not think we are using force excessively," he said. "We are using a very targeted sort of operation. I know the results are sometimes unfortunate, but those who are attacking us are doing it indiscriminately." Mr Tamir said yesterday's bombing of the long established UN observation post in the southern Hezbollah stronghold of Khiam, which UN Secretary General Kofi Annan said appeared deliberate, was an accident that would be investigated.

"To say to us that we are targeting the United Nations would be an absurdity ... the United Nations has never been, and will never be, a target," he said.

Mr Tamir rejected the suggestion that the bombing of the UN post betrayed a carelessness in the way Israel was prosecuting the war.

"I would not go to that extremity.

I would like the investigation to find out whether there was Israeli responsibility," he said.

Responding to media reports that Israel had attacked at least 10 Lebanese ambulances since the conflict began, Mr Tamir denied the vehicles had been fired on intentionally and cautioned against rushing to judgment.

"Accusation in the Middle East is something which is common currency," he said. "Sometimes it's more difficult to substantiate allegations in our part of the world.

There are cases where we were condemned and there was no substance to it."

Israeli envoy denies force disproportionate

Mr Tamir said ambulances "had been targeted in Israel, and targeted intentionally". He said the current violence was the result of Syria and Iran and "Hezbollah and Hamas are the puppets".

Mr Tamir said the imagery broadcast by the media had focused inordinately on the situation in Lebanon and more attention should be drawn to the suffering in Israel.

Syrian Ambassador to Australia, Tammam Sulaiman, denied his country was arming Hezbollah and refused to condemn the group for launching rocket attacks on Israeli civilian populations, although he said he regretted civilian deaths.

"We support the resistance," he said. "And this is part of the resistance ... the Lebanese people have the sovereign right to defend their people. The question really should be posed to Israel that Israel is occupying another land and targeting civilians." Mr Sulaiman said Israel was a "terrorist country" and that the kidnapping by Hezbollah of its soldiers was being used as "a pretext". "Israel wants every country, every party, every organisation to succumb to its needs," he said. "Syria and Lebanon were the only two countries that did not make peace with Israel according to the Israeli conditions."

He said Israel and their supporters in the West were guilty of double standards. "If they are honest in condemning terrorism they should condemn the terrorism of Israel, which really targets the children and women and civilian people," he said.

Load-Date: July 26, 2006

End of Document

Middle East crisis: Al-Qaida: Bin Laden's deputy calls for global war on 'crusaders'

The Guardian - Final Edition

July 28, 2006 Friday

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Section: GUARDIAN INTERNATIONAL PAGES; Pg. 6

Length: 554 words

Byline: Brian Whitaker, Beirut

Body

Al-Qaida's deputy leader, Ayman al-Zawahiri, made a dramatic intervention in the Lebanese crisis yesterday with a videotape calling on Muslims everywhere to rise up against Zionists and "crusaders".

"How can we remain silent while watching bombs raining on our people?" he asked. "O Muslims everywhere, I call on you to fight and become martyrs in the war against the Zionists and the crusaders," he said in the eight-minute tape, entitled The Zionist-Crusader War on Lebanon and the Palestinians, parts of which were broadcast by al-Jazeera television yesterday.

Zawahiri also criticised "impotent, treacherous" Arab governments for their feeble response to the Israeli attacks. "My fellow Muslims, it is obvious that Arab and Islamic governments are not only impotent but also complicit . . . and you are alone on the battlefield. Rely on Allah and fight your enemies . . . make yourselves martyrs."

"All the world is a battlefield open in front of us," he added. "The war with Israel does not depend on ceasefires . . . It is a jihad for the sake of Allah and will last until (our) religion prevails . . . from Spain to Iraq." (Spain was under Muslim rule for several centuries, starting in 711 and ending with the fall of Granada in 1492.)

In the recording, Egyptian-born Zawahiri wore a grey robe and white turban in front of a picture of the burning World Trade Centre.

In the background were photos of two other militants identified as Mohamed Atta, ringleader of the September 11 attacks, and Muhammad Atef (also known as Abu Hafs al-Masri), an aide of Osama bin Laden who was killed by a US air strike in Afghanistan in 2001. "There are 10,000 prisoners of war in Israel's jails that nobody bothers about, but when it came to three Israeli soldiers, the whole world was turned upside down," Zawahiri said in the message. Palestinian militants from **Hamas** are holding one Israeli soldier and the Lebanese Hizbullah is holding two.

"As they fight us everywhere, we will fight them everywhere; everyone who has joined in the crime must pay the price; we can't stand by and monitor these rockets spewing their fire on the people of Lebanon and remain quiet," Zawahiri continued. "The war with Israel is not based on any agreements or any border disputes . . . it is jihad for the sake of Allah, to free all of Palestine from occupation and to rid all the homes of Islam from the crusaders. The whole world is our battlefield."

Zawahiri did not mention Hizbullah - the Lebanese Shia organisation - by name. Al-Qaida's leaders are Sunnis and in a tape last June Zawahiri referred to Iraqi Shia as "infidels".

Middle East crisis: Al-Qaida: Bin Laden's deputy calls for global war on 'crusaders'

But in a message broadcast in 2004, Bin Laden said the September 11 attacks had been inspired by "the oppression and tyranny of the American/Israeli coalition against our people in Palestine and Lebanon" - especially the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982.

"I couldn't forget those moving scenes, blood and severed limbs, women and children sprawled everywhere. Houses destroyed along with their occupants and high rises demolished over their residents . . ." Bin Laden said in the tape. "As I looked at those demolished towers in Lebanon, it entered my mind that we should punish the oppressor in kind and that we should destroy towers in America in order that they taste some of what we tasted."

guardian.co.uk/alqaida >

Load-Date: July 28, 2006

End of Document

Bin Laden deputy urges Muslims everywhere to fight 'crusaders'

The Irish Times

July 28, 2006 Friday

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Section: WORLD; Middle East Crisis; Pg. 10

Length: 551 words

Byline: Brian Whitaker in Beirut

Body

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Bin Laden deputy urges Muslims everywhere to fight 'crusaders'

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Load-Date: July 28, 2006

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Guardian Weekly: Sympathy flees as rockets rain down on Sderot

Guardian Weekly

June 16, 2006 Friday

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*The***GuardianWeekly**

Section: Pg. 1

Length: 516 words

Byline: Chris McGreal, Sderot

Body

Sympathy for Huda Ghalia had largely evaporated from the streets of Sderot on Monday after the Israeli town endured a weekend pounding by scores of Palestinian missiles, and the army attempted to cast doubt on its responsibility for wiping out most of the Palestinian child's family.

Images of the 10-year-old girl wailing after a shell landed on her family's picnic on a Gaza beach last Friday, killing seven people including all Huda's siblings, horrified many Israelis usually indifferent to Palestinian suffering.

The scenes prompted a flicker of questioning over Israel's firing of thousands of shells into Gaza, which has claimed more than 20 civilian lives in recent weeks, in response to a much smaller number of Palestinian rockets. The government immediately called a halt to the artillery barrages. But the mood swiftly hardened in Sderot, a small Israeli town close to the Gaza border, as it was battered by more than 50 "Qassam" rockets last weekend. One rocket severely wounded a 61-year-old man.

Sderot's mayor, Eli Moyal, demanded that the government send the army to reoccupy or destroy the Gaza town of Beit Hanoun, the area from which many Palestinian rockets are fired, if Sderot was to survive. "You have to choose," he told officials in the prime minister's office. "If you do not destroy Beit Hanoun, Sderot will become a ghost town. The people of this city cannot sustain any more Qassam attacks."

Scores of protesters are camped outside the Sderot home of Israel's defence minister, Amir Peretz, who was a popular mayor of the town in the 1980s, to demand a harder line. Mr Peretz has so far resisted calls from the military to reinvade Gaza, but pressure is growing.

Among the protesters is a group of hunger strikers led by Yael Tyayri, a 43-year-old teacher with five children. "My seven-year-old son doesn't want to go to the bathroom without me because of the Qassams . . . My 12-year-old son, last year he couldn't eat properly . . . The doctor told me to take him away from Sderot for a bit."

Ms Tyayri doesn't give much thought to why the Qassams are fired. It is enough that more than 3,000 rockets have been launched into Israel over the past five years, killing five people, including three children from Sderot.

Guardian Weekly: Sympathy flees as rockets rain down on Sderot

Israel used to respond with ground assaults but since its withdrawal from Gaza in September it has used artillery barrages. The army has dropped 6,000 shells since the beginning of April, claiming the lives of elderly farmers, children and women.

Those deaths went largely unnoticed in Sderot, as did the destruction of another Gaza family last month when an Israeli airforce missile attack on Islamic Jihad activists also wiped out three generations of one family. Among the survivors was three-year-old Maria Aman, who is paralysed from the neck down.

The army has suggested that the explosion that killed Huda Ghalia's family was caused by a Palestinian rocket or a mine laid by Hamas. Ms Tyayri seized on that. "I don't want to be unpleasant, but did you see any pictures of the family dying? How do we know they are dead? How do we know who killed them?"

Load-Date: June 24, 2006

End of Document

Iraqi PM comments on alleged marine massacre

Prince George Citizen (British Columbia)

May 31, 2006 Wednesday

Final Edition

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 14

Length: 564 words

Byline: Associated Press

Dateline: BAGHDAD

Body

BAGHDAD (AP) -- Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki broke his public silence Tuesday on the alleged killing of about 24 civilians by U.S. marines, saying such deaths were never justified, even in the fight against terrorists.

The deaths in Haditha, a volatile town in western Iraq, have barely caused a stir in Iraq and much of the Arab world -- where American troops are reviled as brutal invaders who regularly commit such acts.

Al-Maliki, speaking in a television interview with the British Broadcasting Corp., expressed remorse over the reported killings last November.

"We emphasize that our forces, that multinational forces will respect human rights, the rights of the Iraqi citizen," al-Maliki said. "It is not justifiable that a family is killed because someone is fighting terrorists, we have to be more specific and more careful."

Arab media have largely ignored the allegations of brutal U.S. marine misconduct in Haditha, though a few publications have made highly critical comments and said events in the small Euphrates River town northwest of Baghdad were neither the biggest alleged atrocity by American forces nor would they be the last.

The pan-Arab daily Asharq al-Awsat focused on the role of the Western media in exposing the allegations.

"As soon as I read the news, the immediate question that came to mind was: 'Why wasn't the tape broadcast by an Arab channel or published in an Arab newspaper?'" asked Diana Mukkaled in the newspaper's Sunday edition.

Mukkaled referred to a videotape shot by an Iraqi journalism student and later obtained by Time magazine that showed the bodies of women and children, some in their night clothes.

Reports of what happened in Haditha did not surface until March when the incident began to be seriously investigated. An Associated Press report in March included accounts from people in the town who said they witnessed killings.

But for now, renewed U.S. interest in the allegations has only drawn a muted response from the media in Iraq. That also appeared to be largely the case elsewhere in the Arab world.

Iraqi PM comments on alleged marine massacre

The state-run media in Syria, whose anti-U.S. regime is thought to be fomenting violence by allowing foreign fighters to use its territory to enter Iraq, carried a report from the Syrian Arab News Agency quoting British newspaper reports on the killings.

The daily Al-Thawra ran the agency's report with the headline: "Marines deliberately killed children in Iraq."

In the Persian Gulf region, whose rulers are longtime Washington allies, the media reported the killings, but without editorial comment.

Dawood al-Shirian, a Saudi commentator and TV talk show host, said other regional issues, like the Fatah-Hamas rivalry in the Palestinian territories, could have overshadowed the Haditha killings.

"But this issue cannot be hidden for long," al-Shirian told the AP. "Sooner or later, it will come to the surface."

Haditha is in Anbar province, a mainly desert region that stretches from just west of Baghdad to the Jordanian and Syrian borders. Its inhabitants are overwhelmingly Sunni Arabs and it has been the most dangerous part of Iraq for U.S. forces since their arrival in 2003.

Anbar's communities maintain strong tribal links and are bitter critics of the post-Saddam Hussein order in Iraq, in which the Sunni Arabs lost dominance to the Shiites and Kurds, who combined make up about 80 percent of Iraq's 27 million people.

Load-Date: May 31, 2006

Iran 'terrorists' can stop mullahs' nukes

The Sun (England)

May 1, 2006 Monday

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Section: OPINION ON MONDAY

Length: 575 words

Byline: Trevor Kavanagh

Body

THE world has three options as it faces the terrifying prospect of a nuclear armed Iran.

It can watch the mullahs build nukes and hold the world to ransom.

It can denounce American aggression - while secretly counting on the world's only superpower to ride to everyone's rescue.

Or it can encourage the Iranian people themselves to topple the fanatics who threaten global Armageddon.

Since no world leader, including President George Bush, wants a US strike, the safest bet is to encourage an already seething domestic resistance.

Yet Foreign Secretary Jack Straw has ruled it out, leaving us with one nightmare vision - a tyrannical regime ready and willing to wage nuclear war.

He rejects the use of American force as "inconceivable." But

in an act of appeasement that has enraged MPs of all parties, he has barred Iran's only real internal resistance, the People's Mujahedin Of Iran (PMOI).

He upholds the distorted

EU view that they are "terrorists" - simply because Tehran says they are.

It was the price the ayatollahs extracted for continuing to talk to Britain, France and Germany - the so-called "E3" - about their nuclear ambitions.

Those talks proved to be a dangerous waste of breath.

The gullible trio squandered three years trying to bring Iran to heel - while its leaders were taking irrevocable steps to becoming a nuclear power.

Tortured

Now, as brave Iranian citizens are tortured and slaughtered for standing up

Iran 'terrorists' can stop mullahs' nukes

to the evil regime, Europe is effectively helping the mullahs destroy them.

By branding the PMOI terrorists, they give police squads authority to round up and murder them.

The vast majority of ordinary Iranians despise the Islamic zealots running Iran.

The population are young, bright and ambitious to join the enlightened, prosperous West. They are appalled by President Mahmoud Ahmad-

inejad's threat to wipe Israel off the map.

And thousands courageously risk their lives to make their protests public.

Yet the West looks on as the regime crushes these "terrorist" acts with unimaginable brutality.

Women and children are hanged. Boys have their eyes gouged out or are flogged to death. Men suffer unspeakable torture before being butchered.

Iran's tentacles spread far beyond its borders.

Their fingerprints are on almost every act of international terrorism.

They effectively rule Syria, sponsor **Hamas** and fuel insurrection in Iraq.

The mullahs are killing our soldiers in Basra. Death squads hunt down the regime's critics abroad. Exiled Hossein Abedini told me last week how he was ambushed by assassins in Istanbul, pumped full of bullets and left for dead in 1990.

Mr Abedini, a member of

the National Council Of Resistance Of Iran which includes the PMOI, suffers to this day from wounds to his lungs, kidney, liver and spleen.

"I was in a deep coma for 40 days and unconscious for three months," he said.

He bitterly denounced the EU ban on Iranian resistance.

Ironic

"Ahmadinejad's cabinet are the Who's Who of international terrorism," he said.

"It is preposterous and ironic for the EU to put a terrorist tag on the main victims of Iranian terrorism."

A Commons committee backed by an overwhelming majority of MPs and peers want the PMOI ban lifted.

Its chairman, former Labour MP Lord Corbett, dismisses claims that a popular uprising cannot succeed.

"We have seen evidence in Katmandu, in Nepal, Georgia and the Ukraine that when the people make up their minds, nobody can stand in their way.

"We should be supporting them, not banning them."

Load-Date: May 1, 2006

WHAT'S AHEAD THIS YEAR: PERISCOPE; Cox Newspapers' foreign correspondents and free-lancers tell you what to expect from their part of the world in 2006.

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

January 1, 2006 Sunday

Home Edition

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The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Section: @ISSUE; Pg. 6E

Length: 2243 words

Byline: LARRY KAPLOW, MARGARET COKER, MIKE WILLIAMS, SUSAN FERRISS, CRAIG SIMONS, DON MELVIN, SABRA AYRES, SHELLEY EMLING, RAYMOND THIBODEAUX

Body

IRAQ: Long way from an end

The American force level is now at about 160,000, the highest since the war began in 2003. The prerequisites for U.S. withdrawal are a reduction in violence and the training of Iraqi forces. Violence, mostly roadside bombings and other insurgent attacks, was the worst yet in 2005 and shows little sign of a sustained decline.

In December, U.S. officials said that there were about 111,000 Iraqi police officers and troops of about 195,000 needed. Officials say training is going slowly and troop quality is inconsistent. In mid-December, Iraqi forces acted independently in about 21 percent of the U.S. and Iraqi military operations, according to the State Department.

America could have fewer partners in Iraq in 2006. Some countries in the U.S.-led coalition, including Bulgaria and Poland, are scheduled to reduce troops or remove them entirely. Compared with 2005's schedule of three national elections, the next year is largely unscripted but more crucial.

A new parliament will take office for a four-year term (following December's elections). But forming a coalition government could take months as rival Sunni and Shiite Muslims, ethnic Kurds and others jostle for control. If they founder and delay, expect violence to fill the vacuum.

The new constitution comes up for another review and could face revision, bringing more discord over basic issues such as federalism and the role of religion in government.

The trial of Saddam Hussein will probably continue well into 2006 and could end in an execution --- certain to raise political tension as it stirs strong feelings among his loyalists and those who hate him.

WHAT'S AHEAD THIS YEAR: PERISCOPE Cox Newspapers' foreign correspondents and free-lancers tell you what to expect from their part of the world in 2006.

Iraq enters 2006 still dilapidated, battered and dysfunctional. Though thousands of projects, from medical clinics to road resurfacings to school renovations, have been completed, reconstruction has been slow and spotty. Insurgents repeatedly attack oil lines, electrical towers and the reconstruction workers themselves.

But the biggest problem could be a lack of money. U.S. officials have warned of a coming "Reconstruction Gap." Nearly all the \$30 billion the United States has so far set aside for the task has been spent or committed, and there is not enough money to do many planned projects, such as water treatment and electricity plants.

--- Larry Kaplow in Baghdad

MIDDLE EAST: Elections could alter status quo

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and his ruling Fatah party will face strong opposition in parliamentary elections on Jan. 25 from Hamas, the Islamic militant organization popular because of its long record of social work.

Fatah, the organization formed by the late Yasser Arafat that controls West Bank and Gaza Strip affairs, is decried as corrupt and ineffectual. Fed-up Palestinians are expected to give Hamas at least 20 percent of the vote.

The Israeli election March 28 will be heavily influenced by the Palestinian results. A strong Hamas showing could boost the already popular alliance between the country's oldest leaders, Ariel Sharon and Shimon Peres. The two hope to draw Israelis away from past ideologies of socialism and religious Zionism to the mantra of security above all.

A revamped Labor Party, whose new leader, Amir Peretz, is winning popular support by focusing on the country's growing poverty, challenges them.

A breakthrough in the peace process is unlikely. Labor's Peretz says that if he wins he would quickly negotiate a full peace with the Palestinians, but he's trailing in polls. Sharon would forgo talks and continue building the West Bank barrier that cuts Palestinians off from Jerusalem and gives Israel access to prime agricultural land there. This move might bring quiet to Israel, but it also will fuel frustration on the other side.

--- Margaret Coker in Jerusalem

LATIN AMERICA: U.S. learns friends are hard to find

The theme in Latin America will be anti-American sentiment, with the fiery leftist president of Venezuela, Hugo Chavez, leading the chorus. Following in the footsteps of his mentor, Fidel Castro, Chavez has made the Bush administration his whipping boy, blasting the United States for the Iraq invasion, its push for a hemisphere free-trade deal and what he calls "imperialism."

The message has found resonance in a region where U.S.-backed economic reforms have failed to raise the living standards of the poor masses.

Somehow the region must find a way to bring more opportunity to the poor. Without that, look for popular discontent to grow and for leftist candidates to win increasing success. Mexicans kept crossing the borders in large numbers to find work in the United States, and the trend will continue. The Cubans keep coming, too, with the number of people willing to risk their lives in the choppy waters of the Florida Straits rising in 2005.

Mexico --- President Vicente Fox has been a strong U.S. ally and free-trade advocate in the region, but he cannot run for another term. That's why the July 2 elections may be a bellwether of the region's sentiment. Current polls show leftist candidate Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador doing well, and a win by a leftist in Mexico would be sure to shake up Washington.

Brazil --- The region's biggest economy and most populous country, Brazil holds presidential elections in October. It isn't known yet whether President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva will stand for re-election. Lula, a leftist, has upset some

WHAT'S AHEAD THIS YEAR: PERISCOPE Cox Newspapers' foreign correspondents and free-lancers tell you what to expect from their part of the world in 2006.

of his supporters by following a cautious economic policy aimed at keeping peace with the World Bank and Wall Street.

Venezuela --- Chavez is expected to win easily when he stands for re-election in December. The socialist will continue to be a thorn in the side of Bush while maintaining his popularity fueled by his nation's oil reserves.

Cuba --- Despite the never-ending rumors of his impending demise, Fidel Castro continues to stalk the world stage. He'll turn 80 this year and the aging communist war horse shows no signs of compromising his Marxist principles or taking early retirement.

Haiti --- Don't expect presidential elections scheduled for early 2006 to provide any magic solution to the troubled island's sad state. Former President Jean Bertrand Aristide, now in exile in South Africa, still exerts huge influence among the Haitian poor, and his followers could turn the elections into a violent mess if provoked. The 8,000-strong force of United Nations peacekeepers will probably remain in Haiti for the foreseeable future.

--- Mike Williams In Miami and Susan Ferriss in Mexico City

ASIA: Economy faces threats in China

Chinese politics today are almost as hard to fathom as they were in imperial times, when the emperor remained hidden from view in the Forbidden City. But with Hu Jintao firmly established as both the nation's president and military chairman, major personnel or policy shifts are unlikely in 2006.

Beijing's most serious political headache may come from Hong Kong, where tens of thousands of citizens marched in December to call for greater democracy.

China's blistering growth will slow slightly in 2006. While GDP growth was above 9 percent in 2005, Morgan Stanley chief Asia-Pacific economist Andy Xie said 8 percent growth is more likely this year, largely due to manufacturing overcapacity.

Foreign investment growth is likely to slow as companies seek cheap labor costs in other Asian countries. The two significant threats to the economy are a possible bird flu pandemic or a collapse of China's overheated property market, either of which could cause a recession with global repercussions.

Beijing has vowed to improve China's environmental woes after a string of high-profile disasters. But environmental problems are likely to get worse in 2006 as millions of people migrate to cities and factories step up production. A recent Chinese government report said at least half of the water in more than 50 Chinese cities is not fit for human consumption, and hundreds of urban areas suffer from hazardous air pollution.

--- Craig Simons in Beijing

GREAT BRITAIN: Transfer of power won't bring change

Britain's Tony Blair, glib and sunny, has seen off four Conservative leaders since he became prime minister in 1997. But he has promised not to run again and will soon hand power to Chancellor Gordon Brown.

Blair lost his first vote ever in the House of Commons in 2005 and could be out this year. Brown is an intellectual politician but also a brooding and secretive one. Many Labor Party members hope he will lead them back to the left. In this they are likely to be disappointed; Brown was Blair's partner in wresting Labor to the center.

In the wings is David Cameron, the latest Conservative leader and a Tory version of Blair --- a young, charismatic politician who will pull his party to the center.

--- Don Melvin in London

GERMANY: Coalition may slow reforms

WHAT'S AHEAD THIS YEAR: PERISCOPE Cox Newspapers' foreign correspondents and free-lancers tell you what to expect from their part of the world in 2006.

The country's first **female** chancellor, Angela Merkel, faces a rough road ahead. Her campaign promised to shape up the country's economy, Europe's largest, by passing tough reforms. But without enough votes to win outright, Merkel was forced into a grand coalition with her opponents. Getting the coalition to go along with her market and labor reform packages may prove harder than winning the race itself. Germany's economy is stagnant, and unemployment is about 11 percent.

Germany's relations with the United States should also develop differently now that former Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder, who was never shy about his opposition to the U.S.-led war in Iraq, has left the political scene. Germans remain staunchly opposed to the war. But Merkel has said she intends to mend fences with the White House.

--- Sabra Ayres

FRANCE: Aftershocks of riots still haven't subsided

France remains rattled from three weeks of unrest that swept the suburbs of Paris and other cities beginning in late October. In a rampage of riots and vandalism, thousands of youths were arrested, mostly from struggling ethnic minorities. The violence exposed a country that has yet to deal with the realities of segregation and joblessness facing its growing immigrant communities, especially those of North and West African origin.

In 2006, the government will continue to encourage more diversity at businesses and even on television while continuing to reject quotas. Also next year, the country can expect to see two of its best-known politicians --- Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin and Interior Minister Nicolas Sarkozy --- step up their jockeying for power. Both have an eye on the May 2007 presidential elections, which will choose a successor to Jacques Chirac.

France's vaunted cultural standing was also rattled in '05. London beat Paris in the competition to host the 2012 Olympic Games and, even worse, a survey of 500 food experts conducted by Restaurant magazine last summer placed only one French restaurant in the world's top 10; Britain had four.

--- Shelley Emling in Paris

RUSSIA: Putin unlikely to loosen grip

President Vladimir Putin faces growing Western criticism for his increasing political power and his control of Russia's media.

But with the latest polls showing the ex-KGB officer with 73 percent approval ratings, few at home are expecting him to change his authoritarian ways. The key political developments in 2006 will take place behind the Kremlin walls, with maneuvering to find a successor for Putin when his second term expires in 2008.

It will be difficult to beat whomever Putin handpicks. Russia's economy is dripping with petro-dollars, thanks to high oil prices, and the money is slowing trickling down, meaning most Russians live better now than they did five years ago. Government involvement in Russia's most important economic sectors leaves some investors wary, and this could be a problem when it comes to drawing in much-needed foreign direct investment.

--- Sabra Ayres in Moscow

AFRICA: Nations' new leaders bring back iron fist

Africa's new generation of enlightened leaders, including Ethiopia's Meles Zenawi, Rwanda's Paul Kagame and Uganda's Yoweri Museveni --- all rebels turned statesmen --- appear to be slipping back into familiar patterns of African rule: solidifying their power by jailing political rivals, violently dispersing opposition rallies and cracking down on journalists. All of this while professing democracy to baffled Western donors who once esteemed them as models of Africa's new leadership.

WHAT'S AHEAD THIS YEAR: PERISCOPE Cox Newspapers' foreign correspondents and free-lancers tell you what to expect from their part of the world in 2006.

The eastern region of Africa is on the verge of crisis: deadly post-election riots in Ethiopia and the Tanzanian island of Zanzibar, violent protests in the run-up to Kenya's constitutional referendum, and massive street protests in Uganda after Museveni's government jailed the country's main opposition leader in the run-up to the 2006 elections.

One of the bright spots on the continent is Liberia, which elected Africa's first woman president, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf. Her victory promises to embolden more African women to go into politics, a realm long dominated by men.

In southern Africa, black Africans are growing impatient with the slow pace of land redistribution. In Namibia and South Africa, the white minority still benefits from the vestiges of apartheid --- they own the vast majority of farmable land while many black Africans remain landless.

The continent's biggest problem, though, remains the AIDS epidemic. The United Nations estimates that 26 million adults in sub-Saharan Africa between 15 and 49 are HIV-positive, and treatment programs are sporadic in some countries, nonexistent in others.

--- Raymond Thibodeaux in Addis Ababa

Graphic

Photo: VINCENT YU / Associated Press Demonstrators march on a Hong Kong street in December to seek political reforms that would allow voters in the Chinese territory to pick the city's leaders.

Photo: SCHALK van ZUYDAM / AP Liberia elected Africa's first woman president, Ellen-Johnson Sirleaf, whose victory should encourage more African women to go into politics. Other nations chose rulers who are former rebels.

Photo: Parliamentary elections Jan. 25 will provide a challenge for Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas and his Fatah party. A strong Hamas showing would threaten Abbas' vision of seeking peace with Israel and establishing a Palestinian state.

Photo: MOHAMMED BALLAS / Associated Press Palestinian members of the Fatah party show their identification cards at the entrance to a voting center in the West Bank town of Jenin during the November primary. Younger party activists made good last week on their threat to split with Fatah.

Photo: FERNANDO LLANO / Associated Press Workers who support Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez look at a poster with the image of President Bush during a march in Caracas in May. Chavez has blasted the United States for the Iraq invasion, its free-trade initiatives and what he calls "imperialism."

Photo: Hugo Chavez, president of Venezuela and vocal Bush critic, is expected to win re-election.

Photo: MICHAEL SPINGLER / Associated Press Firefighters in Gentilly, south of Paris, extinguish a burning car during riots by youths, mostly from struggling ethnic minorities.

Photo: ITAR-TASS Russian President Vladimir Putin is expected to sign a bill, passed last week, that gives the state greater control over the funding and activities of nongovernmental groups.

Photo: House of Commons TV British Prime Minister Tony Blair (left), who has held the job since 1997, will soon hand power to Chancellor Gordon Brown. Brown helped Blair bring the Labor Party to the center.

Photo: HADI MIZBAN / Associated Press Iraqi police secure the site as a truck burns following an explosion in western Baghdad in September. Violence, mostly roadside bombings and other insurgent attacks, was the worst yet in 2005 and shows little sign of a sustained decline.

WHAT'S AHEAD THIS YEAR: PERISCOPE Cox Newspapers' foreign correspondents and free-lancers tell you what to expect from their part of the world in 2006.

Photo: JAN BAUER / Associated PressAngela Merkel, who replaced Gerhard Schroeder as Germany's chancellor, intends to mend fences with the White House.

Photo: Sabra Ayres

Photo: Raymond Thibodeaux

Photo: Craig Simons

Photo: Margaret Coker

Photo: Larry Kaplow

Photo: Don Melvin

Photo: Shelley Emling

Photo: Mike Williams

Photo: Susan Ferriss

Load-Date: January 1, 2006

End of Document

International Briefs

Telegraph Herald (Dubuque, IA)

February 6, 2006 Monday

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Section: NATIONAL/WORLD; Pg. a8

Length: 560 words

Byline: ASSOCIATED PRESS

Body

Team studies fault line in Pakistan quake

TOKYO - In the massive earthquake that hit northern Pakistan in October, a fault shifted over a 65-kilometer section, and the ground was pushed up to a height of 5.5 meters in places, according to a Japanese and Pakistani joint research team.

The team's study has fully revealed the movements of faults during the earthquake for the first time.

The National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology in Tsukuba, Ibaraki Prefecture, Kyoto University, Hiroshima Institute of Technology and the Geological Survey of Pakistan conducted the joint research in January.

Iraq steps up security for Shiite ceremony

BAGHDAD, Iraq - Iraq will deploy thousands of police to prevent Sunni militants from bombing a major Shiite ceremony next week, while the bullet-riddled bodies of two Shiites were found Sunday in the latest round of killings between rival Sunni and Shiite groups.

The U.S. military, meanwhile, announced the release of about 50 Iraqi detainees, but no women were among them. The freeing of women is a demand by kidnappers of American journalist Jill Carroll, who was abducted Jan. 7 in Baghdad.

Sectarian anxieties are running high in Iraq amid a spate of killings and kidnappings.

Three gunmen shot dead two policemen in the northern city of Kirkuk, and a roadside bomb killed two civilians near Baghdad, police said.

Iraqi forces are stepping up security ahead of the most important date in the Shiite calendar - the feast of Ashoura - to prevent a repeat of suicide bombings by Sunni extremists that killed at least 230 people during the ceremonies in the past two years.

Israel threatens to halt payments to Palestinians

International Briefs

JERUSALEM - Israel agreed to make a crucial payment of \$54 million in tax and customs revenues to the Palestinians, but officials said future transfers will be halted once **Hamas** militants form the next Palestinian government.

The decision was made after a flare-up of violence. Israeli forces pounded the northern Gaza Strip with missiles and artillery fire, killing three Palestinian militants. Hours later, a Palestinian assailant killed one woman and wounded four other people in what police called a politically motivated stabbing in central Israel.

Israel collects millions of dollars in taxes and customs duties for the Palestinians, transferring the funds to the Palestinian Authority each month.

Families of ferry passengers lash out

SAFAGA, Egypt - Family members of passengers on a ferry that sank in the Red Sea protested on Sunday as they waited in vain for news of their loved ones, accusing Egypt's government of mishandling the rescue after the ship went down with more than 1,400 on board.

Egyptian officials said the captain was missing, and some survivors alleged he had jumped into one of the first lifeboats out rather than stay with the crippled ferry. A lawmaker said ships operated by the same company had been involved in past tragedies, including one that sank last year.

Police raise the number of those rescued to 401 - up from 376 reported Saturday.

Outside the Red Sea port in Safaga, where survivors were being taken, about 100 family members shouted at police and criticized Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak for not providing more information. On Saturday, at similar demonstrations in the port 280 miles southeast of Cairo, family members threw stones at police.

Load-Date: February 7, 2006

End of Document

U.S. universities should be more accessible to India students: Bush

Hindustan Times

March 3, 2006 Friday 1:26 PM EST

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Length: 531 words

Byline: Hindustan Times

Dateline: Hyderabad

Body

Hyderabad, March 3 -- US President George W Bush said here today that American universities and colleges should be more accessible to Indian students.

He was addressing students of the Indian School of Business after visiting farmers and weavers at Acharya N G Ranga Agriculture University (ANGRAU) here today.

Ruling out protectionist measures to address domestic concerns on outsourcing, Bush said he favoured easy access for Indian students to American universities and schools.

"I have taken a position, the US will reject protectionism. We won't fear competition. We welcome competition," he said interacting with young entrepreneurs at the Indian School of Business, which has collaboration with Wharton School and Kellogg School of Management.

Acknowledging that globalisation had a negative impact in terms of employment guarantee and protection, he said: "Losing a job is painful. But the fundamental question is how does the government react." He said one way was to resort to protectionist laws and the other was to educate people so that they found jobs in the 21st century.

"Let us make sure that pro-growth economic policies are in place -- it means low taxes, less regulations, fewer lawsuits and wise energy policies," Bush said.

Earlier, Bush, clad in blue shirt and black trousers, walked around the compound and tried his hand at weaving looms put on display at the ANGRAU situated on the outskirts of the city.

Accompanied by Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y S Rajashekara Reddy, President Bush spoke to women of self-help groups, posed for pictures, signed autographs and took straw hats as mementos. He also spent time with farmers, and weavers. He even tried his hand at the threaded weaving looms put on display.

Folk dancers tapped their feet to drumbeats as Bush walked past in a leisurely pace, waving to the artistes and planting kisses on the faces of children around.

Bush, also saw a seven-year-old buffalo, Murra, brought in from Haryana at ANGRAU.

ANGRAU is involved in US-India knowledge initiative on agriculture. The business school is affiliated with the Wharton and Kellogg School of Management.

U.S. universities should be more accessible to India students: Bush

Bush also formally announced the setting up of a US Consulate in Hyderabad.

To protest the President's visit Communists and Muslim groups burnt effigies of President Bush.

Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimen said the shutdown in the Old City of Hyderabad was a message that the President was not welcome.

The Majlis also urged Muslims to offer financial help to **Hamas** in Palestine to help fight Israel.

His arrival to Hyderabad was a low-key, but a tightly guarded affair. Sharpshooters were on guard all around the Andhra capital as US secret service agents fanned across the city to ensure a safe tour the US President.

Two aircraft resembling his Air Force One flew into Hyderabad one after the other as part of US presidential security.

Bush and his wife Laura stepped down from their Boeing 747-200B that landed at the Hyderabad airport shortly before 10 a.m. He was received by Governor of Andhra Pradesh Rameshwar Thakur and the Chief Minister Rajashekhara Reddy.

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Load-Date: March 4, 2006

In the World

The Philadelphia Inquirer

March 5, 2006 Sunday

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The Philadelphia Inquirer

Found on Philly.com

Section: NATIONAL; Pg. A14

Length: 543 words

Body

Seven killed in Afghan fighting

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan - A roadside bomb exploded yesterday as a vehicle carrying Afghan intelligence agents drove by in a southern province, killing four agents.

Separate fighting in southern Kandahar province, a former Taliban stronghold, killed a member of the U.S.-led coalition and two insurgents, the American military said in a statement.

The French Defense Ministry said a special forces officer was killed. France has had 200 special forces officers in southeast Afghanistan since 2003, the ministry said. About 25 countries have forces in the coalition.- **AP**

U.N. agency facing shortages in Kenya

EL WAK, Kenya - The U.N. food agency will soon run out of food needed to feed 3.5 million Kenyans facing prolonged drought because it has received a fraction of the required funding, officials said yesterday.

The World Food Program has enough cereal to last until April but will run out of other staples by month's end, program spokesman Peter Smerdon said.

The program needs \$225 million to buy more than 33,000 tons of food each month until February 2007 but has received only \$28 million, he said. "If we don't get any more food aid it will be a catastrophe," Smerdon said.- **AP**

Al-Qaeda leader decries cartoons

CAIRO, Egypt - Al-Qaeda's No. 2 leader, Ayman al-Zawahiri, criticized the West for its insult to Islam's prophet, complaining in a video broadcast today on Al-Jazeera that the Prophet Mohammed and Jesus "are not sacred anymore."

Referring to the cartoons of the Muhammad that have been printed in a number of European newspapers, al-Zawahiri said: "They did it on purpose and they continue to do it without apologizing, even though no one dares to harm Jews or to challenge Jewish claims about the Holocaust nor even to insult homosexuals."

In the World

In the video broadcast on the satellite network, al-Zawahri also offered his support to **Hamas**, the militant Islamic group that is forming a new Palestinian government after sweeping legislative elections.- **AP**

Elsewhere:

The suspected leader of a gang accused of torturing to death a young Jewish man near Paris was extradited from Ivory Coast to France yesterday. Youssef Fofana, 22, is a suspect in the torture death of Ilan Halimi, 23, who was abducted Jan. 21 and found Feb. 13.

Algeria freed a first group of Islamic militants yesterday after deciding to pardon or reduce sentences for more than 2,000 people detained during an insurgency in the 1990s. The exact numbers of prisoners freed was unclear, as was the nature of their crimes. About 20 prisoners could be seen leaving two prisons outside Algiers.

A Mexico City judge has ordered a woman suspected in the deaths of several elderly **women** to stand trial on six counts of homicide. Prosecutors said they had evidence implicating Juana Barraza, 48, as the notorious "Mataviejitas," or "Little Old Lady Killer." They said she confessed to four killings, and her fingerprints matched those in a total of 10 cases.

Two Sri Lankan men who snatched a gold chain from a woman struggling in the waves of the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami will be tried for murder, Sri Lanka's solicitor general said yesterday. After yanking her necklace, the two let Dinethi Deshika fall back into the torrent. Her body was found after the waters receded.

Load-Date: March 5, 2006

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'Our Peace Strategy Has Failed'

New York Sun (Archive)

January 26, 2006 Thursday

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Section: EDITORIAL & OPINION; Pg. 6

Length: 525 words

Byline: Shoshana Bryen

Body

After hundreds of thousands of deaths, the displacement of about 3 million people, and the destruction of the tribal way of life of the people of Darfur; after the establishment and deployment of an African Union "peacekeeping" force of 7,000 men supported by American logistics and \$170 million; after President Bush called the human catastrophe "genocide" and demanded U.N. action, Jan Pronk, U.N. special envoy to Sudan, has said, "Looking back at three years of killings and (ethnic) cleansing in Darfur, we must admit that our peace strategy so far has failed. All we did was pick up the pieces and muddle through, doing too little, too late."

Mr. Pronk, it appears, has been educated by, or perhaps haunted by the multitude of men, women, and children murdered outright or starved into submission by the Darfur rebels with the active support of the Sudanese government under the protection of the threat of a Chinese veto of Security Council action. (China has a large stake in the oil riches of southern Sudan, and thus supports the government in Khartoum regardless of the depredations it heaps upon its citizens.) According to media reports, Mr. Pronk "appealed to [the U.N. Security Council] to undertake a transition from the African Union mission to a UN force of ... peacekeepers with the authority to use violence to prevent attacks against civilians and disarm militias." (My emphasis)

Aside from the syntactical oddity, Mr. Pronk is on to something.

A "war strategy" - the authority to use violence - might, in fact, be more effective and humane than a "peace strategy." The militias are waging war against the people of Darfur and warriors - people authorized to use violence - are needed to protect the people and kill, yes, kill, the perpetrators. There is no reason to believe anything less will stop the Janjaweed ravaging of an already ravaged people.

One of the most bizarre notions born of the late 20th century is that people who kill, loot, maim, rape, pillage, and blow up buses are driven by circumstance to their evil deeds and can be convinced by diplomacy to stop. There is an implicit assumption that killers have an agenda amenable to compromise or purchase. It further assumes that at least some of the killers' claims have merit that diplomats - and victims - should consider. It is on a par with the notion that sharing power with terrorists will "moderate" them, making them aware of potholes, civil rights, and the requirements for peaceable relations among nations.

But it is often the case that one party's agenda is the death of its enemy and the acquisition of its physical and intellectual space and/or property. Janjaweed, Hamas, Hezbollah, and Al Qaeda give no evidence of interest in the achievement of some of their goals or satisfaction of some of their claims. The benefits of a Western-style "win-win" situation eludes them.

'Our Peace Strategy Has Failed'

To the extent that Mr. Pronk is successful in convincing the United Nations that killing the killers is the fastest route to peace, the people of Darfur may yet have hope.

Ms. Bryen is director of special projects at the Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs in Washington, D.C.

Load-Date: January 26, 2006

End of Document

Prime minister's press conference

Guardian.com

April 24, 2006

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theguardian

Length: 1848 words

Highlight: Tony Blair faces questions from Westminster journalists at his monthly press conference from midday. Follow it live with Oliver King

Body

With the Daily Mail running that hoary old cliché of a headline - "Crisis? What NHS crisis?" - prompted by Patricia Hewitt's "best year ever" comment yesterday, expect job losses and trust deficits in the NHS to figure prominently. Does Tony Blair still have confidence in his health secretary? He will undoubtedly say yes, as he's as determined as she is that journalists put the recent bad headlines in some perspective, arguing that the current painful reforms are justifiable because they will ensure proper financial control in the future.

After Mr Blair's comment about how "out of touch" his critics on civil liberties are, expect more from the PM on this subject, too. Labour believes it is responding to the public mood and dismisses as exaggerated distortions claims that it is undermining British democracy. Given that we are in the middle of a local election campaign, Mr Blair will try and paint his political opponents as soft on law and order for opposing Asbos, 90-day detention and ID cards among other things.

Questions too on "cash-for-honours". Has Mr Blair been preparing to talk to Scotland Yard? At PMQs last week he repeated a favourite phrase of Downing Street when faced with awkward questions, saying that he wasn't going "to give a running commentary" on the affair. That won't stop journalists trying, though.

Midday

Still waiting for Tony Blair but we can see a flatscreen TV. Are we in for one of those powerpoint demonstrations loved by Downing Street and loathed by journalists who are keen to get their questions in?

Mr Blair joins us and opens by reminding journalists about the progress made on waiting lists, cardiac care and cancer care. All improved, he says. No winter flu crisis, either. He tells us that he is going to be "very open" about the challenges the NHS is facing but reminds his audience of Labour's record of achievement.

12.05pm

Next year will be "very challenging for the reasons we know," he says. Talks about creating a "different type" of health service centered around patient choice. Points to the screen to figures backing up his case. I'm not minimising the difficulties, Mr Blair repeats, but "for the sake of balance ... let's get the figures right" about jobs, he tells the nursing unions.

Prime minister's press conference

12.10pm

Mr Blair points to screen and says there are double the amount of heart operations and patients helped with the use of statin drugs. On cancer, he says there are more consultants and the speed with which patients are seen has been improved (though there is a lot further to go, he admits). Outcomes have improved, too, as the number of cancer deaths are down.

Our NHS has been changed for the better, he sums up. The PM asks for, one, a sense of balance - yes, there are problems but there have been lasting improvements - and, two, reforms do mean difficulties but the reforms will make the extra money work better for the patient. The challenges faced over the next year will be overcome by the NHS, he claims.

12.15pm

Nick Robinson of the BBC asks him why he didn't use the phrase "best year ever" to describe the NHS, and whether he would care to repeat it. The facts speak for themselves, says the PM, although he doesn't repeat the comment. He says he'll meet the targets set by central government. The PM asks anyone to show where Labour has done badly by nurses, given the increases in numbers and pay.

Adam Bolton of Sky News raises the question of increased pay in the NHS and the government's underestimation of the figures. Mr Blair pauses and says he doesn't accept the resources on pay are not justified ... the overall pay bill as a proportion of NHS expenditure is down, not up, since 97, says the PM. He also wants to lay to rest the idea that GPs are on 250,000pa - he doesn't believe any doctor is being paid that much.

Practice-based commissioning in the NHS gives the GPs the incentive to do more in a primary care setting and not to refer to hospitals, he says. GPs doing a lot more that used to be done in hospitals and hospitals doing a lot more "day surgery", Mr Blair says.

12.20pm

... the PM asks for sense of balance for a third time.

Tom Bradby of ITV asks if patients have "never had it so good". Mr Blair avoids using that particularly loaded phrase but his answer implies that he believes that to be true.

Andy Bell from Channel 5 asks if job losses mean the NHS reforms are working. Mr Blair disagrees but says there was no proper financial control in the NHS. It's only progress if the patient gets a better deal, Mr Blair says. There are many different methods of paying for healthcare but the principles around the world seem to be the same.

12.25pm

Newsnight asks Mr Blair if - as a focus group organised by the programme suggested - he is the problem and that people don't believe in him. Instead of doing focus groups, you could help me with this debate, says Mr Blair.

The Sun's political editor George Pascoe-Watson asks if Patricia Hewitt is the right person to carry through the reforms as health secretary. "Of course," Mr Blair says. He claims that waiting lists dramatically fell the month that patient choice was introduced.

George Jones from The Daily Telegraph brings up lenders to the Labour party and whether the party can repay the money. He says he has nothing more to add to what John Prescott said yesterday ... he frowns and then - surprise, surprise - says he is not going to give a "running commentary" on the affair.

12.30pm

Channel 4's Jon Snow asks about health, too. Mr Blair repeats his earlier comments.

Prime minister's press conference

Asked why some good health trusts have to bail out the overspenders, the PM says that's the way the system has always worked but overspending trusts will only be bailed out if they have a "recovery programme in place".

Bloomberg asks about the reform of the House of Lords and whether he believes in a democratic upper chamber. He says he hasn't made up his mind.

Oona Blackman of the Mirror returns to NHS closures. Mr Blair repeats that some reports are exaggerated and that it's always possible to find bad news stories, even in his constituency, but that healthcare is different.

GMTV asks about Dave the Chameleon advert and whether it has backfired. It's just a bit of fun, says the PM, and he's sure Mr Cameron will be able to handle it. At some point the Tory leader will have to make some decisions, he says.

12.35pm

Gary Gibbon of Channel 4 news says it sounds like you're more open-minded than before. "I'm marginally more open-minded," says the PM ... "I'm a very open minded bloke". But he then advises the hacks not to read too much into what he's saying ...

Catherine McCloud from the Glasgow Herald asks about the "unpaid" minister for women. Mr Blair hints he might well pay Meg Munn - he says "it has to be resolved". On the wider point about equality of pay, Mr Blair says there is a need to talk to employers about closing the gap, suggesting the very predictions about how long it will take are "too pessimistic".

RTE ask about the return of the Northern Ireland assembly and the Queen's visit to Ireland. Relations between the two countries have been transformed, Mr Blair says.

12.40pm

Ben Brogan from the Daily Mail asks when the NHS reforms will stop and if Mr Blair will stick around to see them finished. The PM responds, "I was waiting for that sting in the tail". The big problem we faced, says Mr Blair, was rationing by waiting list - with people waiting sometimes years for elective surgery. If people now have a door-to-door average wait of seven or eight weeks and a maximum of 18 weeks, that is effectively the end of that problem and would be a major transformation.

There will always be problems with the health service, he admits. What we are trying to do is get to the stage where GPs and hospitals have incentives to improve their own services. Take MRI scanners, he says, which are not used at weekends or evenings. As the government builds in incentives, this will change, he says.

12.45pm

The BBC asks about how and why donations to the Labour party were turned into loans and whether the PM has taken legal advice. Mr Blair repeats his line about not offering a "running commentary" - he won't say anything because it would be "a complete distraction" but indicates that there will be a time and place when journalists can question him. Mr Blair says that it's right that sponsors of city academies are nominated for honours.

Andrew Grice of the Independent asks if his administration is "one of the most authoritarian in history" - a charge levelled by Liberty. Mr Blair disagrees, reminding him that Labour introduced the Human Rights Act. But the civil liberty of a pensioner living in fear also "counts" he says. People are fed up with menaces on the street and drug dealers. We will legislate again if the police need more powers, he promises.

The Scotsman asks if he is not uncomfortable with the idea that people who endorse a policy of his are rewarded by honours. Mr Blair says it is not about endorsing his policies, but about benefiting society.

12.50pm

Prime minister's press conference

Asked by Tyne Tees if there are any similarities between Alan Shearer's early retirement and another north-east icon who may have to consider giving up. Mr Blair responds by saying "my knees are fine", which raises a laugh.

A Middle Eastern journalist asks about Britain's contribution to the Palestinian issue and the "Abdullah" plan - a reference to King Abdullah's proposals. Mr Blair says it's a priority for him to make progress because without progress we'll have a running sore which causes great mistrust in the world. Everyone must accept the principles though which peace will come - ie a two-state solution with security for Israel guaranteed.

"I support entirely the mandate of Hamas," the PM says, but they must change their attitude to Israel.

12.55pm

Patrick Wintour of the Guardian asks what responsibility central government has in the NHS crisis and what his latest estimates are for the overall deficit figure and whether he is planning to fine overspending trusts.

Mr Blair denies the last question but says "of course we take responsibility". He doesn't know what the current prognosis is on the deficit but he says it's not "sensible" to give an estimate. He hints that the 800m figure might prove to be an exaggeration.

Jerry Lewis of Israel radio asks Mr Blair to clarify the government's attitude to Hamas, as well as Osama Bin Laden's latest audio tape, and the threat of the BNP.

1pm

Mr Blair says the BNP and racism offer nothing but misery. About Hamas, he says the government's position remains as he set it out earlier. Osama Bin Laden's tape reveals the extremism of their politics of hatred.

A Sky reporter returns to the question about the NHS and the difference between peoples' perceptions and the service they receive. Mr Blair repeats his call for balance in the reporting of the NHS story.

On Iran, Mr Blair says it's not the same situation as with Iraq, but adds that the west shouldn't be sending signals of weakness at the current time.

Mr Blair wraps things up with the comment that "all good things must come to an end" before grinning and leaving the room.

Load-Date: April 24, 2006

Unspooling difficult truths

The Toronto Star
December 18, 2005 Sunday

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Section: ENTERTAINMENT; Pg. C12

Length: 540 words

Byline: Olivia Ward, TORONTO STAR

Body

Down at heel, damp from North Sea rainstorms but undaunted, thousands gathered last week in Amsterdam's trendy southern sector to warm themselves over cups of bad coffee at the seedy City cinema complex.

Unlike at Cannes or Venice, they were not coming to watch superstars twinkle. They were drawn by the world's largest documentary festival: an event that, like Toronto's Hot Docs, attracts audiences hungry for ...

For what?

"I'm here because I can't get a real view of what's happening in the world any other way," said a middle-aged German woman. "If you can't travel the world and see for yourself, the next best thing is documentary film."

"I don't believe anything I see on the news," said a skeptical Italian student. "Here you get the real story."

Ally Derks, president of International Documentary Festival Amsterdam, put it more politically. "Documentary in conjunction with democracy can provide a civil society with information and enlightenment, and help us to face the reality of the 21st century," she said.

For the filmmakers, such words are balm indeed. Arousing opposition, anger and sometimes violent revenge, they have little hope of fame and fortune at the end of tortuous journeys.

"Maybe we should all be locked up somewhere safe for our own good," said a director who had trekked through Afghanistan during the Taliban's fiercest resistance campaign.

It certainly isn't for the money. Few documentary filmmakers earn enough to carry them from one project to the next, and most live on the benevolence of their bankers.

But they are oddly compelled to record their particular pursuit of truth, whether personal or political, and share it.

Many of their images are hard to watch, and some quite shocking.

"Have you see that terrific film on the way our food is produced?" a cheerful Chinese director asked me over a grilled trout. "It's absolutely gruesome. You won't ever want to eat again."

Unspooling difficult truths

The film, *Our Daily Bread*, directed by Austrian Nikolaus Geyrhalter, went on to win a special jury prize. But the top award, the Joris Ivens Award, went to *My Grandmother's House*, a poetic but highly personal study of the affectionate relationship between an elderly Spanish woman and her brash, new-generation granddaughter.

Another wrenchingly personal film, *Before Flying Back to Earth*, won the Silver Wolf award for shorter documentaries, for its portrait of the children's leukemia ward in Vilnius.

Political passions were also prominent at Amsterdam, where filmmaker Theo van Gogh was murdered for graphically portraying the plight of Muslim women.

Some filmmakers I talked with were driven to their subjects by indignation - like young Palestinian director Osama Qashoo, who documented the destruction of his village's olive grove in *My Dear Olive Tree*.

Swedish director Bernt Hermele, whose Jewish mother was killed on a visit to Israel, plumbed the depths of his grief in the film *My Mother Was Murdered by a Suicide Bomber*.

Others, like Finnish director Arto Halonen who profiled a psychologist on call to Russia's rich and reckless in *Pavlov's Dogs*, delivered a slice of life in seldom viewed societies.

Olivia Ward was in Amsterdam for the screening of her documentary *Hamas*: *Behind the Mask*, produced and directed by Shelley Saywell.

Graphic

An appetite-killing look at food production propels *Our Daily Bread*.

Load-Date: December 18, 2005

World briefing: Band of Brothers

The Guardian (London) - Final Edition

December 9, 2005

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Section: Guardian International Pages, Pg. 23

Length: 550 words

Byline: Simon Tisdall

Body

The Muslim Brotherhood's success in Egypt's parliamentary elections, which came to a turbulent end yesterday, will reverberate around the Arab world. The region traditionally looks to Cairo for a lead. And potentially incompatible demands for strengthened civil societies and the integration of Islamists into mainstream politics are this year's hot topic.

The Brotherhood's advance also poses a dilemma for Hosni Mubarak, Egypt's president, and for the US and other countries urging greater Middle East democracy but fearful of Islamist activism. Officially the Brotherhood is banned in Egypt, as in several Arab countries. The Bush administration refuses to talk to the movement. It is equally wary of Islamists such as **Hamas**, expected to make gains in next month's Palestinian elections.

Poll results gave the ruling National Democratic party and its allies roughly 333 seats in the 454-seat assembly. Secular parties and independents took a handful of seats. But the Brotherhood was the big gainer. Its 19% share of the vote, translating into a record 88 seats, confirmed it as Egypt's main opposition group - despite its decision to field only about 150 candidates for fear of provoking a crackdown.

The elections saw a repeat of the fraud claims that marred Mr Mubarak's re-election triumph in September. Violence and mass arrests of Brotherhood supporters accompanied the poll, and on Wednesday at least eight people were killed amid widespread complaints that police had stopped some opposition voters casting their ballots.

"Bullets govern the elections," the opposition Al-Wafd newspaper declared. Meanwhile, the pro-government Al-Gomhuria warned that "The Mullahs are Coming!", playing on fears that although the Brotherhood's campaign emphasised practical issues, its slogan "Islam is the Solution" pointed to a hidden agenda of social intolerance, Sharia law, repression of **women** and hostility to religious minorities.

The Brotherhood says that is a distortion. Spokesman Mohammad Moursi said earlier this year: "All around the world, people want to be democratic, to pick their own leaders. Creating a democratic, civil party is our aim. We want political reform. But the constitution says the main source of all laws is the Qur'an."

Meanwhile, Egypt's reform rollercoaster hit another trough this week with the renewed detention of former presidential candidate Ayman Nour. "Nour's trial, like the violence against voters, is a terrible advertisement for President Mubarak's supposed reform agenda," Human Rights Watch said.

World briefing: Band of Brothers

Mr Nour's plight also prompted criticism from the US. "This is the latest in a string of events that cause us serious concern about developments in Egypt," the state department said. But while condemning poll irregularities, Washington says "considerable progress" has been made.

Egyptian officials say that despite all the problems, the impetus for reform will gather pace. "The process has become unstoppable," one official said. "The next elections (in 2010) will bring even bigger changes." Asked whether the ban on the Brotherhood would be lifted, he said it was up to the movement to abide by Egypt's constitution, which forbids parties based on religion, ethnicity or gender. It had to decide whether it was ready to join the secular political mainstream.

Load-Date: December 9, 2005

End of Document

**Comment & Debate: We need to engage with all strands of Muslim opinion:
The British government is making a mistake if it believes it can understand a
community by talking to just one organisation**

The Guardian - Final Edition

July 12, 2006 Wednesday

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Section: GUARDIAN COMMENT AND DEBATE PAGES ; Pg. 31

Length: 1246 words

Byline: Jonathan Freedland

Body

Alexandra Palace is not a mosque, but last week it looked like one. Set designers had gone to work, painting domes and minarets, so that the interior of the building where British television began looked more like north Damascus than north London, more Mecca than Muswell Hill. The change was for Islam Expo, a four-day festival of debate, music and culture that brought in tens of thousands of people, instantly becoming the biggest event of its kind in the history of Britain's Muslim community.

I was at a panel on the origins of terrorism: "religious or political?" The star turn was Palestinian-born Dr Azzam Tamimi of the Muslim Association of Britain (MAB). Asked whether Hamas should recognise Israel and renounce violence, he launched into a full-throttle rhetorical assault, insisting: "It is the same as asking rape victims to recognise that their rape was legitimate . . . We will never do that, never!"

While the audience were loudly applauding and cheering, I was struck by two related thoughts, both of which have become especially pressing in the globalised world of the 21st century - in which it is now common, rather than unusual, for people to live far away from the lands with which they strongly identify.

For this is the age of the diaspora. There are Indians in America, Turks in Germany, Algerians in France, and everybody in London. Many of these communities stay passionately connected to the politics of the old country. But their view of that politics is different from those who are living it, day to day. Thus is born the phenomenon of the irresponsible diaspora.

I saw it up close in the US, when I met Irish-Americans whose nostalgic brand of Irish nationalism made them much more stubbornly hardline than the leadership of Sinn Fein, those who lived the reality of contemporary life on the Falls Road. As one senior republican put it to me, these third-generation Americans in Boston and New York were "more Catholic than the Pope".

The phrase doesn't fit Dr Tamimi, but the sentiment does. For most Palestinians on the ground had to give up the luxury of such dogmatism long ago. Even Hamas, which stands alongside the MAB in the worldwide fraternity of the Muslim Brotherhood, is quite clearly on its way to reaching an acceptance of Israel's existence within the 1967 borders. It has taken tentative steps in that direction already, most recently in its backing for the so-called "prisoners' document" that implies acceptance of Israel. For the sake of trying to end the distress they live with every day in Gaza and the West Bank, they can no longer afford the ideological purity of Dr Tamimi's "never".

Comment & Debate: We need to engage with all strands of Muslim opinion: The British government is making a mistake if it believes it can understand a community

Intriguingly, tension on the other side of this conflict, between Israel and the Jewish diaspora, often runs the other way. True, in the Oslo period of the 1990s the minority Zionist Organisation of America stood to the right of Yitzhak Rabin, insisting it understood Israel's security needs better than Israel itself. But a more frequent clash is of the kind seen last week, when 300 British Jews took a full-page ad in the Times to call on Israel to halt its "collective punishment" of the people of Gaza. I share the signatories' horror at the bombing of a Palestinian power station and cutting-off of fuel supplies: such actions are morally indefensible. And I reject the complaints of those Israelis who denounce their diaspora critics, saying that only those who live with the Israeli reality have any right to comment. That said, I do wonder why these concerned Jews did not place an ad in an Israeli newspaper. If their motive was moving Israeli policy, that would surely have been the right place. Instead, they have allowed their opponents to say their prime interest was advertising their own dovishness to their fellow Britons.

Still, the move has served as a timely reminder that no diaspora community, no ethnic minority, is a monolith: they are as varied as the societies with which they identify. Timely, because right now the government faces serious criticism of its view of the British Muslim community - or communities - specifically in the way they are represented.

On Friday Channel 4 will air a documentary by Martin Bright of the New Statesman in which he argues that ministers have in effect anointed as the official representatives of British Islam those who represent some of its most radical shades of opinion. Central is the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB), an umbrella body but one that is, Bright argues, sympathetic to a robust form of Islamism. Others recall the MCB's former head, Sir Iqbal Sacranie, who at the height of the Salman Rushdie affair wondered if "death is too good for him".

Bright traces the origin of this approach to the Foreign Office, which has long believed in engagement with political Islam, including the Muslim Brotherhood. Using a stream of leaked documents, Bright shows how civil servants have argued for the same policy of engagement to apply domestically. The result has been the admission to Britain of one of the Brotherhood's spiritual leaders, Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi - who blesses suicide bombings against Israeli civilians, denounces homosexuality, and defends the physical disciplining of women by their husbands - on the grounds that he is in tune with "mainstream" British Muslim opinion (a move rather at odds with Tony Blair's stated belief that the Brotherhood is partly responsible for the global spread of the ideology that underpins Islamist terrorism). A succession of other, less strident Muslim leaders testify that they have been shut out of government dialogue - and denied financial help - in favour of the privileged MCB.

The key question is where, in fact, the British Muslim mainstream lies. Bright says the majority are from the more non-political Sufi tradition; others insist that young British Muslims see the MCB as, if anything, too mild and insufficiently hardline. Which is it?

Polling offers a mixed picture. Last month the Pew Global Attitudes Project found that British Muslims had far more negative views of westerners than Muslim communities elsewhere in Europe. A significant majority viewed western populations as selfish, arrogant, greedy and immoral - attitudes more prevalent in Muslim societies in the Middle East and Asia than among other European Muslims. Another poll last week further found that 13% of British Muslims believe the 7/7 bombers should be regarded as "martyrs".

Of course, the flipside of that finding is that a majority of British Muslims believe no such thing. Indeed the poll found most saying the government has failed to combat extremism - a greater proportion with that view than among the British population as a whole.

There is, then, evidence available to both sides of this argument: those who say British Muslims are radical and therefore have to be met where they are - not where others would like them to be - and those who say that this community is essentially moderate, but is regularly stirred up by hardliners who enjoy the misguided support of the government.

My own view is that the government is making a mistake if it hands the franchise of dialogue over to a single organisation or strand of opinion. It may be more convenient, but it is mistaken. For diasporas and religious communities are diverse organisms, with complex, contradictory views. They can be irresponsible and irritating, but they are never monolithic. The annoying reality is, you have to speak to all of them.

Comment & Debate: We need to engage with all strands of Muslim opinion: The British government is making a mistake if it believes it can understand a community

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End of Document

Once Again, Gazans Are Displaced by Israeli Occupiers

The New York Times

July 12, 2006 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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Section: Section A; Column 3; Foreign Desk; Pg. 12

Length: 1207 words

Byline: By STEVEN ERLANGER

Dateline: SHUKA, Gaza Strip, July 11

Body

Khairi Edbary and his family of eight normally share a tiny concrete house with his brother and his family of eight, with a raw dividing wall of concrete blocks providing a touch of privacy.

These days, however, the house is almost empty. The Edbarys live on the eastern edge of the broken runway of what was once the Gaza airport, which has now been taken over by Israeli troops.

Like many of the people here, mostly poor farmers, the Edbarys have heeded the Israeli call to evacuate their homes to escape the fighting and are sleeping in United Nations schools in nearby Rafah.

Mr. Edbary, 36, displayed a large brass shell from an Israeli heavy machine gun that had fallen from an attack helicopter onto his roof. "At night," he said, "the noise is frightening, and the firing shakes the ground. They shoot at anything moving at night."

He had returned to his house on Tuesday to prepare some food for his family and retrieve documents for a sick daughter, before making his way back about three miles to the Rafah Elementary Boys School, run by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, which helps Palestinian refugees and their families.

In the last week, the agency has opened two schools in Rafah to house the displaced people of Shuka and southern Gaza. There are about 1,000 people in 136 families at the two schools, sleeping on thin mattresses in empty classrooms, said Jamal Hamad, an agency spokesman, "but the numbers are increasing every day."

Initially, people like Fayez Sawarka, 40, stayed at home. But the Israeli incursion into the airport and its neighborhood, with tanks and armored bulldozers and artillery, destroyed some of the narrow roads and made it difficult if not impossible for farmers to get to their fields or to bring in food.

The shelling and the noise were followed by Israeli calls on loudspeakers for residents to leave their homes for their own safety.

"We just took our identity cards and the clothes we were wearing," Mr. Sawarka said, adding that he, his wife and their 10 children lived for a week in the open outside Rafah. Locals fed them, and the United Nations agency finally brought them a tent, then began to open the schools.

Once Again, Gazans Are Displaced by Israeli Occupiers

"We left all the crops in the ground," he said, watermelon, garlic, cucumbers and tomatoes. "I know nothing about my house."

The agency provides food, water and shelter, plus some social workers. But no one knows how long this will last.

For John Ging, the director of operations for the agency in Gaza, the Israeli incursion, to try to force the release of a captured soldier, is the latest strain on a population already suffering from a broad economic boycott of the **Hamas**-led Palestinian Authority, which has been unable to pay salaries for five months.

"There is now a humanitarian crisis here," Mr. Ging said. "For many Palestinians now, it's a struggle to survive, for the basics of life."

Before the Israeli incursion, the agency and other aid institutions were struggling to help people cope with the lack of jobs and salaries.

Now, he said, with the destruction of Gaza's only power plant, the bombing of some key bridges, the damage to water pipes and the sleep deprivation caused by sonic booms, "there is collective suffering here that doesn't distinguish" between civilian and fighter.

"We are all collectively living with the consequences of that Israeli military action," he said. "It affects everyone."

Mr. Ging said that Israeli citizens under Palestinian rocket fire were also living in fear, and that that was equally unacceptable. "All lives are equal," he said.

Still, his job is Gaza, and with the closure of the Karni border crossing because of security alerts, "we'll run out of broad beans and whole milk in another day."

The agency now distributes food packages to 725,000 of Gaza's 1.4 million people, an increase of 100,000 in the last month, he said. There are 235 shipping containers of food in Israel, he said, at the Ashdod port, waiting to be brought through the Karni crossing.

According to the World Food Program, "the last two weeks have had a significant impact on food security," with shortages of milk and sugar, and only a week's supply of flour remaining, said a spokeswoman, Kirstie Campbell. Food companies and bakeries are struggling with the power cuts, she said, and fishermen are not allowed out beyond the harbor, though on Monday Israel allowed the program to bring in some canned meat and flour through the Erez crossing, normally used only for people.

"The issue is capacity," she said. The one truck through Erez took an hour and contained 25 metric tons of food, she said. But 1,000 metric tons of flour is waiting in Ashdod, though that represents only a third of the agency's monthly needs for its 160,000 recipients.

Israel has said that it is trying to minimize harm to civilians as it tries to force the release of the soldier, Cpl. Gilad Shalit, and stop rocket fire into Israeli towns. More than 50 Palestinians have died since the Israeli incursion began nearly two weeks ago; most of the dead have been militants.

Israel has also said it has allowed in needed gasoline and diesel fuel, medicine and foodstuffs, and Prime Minister Ehud Olmert noted Monday that Israel was still supplying Gaza with water and electricity because "we don't want to punish the civilian population."

Still, after the damage to the power plant, most Gazans get only six hours of electricity a day, at unpredictable times, so refrigeration of food becomes a problem. So does water supply, because many Gazans use electric pumps to get their water, and there are similar problems with sewage treatment.

On Saturday, the head of Israel's Gaza liaison administration, Col. Nir Press, told The Jerusalem Post that "the situation in Gaza is not even close to developing into a humanitarian crisis," saying such charges made by the Palestinians were aimed at deceiving the international community.

Once Again, Gazans Are Displaced by Israeli Occupiers

Mr. Ging, the United Nations representative, said in response: "There's growing resentment expressed to me about the debate whether it's a humanitarian crisis or not. It is a humanitarian crisis."

The Palestinian prime minister, Ismail Haniya, emerged on Tuesday from a long period of silence to hold a cabinet meeting. He told reporters that living conditions in the Gaza Strip "are becoming critical because of a lack of food, fuel and medicine."

Mr. Haniya thanked the European Union for sending fuel for Gaza hospitals via a new mechanism set up to meet the basic needs of Palestinians without going through the Hamas-led government. Around 78,000 gallons of fuel was delivered Tuesday to power generators at public hospitals, the first of what are meant to be monthly deliveries.

In Shuka, Mr. Edbary said he supported the raid into Israel that captured the soldier, and thought Israel should be willing to negotiate some form of prisoner exchange.

"At least Israel should release the women and children prisoners of ours that they have," he said. "It's shameful."

Does he think his government bears some responsibility for the troubles he now has? Mr. Edbary's eyes wandered. "I don't care about politics," he said. "I care about our dignity."

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Graphic

Photos: The United Nations has opened two schools near Rafah, in southern Gaza, to house Palestinian refugees shunted aside in the Israeli incursions.

Khairi Edbary, 36, and his wife moving their family of eight on Tuesday from their home in Shuka, Gaza, to a center set up in a local school. (Photographs by Shawn Baldwin for The New York Times)

Load-Date: July 12, 2006

End of Document

Deal directly with Latin America, Canada urged

Ottawa Citizen

April 26, 2006 Wednesday

Final Edition

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Section: CITY; Pg. C6; Diplomatica

Length: 909 words

Byline: Jennifer Campbell, Citizen Special

Body

Canada should start dealing with Latin America and the Caribbean directly. It doesn't always have to do so in concert with its large southerly neighbour. This prescription came from Jorge Quiroga, the youthful former president of Bolivia, clearly someone who has some experience dealing with both Canada and the U.S.

Mr. Quiroga was a guest speaker at a day-long symposium held Friday at Foreign Affairs. The event, presented by the Canadian Institute for International Affairs and FOCAL (The Canadian Foundation for the Americas), was titled "Where Can Canada Really Make a Difference?" It set out to look at "neglect and opportunity" in Latin America and the Caribbean, 16 years after Canada signed up with the Organization of American States.

Mr. Quiroga was vice-president of Bolivia when he stepped in as president from 2001 to 2002 when President Hugo Banzer stepped down because he was battling cancer. Mr. Quiroga ran for the presidency in the December 2005 election but lost to Evo Morales.

"There's something to be gained through direct communication between Canada and Latin America," Mr. Quiroga said, using communication problems in his own family as an example of how messages can get mixed when communication involves too many parties, whether parents and children, or governments.

In his suggestions on what Canada can do, Mr. Quiroga suggested it can show Latin America how to structure a multicultural society. He also said Latin America's countries need institution-building and poverty-reduction.

In his comments, Peter Hakim, president of Interamerican Dialogue, a Washington-based think tank that looks at western hemisphere relations, talked about how impressed he was to have been asked by Canadians how they should be running their foreign policy, something he said would never happen in the U.S.

"I may get to like it," Mr. Hakim said with a laugh.

Mr. Hakim admitted that the economies of Latin America and the Caribbean are doing far better than they were a decade ago, but said they should be doing even better. When you take into account other economic indicators such as savings rates, tax and export policies, education and infrastructure, he said, "you get nervous about how long the buoyancy is likely to continue."

Deal directly with Latin America, Canada urged

Addressing the topic of their particular session, which was to look at the surge of "populist" governments and included a French-language address from Venezuelan Ambassador Jesus Perez, Mr. Hakim said he doesn't see an ideological shift "of great importance" in Latin America.

"What we're seeing is bad governments being thrown out of office -- governments that don't perform," he said. "And if the left governments don't perform, they'll get turfed out too."

Palestinian Pleading

A prominent Palestinian spokesperson was in Canada this week, trying to re-establish aid ties with her country after the Canadian government cut them off. Hanan Ashrawi, an elected member of the Palestinian Legislative Council for the Jerusalem District and a strong advocate for government accountability, was invited to speak Saturday in Montreal by the National Council on Canada-Arab Relations and the Canadian Arab Federation.

She came to Ottawa this week to meet with Foreign Affairs Minister Peter MacKay, Liberal Party foreign affairs critic Stephane Dion, NDP leader Jack Layton and Bloc Quebecois leader Gilles Duceppe.

Yesterday, before heading home, she was meeting with some 30 parliamentarians -- MPs and Senators.

She was in Canada to explain that there are ways the government can get aid to the Palestinian people without the risk of it getting into the hands of the Hamas government, explained Amin Abou-Hassira, head of the general delegation for Palestine in Canada. Canada cut off aid shortly after Hamas was elected because the party didn't promise non-violence in its platform.

"There are ways for CIDA to supervise the aid," Mr. Abou-Hassira said, adding that the situation is complicated but the bottom line is that the living conditions of the average Palestinian are not good and Canada is in a position to help.

Foreign Food Flair

Where else can you sample culinary delicacies from 18 Asia-Pacific countries, and then take home all the recipes? The Asia Pacific Food Fair is back and takes place May 10 from noon till 2:30 p.m. at the Chinese Embassy.

The event happens every two years and involves the embassies and high commissions of Afghanistan, Australia, Bangladesh, Brunei, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, New Zealand, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam. It is put on by the Asia Pacific Group, through the Heads of Mission Spouses Association. In addition to food and drink from 18 countries, participants will be treated to a table of handicrafts for sale. The group also publishes cookbooks of the recipes that will be sold at the event.

This year, the food-fair proceeds will go to Harmony House, an Ottawa shelter that helps women and their children make the transition from abusive environments. Meanwhile, Laureen Harper will be the guest of honour. She will speak, and officially open the fair.

Committee member Khorshied Samad, who is married to Afghan Ambassador Omar Samad, also promised door prizes and a raffle for at least one exotic holiday.

For information and tickets (\$30), e-mail juyenakhan@yahoo.com or call Renalta at (613) 236-0138.

Jennifer Campbell is a freelance writer and editor in Ottawa.

Reach her at Diplomatica@sympatico.ca.

Graphic

Deal directly with Latin America, Canada urged

Colour Photo: Rod MacIvor, The Ottawa Citizen; International Day: A handful of ambassadors and high commissioners took part in Ashbury College's International Day Thursday. Activities included an international food fair at lunch time. From left, student Laura Pavezka, 16, Headmaster Tam Matthews, Ana Isabel Messina, wife of the ambassador from the Dominican Republic, Musaed Al Haroon, ambassador of Kuwait, and students Katherine Agapitoy, 17, and Angela Bouzanis, 16.;

Colour Photo: Bruno Schlumberger, The Ottawa Citizen; Asia-Pacific Food Fair: Members of the Asia-Pacific group within the Heads of Mission Spouses' Association are preparing for its bi-annual Asia-Pacific Food Fair, which takes place May 10 at the Chinese Embassy. Juyena Khan, wife of Bangladesh High Commissioner Rafiq Khan, held a planning meeting Monday. From left, Ghazala Malik (Pakistan), Cherry Ignatius (Malaysia), Ms. Khan and Khorshied Samad (Afghanistan).;

Colour Photo: Rod MacIvor, The Ottawa Citizen; Day of Remembrance: Australian High Commissioner Bill Fisher and New Zealand High Commissioner Graham Kelly held a commemorative service yesterday at the Canadian War Museum to mark ANZAC Day, the two countries' national day of remembrance. Mr. Fisher, left and Mr. Kelly.;

Colour Photo: Focus on Women's Health: Mesaid Al-Kulaib, third secretary of the Embassy of Kuwait, hosted a lunch in support of the Shirley E. Greenberg Women's Health Centre yesterday. From left: Linda Schumacher, executive director, Women's Health Centre Advisory Board, Karen Fung Kee Fung of the health centre, and Mr. Al-Kulaib.;

Colour Photo: Ryan Jackson, The Ottawa Citizen; Art Exhibit: The Foreign Service Community Association hosted an art exhibit yesterday in the Skelton Lobby of the Lester B. Pearson building, 125 Sussex Dr. The exhibit continues until Friday.;

Colour Photo: Ryan Jackson, The Ottawa Citizen; Cultural Evening: The Polish Embassy hosted a cultural evening for the Carleton University Library Circle of Friends last night. Rafal Domisiewicz of the Embassy of the Republic of Poland chats with Vivian Cummins, co-ordinator of research and training at Carleton University.;

Colour Photo: Ryan Jackson, The Ottawa Citizen; Gallipoli Recalled: The Turkish Embassy, Australian High Commission, New Zealand High Commission and the Canadian War Museum presented the Canadian premiere of Gallipoli, a First World War docudrama, Monday at the War Museum. From left: Australian High Commissioner William Fisher, New Zealand High Commissioner Graham Kelly and Turkish Ambassador Aydemir Erman.;

Colour Photo: Aaron Lynett, The Ottawa Citizen; The Art of Ukrainian Easter Eggs: Inna Prystaiko, wife of Vadym Prystaiko, charge d'affaires of the Embassy of Ukraine, hosted the third annual pysanka (Ukrainian Easter egg) workshop Thursday at the embassy, with Chrystia Chudczak providing the instruction. Chrystia Chudczak demonstrates her technique.;

Colour Photo: Aaron Lynett, The Ottawa Citizen; The Art of Ukrainian Easter Eggs: Inna Prystaiko, wife of Vadym Prystaiko, charge d'affaires of the Embassy of Ukraine, hosted the third annual pysanka (Ukrainian Easter egg) workshop Thursday at the embassy, with Chrystia Chudczak providing the instruction. Ms. Prystaiko, left, shows Yulia Rozhkova how to use the 'kistka,' used to write on eggs.

Load-Date: April 26, 2006

Muslim who ran cartoons paying the price; Efforts at dialogue get overwhelmed

The International Herald Tribune

February 23, 2006 Thursday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 2

Length: 1344 words

Byline: Michael Slackman and Hassan M. Fattah

Dateline: AMMAN

Body

Michael Slackman reported from Amman and Hassan M. Fattah from Sana, Yemen. Mona el-Naggat contributed reporting from Cairo.

*

In a direct challenge to the international uproar over cartoons lampooning the Prophet Muhammad, the Jordanian journalist Jihad Momani wrote: "What brings more prejudice against Islam: these caricatures, or pictures of a hostage-taker slashing the throat of his victim in front of the cameras or a suicide bomber who blows himself up during a wedding ceremony?"

An editor in Yemen, Muhammad al-Assadi, wrote an editorial condemning the cartoons but also lamenting the way many Muslims reacted. "Muslims had an opportunity to educate the world about the merits of the Prophet Muhammad and the peacefulness of the religion he had come with," Assadi wrote. "Muslims know how to lose, better than how to use, opportunities."

To illustrate their points, both editors published selections of the drawings and for that they were arrested and threatened with long prison terms.

Momani and Assadi are among 11 journalists in five countries facing prosecution for their decision to publish some of the cartoons. Their cases illustrate another side of this conflict, the intra-Muslim side, in what has typically been defined as a struggle between Islam and the West.

The flare-up over the cartoons, which were first published in a Danish newspaper, has magnified a fault line running through the Middle East, between those who want to engage their communities in a direct, introspective dialogue and those who focus on outside enemies.

But it has also underscored a political struggle involving emerging Islamic political movements, like **Hamas** in the Palestinian territories and the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, and Arab governments unsure of how to contain them.

"This has become a game between two sides: the extremists and the government," said Tawakkul Karman, head of **Women** Journalists Without Constraints, a journalists' rights group in Sana, Yemen. "They've made it so that if you stand up in this tidal wave, you have to face 1.5 billion Muslims."

Muslim who ran cartoons paying the price Efforts at dialogue get overwhelmed

The heated emotions, the violence surrounding protests and the arrests of the journalists have sent a chill through people, mostly writers, who want to express ideas contrary to the prevailing sentiment.

It has threatened those who contend that Islamic groups have manipulated the public to show their strength and that governments have used the cartoons to establish their own religious credentials.

"I keep hearing, 'Why are liberals silent?'" said Said al-Ashmawy, an Egyptian judge and author of many books on political Islam. "How can we write? Who is going to protect me? Who is going to publish for me in the first place?"

"With the Islamization of the society, the list of taboos has been increasing daily. 'You should not write about religion. You should not write politics or women.' Then what is left?"

While the cartoons have indeed infuriated Muslims, the regional dynamics underneath the conflict have been evolving over a period of decades, during which leaders have tried to stall the rise of Islamic political appeal by trying to establish themselves as guardians of the faith.

In the end, political analysts around the region say that governments have resorted to the very practices that have helped the rise of Islamic political forces in the first place. They have placated the more extreme religious voices while arresting and silencing more moderate voices, like those of Momani and Assadi.

Jihad Khazen, a prominent Arab columnist for the pan-Arab newspaper Al Hayat, said: "The Islamists wanted to prove their strength. The government replied in kind, saying that we are all Muslims and we care about our religion, and I think the truth was trampled on in the process."

In Jordan, King Abdullah II, who has been trying to control the most extreme religious forces in the region, came out with such a powerful condemnation of Shihan, the paper Momani edited, that even his allies were taken aback.

The newspaper printed three of the cartoons without obscuring them, including one of the prophet in a turban shaped as a bomb with a burning fuse.

Many of the king's supporters said he felt the need to respond as firmly as he did partly because of the rise of Hamas, which won parliamentary elections for the Palestinian Authority, and also to strip the Islamists in Jordan of an issue to rally around.

"What Shihan did was a corruption on earth which cannot be accepted or excused under any circumstances," the Royal Court said in a statement reported by Petra, Jordan's official news agency.

But now there seems to be a growing concern and in some circles a degree of regret for unleashing a wave of anger that has claimed lives.

In Jordan, authorities moved quickly to release the journalists from detention.

In Libya, where spontaneous protests are unheard of, allowing demonstrations against the cartoons seemed a safe bet for the authorities until the protesters began criticizing the government.

A group of some of the world's most renowned Islamic religious leaders and scholars recently issued a declaration that, though sharply critical of the drawings, sought to rein in the violence and cautioned Muslims against becoming international pariahs. In so doing, they have begun to echo the sentiments of the journalists facing criminal charges.

"We appeal to all Muslims to exercise self-restraint in accordance with the teachings of Islam," the statement said. It added that "violent reactions" can lead "to our isolation from the global dialogue."

To many journalists, proof that Momani and Assadi face charges because of the region's broader political dynamics, and not because of the offensive nature of the cartoons, can be found in Egypt.

Muslim who ran cartoons paying the price Efforts at dialogue get overwhelmed

After all, Ahmed Abdel Maksoud and Youssra Zahran are free. The two are journalists with the Egyptian weekly newspaper Al Fajr, one of the first Arab newspapers to publish the cartoons. The two wrote a story about the caricatures and reprinted them in October, several months before the conflict erupted, to condemn the drawings.

"The feelings of the Muslims are being exploited for some purpose," said Adel Hammoude, editor in chief of Al Fajr. "Religion is the easiest thing to use in provoking the people. Egyptians will never go out on the street in protest about what happened in the case of the sinking ferry or against corruption or this or that."

That thinking is widespread in Yemen, where three journalists languished in a squalid basement cell, escorted to court by police officers carrying machine guns. It is echoed in Jordan as well, where two journalists await trial.

Momani was to appear in court on Wednesday, while two of the Yemeni journalists were released Tuesday pending their trial. The third was to begin his trial on Wednesday.

Government officials in both countries say the journalists were arrested for having printed blasphemous cartoons. In Jordan, a spokesman said the king felt especially obligated, because his family is a direct descendant of the prophet.

But in Yemen, with presidential elections scheduled for September, many see a more political motive.

"They've now found a good reason to put us here: They say the public demanded it," said Assadi in an interview in his jail cell.

Assadi, who once worked as a part-time correspondent for The New York Times, is the editor of The Yemen Observer, an English-language paper owned by an adviser to Yemen's president. Assadi has been sharing a prison cell with Abdulkarim Sabra, the managing editor of the weekly Al Hurriya, and Yehiya al-Abed, a reporter for that paper.

The three men stand accused of insulting their faith by publishing the images, a crime approaching heresy. In each case the intention was to condemn the drawings, and The Observer put a black X across the picture to obscure the image.

"When I saw all the demonstrations, I thought that Muslims should be able to see what the fuss was all about," said Sabra, during an interview in jail. "I condemned them; I said these drawings don't represent our prophet, burn them."

Load-Date: February 26, 2006

Palestinians forced to scavenge for food on rubbish dumps

The Independent (London)

September 9, 2006 Saturday

Final Edition

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The  INDEPENDENT

Section: NEWS; Pg. 34

Length: 580 words

Byline: By Patrick Cockburn in Jerusalem

Body

The Israeli military and economic siege of Gaza has led to a collapse in Palestinian living conditions and many people only survive by looking for scraps of food in rubbish dumps, say international aid agencies.

"The pressure and tactics have not resulted in a desire for compromise," Karen Abuzayd, the head of the UN Relief and Works Agency is said to have warned. "But rather they have created mass despair, anger and a sense of hopelessness and abandonment."

Israel closed the entry and exit points into the Gaza Strip, home to 1.5 million Palestinians, on 25 June and has conducted frequent raids and bombings that have killed 262 people and wounded 1,200. The crisis in Gaza has been largely ignored by the rest of the world, which has been absorbed by the wars in Iraq, Afghanistan and Lebanon.

"**Women** in Gaza tell me they are eating only one meal a day, bread with tomatoes or cheap vegetables," said Kirstie Campbell of the UN's World Food Programme, which is feeding 235,000 people. She added that in June, since when the crisis has worsened, some 70 per cent of people in Gaza could not meet their family's food needs. "People are raiding garbage dumps," she said.

Not only do Palestinians in Gaza get little to eat but what food they have is eaten cold because of the lack of electricity and money to pay for fuel. The Gaza power plant was destroyed by an Israeli air strike in June. In one month alone 4 per cent of Gaza's agricultural land was destroyed by Israeli bulldozers.

The total closure imposed by Israel, supplemented by deadly raids, has led to the collapse of the Gazan economy. The 35,000 fishermen cannot fish because Israeli gunboats will fire on them if they go more than a few hundred yards from the shore. At the same time the international boycott of the **Hamas** government means that there is no foreign aid to pay Palestinian government employees. The government used to have a monthly budget of \$180-200m, half of which went to pay 165,000 public sector workers. But it now has only \$25m a month.

Palestinians forced to scavenge for food on rubbish dumps

Aid agencies are frustrated by their inability to persuade the world that the humanitarian crisis is far worse in Gaza than it is in Lebanon. The WFP says: "In contrast to Lebanon, where humanitarian food aid needs have been essentially met, the growing number of poor in Gaza are living on the bare minimum."

It is possible for foreign journalists to visit Gaza but it is a laborious process passing through the main Israeli checkpoint at Erez and then walking down a long concrete tunnel. The kidnapping of two Fox television employees by criminals - though they were later released - has also dissuaded several TV companies from covering the crisis. The total closure imposed by Israel dates from the seizure of Cpl Gilad Shalit by Palestinian militants on 25 June. Between then and the end of August, Israeli security forces killed 226 Palestinians, 54 of them minors, in the Gaza Strip, according to the Israeli human rights organisation B'Tselem. Of these it says that 114 were taking no part in any hostilities.

The quickest way to alleviate the crisis would be for Israel to allow the Rafah crossing into Egypt to reopen, according to the mayor of Gaza City. But any restoration of the economy would require the reopening of the other crossing points at Erez and Kami.

Israel lifted its sea blockade of Lebanon yesterday after an interim maritime task force led by an Italian admiral deployed off the Lebanese coast, the commander of UN peacekeepers said.

Graphic

Unemployed Palestinians, some holding empty bowls and bread, protest outside the Palestinian parliament building in Gaza City over the lack of food and jobs MOHAMMED ABED/AFP/GETTY

Load-Date: September 9, 2006

End of Document

Experts discuss Middle East in U. Iowa area

University Wire

September 12, 2006 Tuesday

Copyright 2006 The Daily Iowan via U-Wire

Length: 619 words

Byline: By Matt Nelson, The Daily Iowan; **SOURCE:** U. Iowa

Dateline: IOWA CITY, Iowa

Body

The camera captures a woman with long, dark hair. She holds a yellow folder, has large sunglasses and faded jeans. Behind her are young women, some wearing traditional head scarves, and young men. Cypress and palm trees stand over them. A magazine focused on explaining the changing face of modern Arab media shows her at Amman University. She could be any young woman in any American city. But she's from Jordan, more than 8,000 miles away.

The distance between Middle Eastern and American cultures may seem vast, yet two speakers made it their goal to shorten the gap in Iowa City, Iowa on Sept. 11.

Marwan Kraidy, an assistant professor at the American University in Washington, D.C., and Steve Clemons, director of the American Strategy Program at the New American Foundation, spoke at the Iowa City Public Library. The Stanley Foundation -- an Iowa-based, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization focused on discussions of peace and security issues -- in conjunction with the Iowa City Foreign Relations Council, brought the lecturers to town.

Kraidy spoke first, discussing Arab satellite TV, the primary way most Arab-speaking people get their news and, more importantly, their entertainment.

"More people watch entertainment than news," he said. "Reality TV has the most popular shows on Arab television." He described the most popular program "Star Academy" as a sort of "American Idol" with singing competitions. The Arab version is complicated -- contestants live together in a house with 60 cameras, broadcasting live, 24 hours a day.

And because Arab reality shows often involve a lot of singing, broadcast companies use clips as additional, cheap programming, with each music video voted upon by viewers.

Kraidy demonstrated the effect of Arab pop culture and its influence on politics in the form of a picture, taken after the assassination of Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri. Lebanese youths held a sign that read "call 1559," a reference to the United Nations resolution calling for Syria to withdraw from Lebanon, filtered through an Arab pop culture expression: the text-message vote. In the political arena, Clemons spoke about discussions with U.S. foreign-policy officials and the direction he sees American diplomacy moving.

"The primacy of the U.S. in [the Middle East] region is fragile," he said. "The mystique of American power has been shattered by Iraq."

Experts discuss Middle East in U. Iowa area

Clemons, speaking to the mostly middle-aged audience, expressed frustration at the day-to-day approach the Bush administration was taking with handling Middle East crises.

"I'm worried about discontinuity -- what we did yesterday is not very useful for what we have to handle tomorrow," he said. He went on to describe his view of the Iran situation and how American policymakers need to embrace the former president of Iran, Mohammad Khatami, instead of vilifying him, as Clemons saw the U.S. media do.

Clemons' solution to Middle East turmoil emphasized what he called the "George Soros" approach -- stabilizing countries through cash assistance in an effort to pave the way for the eventual Americanization to follow, as the U.S. businessman Soros did in Eastern Europe. He also said the United States deals too broadly with Middle East problems.

"We're talking about nuances of culture," he said. "What's going on with Hamas, and Palestine, and Hezbollah, and Lebanon, and Iraq, and Iran, the so-called global war on terror lumps all of these together."

Yet he remains optimistic about the possibilities for change and democracy in the Middle East.

"As people get engaged and vote, in the long run, it will have stabilizing results," he said. "Because at the end of the day, people want a better life for themselves."

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Load-Date: September 12, 2006

Letters

Christian Science Monitor

August 4, 2006, Friday

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Section: OPINION; Pg. 8

Length: 616 words

Body

What it would take for peace between Israelis and Palestinians

Regarding your July 14 editorial, "The way in - and out - of Israel's wars": Unhappily, there is no substitute for war as long as Israel's neighbors insist that it has no right to exist and threaten genocide if it should prevail.

And on those rare occasions when Palestinians do come to a bargaining table, their insistence on a right of return for the Palestinian people is something no sane Israeli politician would agree to. Some form of reparations might well work, though, provided Palestinian politicians could be counted on to shut down groups that attack their Israeli neighbors.

Your comments suggest that if the Israelis, Palestinians, and Lebanese show disgust with those who bring war into their lives, the bloodshed might stop. I wish that were likely, but people who cheer the misfortunes of others are not likely partners for peace.

Herb Yood

Orleans, Mass.

Your July 14 editorial on the Middle East totally absolves the chief culprit - Israel. Hamas had kept a unilateral cease-fire for 17 months, both before and after its democratic victory this January, but Israel continued to use violence in the West Bank and Gaza and to seize more land and water in the West Bank, all in violation of international law.

Israel's destruction of Gaza's infrastructure has brought severe shortages of fuel, water, food, and medicines and is threatening the health and lives of over 1 million civilians. Hospital patients are especially endangered. Amnesty International calls this collective punishment "war crimes." Israel's excuse: one captured soldier. Israel holds 10,000 Palestinians, many tortured, many women and minors, many without charges. Would this justify comparable collective punishment of 1 million Israelis?

As long as the US gives Israel a blank check, Israel will seek to militarily impose its conditions on the Arabs and act with impunity. The result will be more bloodshed.

Edmund R. Hanauer

Framington, Mass.

Taiwan merely wants self-preservation

Letters

I would like to address some of the issues brought up by the July 31 article, "Next troublesome missile test: Taiwan?", concerning Taiwan's defense policy. The article is correct that Taiwan has always pursued a defensive strategy toward the very real threat of China. Included in this strategy are continued efforts to reach out and improve relations and decrease tensions with China. However, Taiwan has the right and the duty to protect its 23 million citizens from the direct threat represented by Beijing's 800 missiles aimed at Taiwan.

It is interesting that while China is a key member in the six-nation talks trying to defuse the North Korean missile crisis, Beijing continues its missile buildup on the Taiwan Strait. This missile buildup is a similar risk to peace and stability in the region and should be included in the six-nation talks as a way to decrease the overall tensions in East Asia. Taiwan is an active partner in maintaining peace and stability in the region, but it cannot overlook its own security.

Alice Wang

Director, Information Division

Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Boston

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Palestinians forced to scavenge for food on rubbish dumps

The Independent (London)

September 9, 2006 Saturday

Fourth Edition

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The  INDEPENDENT

Section: WORLD; Pg. 36

Length: 581 words

Byline: Patrick Cockburn in Jerusalem

Body

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"The pressure and tactics have not resulted in a desire for compromise," Karen Abuzayd, the head of the UN Relief and Works Agency is said to have warned. "But rather they have created mass despair, anger and a sense of hopelessness and abandonment." Israel closed the entry and exit points into the Gaza Strip, home to 1.5 million Palestinians, on 25 June and has conducted frequent raids and bombings that have killed 262 people and wounded 1,200. The crisis in Gaza has been largely ignored by the rest of the world, which has been absorbed by the wars in Iraq, Afghanistan and Lebanon.

"**Women** in Gaza tell me they are eating only one meal a day, bread with tomatoes or cheap vegetables," said Kirstie Campbell of the UN's World Food Programme, which is feeding 235,000 people. She added that in June, since when the crisis has worsened, some 70 per cent of people in Gaza could not meet their family's food needs. "People are raiding garbage dumps," she said.

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Load-Date: September 27, 2006

End of Document

OPPOSITION, GOVT JOIN HANDS IN SLAMMING ISRAELI AGGRESSION AGAINST LEBANON

The Frontier Star
August 4, 2006 Friday

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Length: 646 words

Body

ISLAMABAD: Opposition and treasury benches in national assembly have joined hands

in slamming Israeli aggression against Lebanon, expressing solidarity with the people of Lebanon besides pledging support to Hezbollah. The ARD legislators announced to set up fund for the people of Lebanon and donate one-month pay to the fund.

Opening debate on situation in Lebanon MMA president Qazi Hussain Ahmad regretted that the whole world was playing the role of glum spectator over Lebanon crisis. Tyrannical forces are backing Israel. Muslim rulers have grown weak. Hezbollah is fighting with Israeli troops with full might. Pakistan army should enjoy popular support if it wants to stay stronger; he said adding army should play its constitutional role. On the other hand, chief of army staff is imposing decisions in the capacity of president. This way the army will remain weak.

He went on to say Hassan Nasrullah has become hero and leader of Muslim Ummah. He is rightfully representing sentiments of Muslims. On the other hand, India is threatening Pakistan with hot pursuit and we are showing nervousness. Our leaders and generals are fearful of war. OIC is keeping mum in the prevailing situation. We will have to evolve planning to face this situation. We will have to forge unity in our ranks other wise no one would be able to escape advancement of Jewish force, Qazi warned.

We should stand besides people of Lebanon, he stressed. Army should accept supremacy of masses. We want restoration of 1973 constitution. . Minister for religious affairs Ejaz Ul Haq said that Israel perpetrated aggression against Lebanon on the excuse of kidnapping of two Israeli soldiers. While 11000 Palestinians are languishing in Israeli prisons and no one is raising voice. . Israeli troops massacred children and women in Lebanese town of Qana. It was sheer tyranny. Hezbollah is part of Lebanon and they are fighting for the defence of their motherland. We appreciate the sacrifices being rendered by them.

He held that the international court of justice should be moved against Israeli barbaric aggression in Qana. Opposition member Shah Mehmood Qureshi said there is awful difference in the thinking of Muslim rulers and masses on Lebanon issue. Legislators of PPP and ARD are setting up relief fund for people of Lebanon and their parliamentarians will donate one-month pay.

Parliamentary secretary for defence Major (Retired) Tanveer Hussain Syed said President Musharraf had strengthened defence of the country otherwise our situation would have not been different from Lebanon. We should not forget Kashmir besides Lebanon and we should come to their aid as well. Opposition legislator Pervez Malik said the role being played by OIC in the prevailing crisis is regrettable.

OPPOSITION, GOVT JOIN HANDS IN SLAMMING ISRAELI AGGRESSION AGAINST LEBANON

MMA legislator Hafiz Hussain Ahmad alleged US is backing Israel. People of Lebanon and Palestine are with **Hamas** and Hezbollah who have defeated US and Israel. The situation will improve if OIC is expelled from ICU. MP Bhindara said he condemns Hezbollah for raising state within state. I slam Israel too. Government of Lebanon should fight war if it has to be fought. The completely Muslim world will support it. However, no one will back Hezbollah.

Opposition legislator Naheed Khan said UN Security Council and European countries are keeping mum over Israeli aggression. State Minister Malik Ameen Aslam said atrocities being perpetrated in Lebanon is slap on the face of whole humanity. Maulana Merajuddin from FATA said what Israel has done is not a new thing.

Opposition legislator Fauzia Wahab said Israeli aggression is being termed as third world war UK and US are involved in it. Minister of state for foreign affairs Khusro Bakhtiar concluding the debate said the house has represented the sentiments of the whole world. Pakistan will be ahead of all in dispatching peacekeeping forces in Lebanon.

Load-Date: December 6, 2006

End of Document

Islamists assail U.S. and its 'puppets'; MIDDLE EAST CRISIS / Blaming U.S. policy for rising radicalism

The International Herald Tribune

July 22, 2006 Saturday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 6

Length: 630 words

Byline: Neil MacFarquhar

Dateline: DAMASCUS

Body

The main weekly prayer sermons in mosques from Mecca to Marrakesh, Morocco, on Friday underscored the sharp contrast between the swelling David-versus-Goliath glamour Arabs associate with Hezbollah's fight and the utter antipathy toward the United States and its regional allies for doing so little to stop yet another Arab country from collapsing into bloodshed.

"Our brothers are being killed in Lebanon and no one is responding to their cries for help," said Sheik Hazza'a al-Maswari, an Islamist member of Parliament, in his Friday sermon at the Mujahid mosque in Sanaa, the Yemeni capital. "Where are the Arab leaders? Do they have any skill other than begging for a fake peace outside the White House? We don't want leaders who bow to the White House."

The tone of the sermons underscored how the lack of a cease-fire in Lebanon is both further tarnishing the image of the United States in the Arab world as being solely concerned with Israel's welfare and making its allied regimes look increasingly like puppets.

"What is creating radicalism in the region is not authoritarian regimes, mainly it is American policy in the region survey after survey shows that," said Mustafa Hamarneh, director of the Center for Strategic Studies at the University of Jordan, whose polls have charted the steady decline of America's image among Arabs.

The pervasive attacks against Arab leaders from the pulpit were all the more surprising because so many regimes have exerted some manner of central government control over sermons in recent years. Dictating the content of the weekly themes is one means of preventing prayer leaders from launching into the kind of political discussions that inspire extremists.

In Damascus, for example, where the government has been trying to keep a low profile as the fighting surges, leading prayer leaders focused on the need to donate generously to help Lebanese refugees pouring over the border. But they also slipped in criticism of neighbors, although critics of Hezbollah, including Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Jordan, were not mentioned by name.

"What gives us pain is the Arab position," said Muhammed al-Habash, a cleric who serves in Syria's Parliament, speaking at Al Zahra Mosque. "They are entering a conspiracy against the Arabs, their brothers."

Islamists assail U.S. and its 'puppets' MIDDLE EAST CRISIS / Blaming U.S. policy for rising radicalism

In an interview, the cleric said that by encouraging the Israelis to continue their onslaught, the United States was only helping religious extremists. By not working harder to stop the deaths of scores of Lebanese women and children, the United States "is creating more Zarqawis, more bin Ladens in the Mideast every day," Habash said.

The United States blames Syrian support for groups like Hezbollah and Hamas as being a cause of extremism.

The Saudi government also took a particularly strong public position against Hezbollah provoking the crisis by capturing two Israeli soldiers, issuing a statement last week condemning the organization's "uncalculated adventures." Washington has leaned heavily on this in explaining its own position.

Yet the senior Saudi imam delivering the sermon from Islam's holiest mosque, in Mecca, broadcast live, presented a rare if discreet criticism of royal policy.

The entire Muslim nation should be proud of the bravery shown by both the Palestinians and the Lebanese confronting Israel, said Sheik Abdul Rahman al-Sudais, while pointedly addressing Muslim leaders directly, urging them to return to "sound reason and unify their ranks."

He also took an indirect swipe at the United States for pretending to push human rights while leaving the mounting deaths of civilians all but unmentioned.

"Where are those who filled the world with slogans of freedom and democracy?" he said. "They don't fear that history will condemn them for their policy of double standards?"

Load-Date: July 28, 2006

End of Document

Arab regimes fear Islamists' political dividend

Financial Times (London, England)

July 21, 2006 Friday

London Edition 1

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Section: MIDDLE EAST AND THE AMERICAS; Pg. 7

Length: 618 words

Byline: By WILLIAM WALLIS

Dateline: CAIRO

Body

For Islamist groups beyond the immediate reach of Israeli firepower, the explosion of conflict in Lebanon may prove double-edged.

As the only organised opposition to entrenched autocracies, articulating the outrage that many Arabs feel, Islamists from Morocco to Saudi Arabia look set to gain from a fresh groundswell of public support. But the immediate response of conservative, US-allied Arab regimes may be to close down those remaining channels through which they have made political gains.

Burnt by the electoral successes of some of its and Israel's most virulent opponents, Washington is less enthusiastic about democratising the region and is unlikely to make a fuss.

As in the past, when Palestinian civilians have fallen victim to the Israeli army, so the bombardment of Lebanon and Gaza has exposed the limited capacity of Arab governments to come to the rescue.

Moreover, events in Lebanon have served as a reminder of how quickly Washington can drop an Arab ally - in this case the Siniora-led government in Beirut - when Israel's "right to self-defence" is at play.

Jordan and Egypt, the only Arab states formally at peace with Israel, have both issued measured criticism of Israel's devastation of Lebanon, but it was only yesterday that two Arab governments delivered stronger condemnations. Iraqi prime minister Nuri al-Maliki described the Israeli offensive as "operations of mass destruction" while the Saudi defence minister, Prince Sultan bin Abdul-Aziz, said: "We cannot tolerate that Israel plays with the lives of citizens, civilians, women, old people and children."

What has been new is that along with Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Egypt also blamed Hizbollah, and indirectly its Syrian and Iranian backers, for stirring a tiger with destabilising consequences for all.

Among much of the Arab population, however, the abduction of Israeli soldiers first by Sunni Palestinian militants and then by the Lebanese Shia guerrillas, Hizbollah, was seen as heroic - legitimate means to leverage the release of Palestinian and other Arab prisoners in Israeli jails.

Islamist groups have been quick to exploit the resulting discomfort of Sunni Arab governments, which has been heightened by their fears of rising Iranian influence in the region.

Arab regimes fear Islamists' political dividend

"Hizbollah has become a role model which attracts people because it contrasts so much with the paralysis of Arab regimes who supposedly have the power yet play only a dwindling and embarrassing role," said Mohamed Habib, deputy leader of Egypt's banned Muslim Brotherhood, the oldest and largest Sunni Islamist movement.

Hosni Mubarak, Egypt's president, has defended his role in attempting to defuse the crisis: initially trying to secure the release of Palestinian prisoners in return for the first soldier captured, Corporal Gilad Shalit, and also claiming that he had persuaded the Israelis to hold off a broader land attack on Lebanon.

But by Saturday, when Arab foreign ministers appealed for help from the United Nations, it was clear that no western-allied Arab leader had much leverage, the agenda having shifted to more radical groups and states - notably Syria and Iran. "It is the first time in the Arab Israeli conflict to see two fronts opened up by two Islamist movements. This partly explains the reaction coming from the Arab regimes," said Dia Rashwan, expert at the Al Ahram Centre for Political and Strategic studies. "It is risky for them too."

Predictably, Israeli officials argue that the raids on Israel are evidence that a policy of accommodation with political Islam, which has seen **Hamas** win control of the Palestinian government and Hizbollah secure the largest opposition block in Lebanon's parliament, does not lead to moderation.

Load-Date: July 20, 2006

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Israel says no to a ceasefire

Belfast News Letter (Northern Ireland)

August 1, 2006 Tuesday

Ulster Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 14

Length: 558 words

Body

TONY Blair was pressing on 'hell for leather' yesterday with attempts to secure a United Nations resolution for a ceasefire in the Middle East, his spokesman said.

The prime minister, on a visit to the US, had already spoken by telephone to the prime ministers of Israel and the Lebanon in a bid to help find an acceptable way forward.

As events in the Middle East lent 'even greater urgency' to the efforts, Mr Blair was also speaking to his counterparts in Turkey, Italy and Germany.

And the UK was involved in negotiations with the French and Americans at the UN in New York to draw up a resolution 'as soon as possible' that could have an immediate impact on the ground.

"We are pushing with the same urgency " in fact I would say a greater urgency " for a resolution after the events of the last few days, as we were last week,' the spokesman told reporters.

"We believe a resolution can help bring this conflict to an end and I think the sooner we have it the better. That's why we are still going hell for leather for a resolution.

"We are working flat out in London, in the UN and from here to try to reach the situation as quickly as possible where there is agreement on a text in New York.

"We hope that will then have an immediate effect on the ground.'

His words came as Israeli prime minister Ehud Olmert said there would be no let-up in the offensive in the immediate future as airstrikes continued.

A 48-hour halt to hostilities " aimed at allowing civilians to leave and aid to get in " did not hold after Hezbollah continued to fire rockets at Israeli targets.

It was called under US pressure following outrage over the strike on Sunday morning that levelled a house in Qana, killing at least 56 people " mostly women and children " taking refuge there.

Asked if the prime minister was disappointed the halt had not been observed, the spokesman said: "There has been, as I understand it, action on both sides. The important point is that we negotiate to bring the action on all sides to a close.

Israel says no to a ceasefire

"That's where our focus is.'

Mr Blair's efforts have not included discussions with Syria, he conceded, despite the nation's links with Hezbollah, because of its limited influence.

"You have to concentrate your efforts on where you actually think you can influence things and that's what the prime minister is doing.'

Meanwhile, the defence minister, Amir Peretz, has said Israel plans to "expand and strengthen' its attack on Hezbollah.

Liberal Democrat defence spokesman Michael Moore said that was a "major setback' for diplomatic efforts.

And he called on Mr Blair and US president George Bush to put pressure on Israel to call an immediate ceasefire.

"There was a small glimmer of hope for diplomatic progress over the last 24 hours but this is a major setback,' Mr Moore said. The UK and US must put pressure on the Israeli government to agree to an immediate ceasefire and reverse their defence minister's position.

"Other countries in the Middle East also have a vital role in persuading Hezbollah and **Hamas** to lay down their arms and release the Israeli soldiers.'

The prime minister's spokesman said "exhortation' would not resolve the situation " only agreement on both sides of the way forward.

"There are two sovereign governments here. This will not proceed unless those two sovereign governments are in broad agreement with where we're going.'

Load-Date: August 1, 2006

On the Hopes for a Mideast Truce

The New York Times

July 28, 2006 Friday

Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2006 The New York Times Company

Section: Section A; Column 4; Editorial Desk; Pg. 28

Length: 586 words

Body

To the Editor:

Re "Cease-Fire Talks Stall as Fighting Rages on 2 Fronts" (front page, July 27):

Against the wishes of the rest of the world, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice insists that there is no point to calls for a cease-fire unless the conditions are right to make it a lasting one.

So what if a cease-fire lasts only a day before fighting erupts again? Don't those lives saved in one day mean anything? Would a temporary cease-fire create more lost lives in the future?

Enough with the cold calculus of realpolitik; stop the loss of human lives now.

Kate Somers

Princeton, N.J., July 27, 2006

To the Editor:

Prime Minister Fouad Siniora of Lebanon asks rhetorically, "Is the value of human life less in Lebanon than that of citizens elsewhere?" (front page, July 27).

This is a question he should ask of Iran and Syria, as well as of Hezbollah.

It is Iran, Syria and Hezbollah that deliberately emplace missiles next to women and children, in residential neighborhoods. These terrorists, not Israel, spend innocent human life as if it were inflated currency of little worth.

Dennis Flynn

Byfield, Mass., July 27, 2006

To the Editor:

The systematic dehumanization of the Arab people is evident when Israel targets Lebanon for collective punishment.

On the Hopes for a Mideast Truce

The Hezbollah terrorists have adopted the same logic of holding the Israeli people responsible for the actions of their government.

When Prime Minister Fouad Siniora asks, "Is the value of human life less in Lebanon than that of citizens elsewhere?," the answer, devoid of diplomatic parlance, is yes, if you agree with the Israeli attacks.

Jahan Habib

Boston, July 27, 2006

To the Editor:

Why is there no outrage against Hezbollah or Hamas, only criticism of Israel? Israel never sought these conflicts.

It appears that terrorist organizations have special dispensation to bring death and destruction to any country without condemnation from the international community. The question is why.

What sad times for the world and humanity.

Linda Vaughn

Daytona Beach, Fla., July 27, 2006

To the Editor:

Nicholas D. Kristof ("In Lebanon, Echoes of Iraq," column, July 25) uses the example of Israel's restrained conduct toward Hezbollah from 2000 until two weeks ago to prove the wisdom of restraint.

But Israel's restraint during this time allowed Hezbollah to arm itself to the teeth right along the Israel-Lebanon border, waiting for the appropriate excuse to rain down rockets on Israel's towns and cities.

Since Israel didn't seem to care, the international community didn't put much effort into enforcing United Nations Resolution 1559 (which calls for the disarming of Hezbollah).

Now that Israel has put its foot down by responding strongly, the international community has followed, and there is a consensus that Hezbollah must be disarmed.

This would not have been possible if Israel had responded to this attack as it had to others.

Ben Bokser

Jerusalem, July 25, 2006

To the Editor:

Nicholas D. Kristof mentioned that Israel was not rewarded for its withdrawal from Gaza and Lebanon.

The reports from Gaza after the withdrawal leave little room for the idea of a reward.

The Israeli forces withdrew from Gaza and tightly shut the air, sea and land access to the strip. Goods perished at the "crossing points," and the movement of humans occurred at a snail's pace, when and if it occurred at all.

These restrictions resulted in a suffocating atmosphere, a de facto siege. What is there to reward?

Hana El Sahly

Houston, July 25, 2006

On the Hopes for a Mideast Truce

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Load-Date: July 28, 2006

End of Document

Sonic boom attacks spread trauma across Gaza; TERRIFYING TACTICS

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

July 6, 2006 Thursday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; International News; Pg. 17

Length: 531 words

Byline: Ed O'Loughlin

Body

DOCTORS in Gaza say a combination of Israeli bombardment, sonic boom attacks and economic warfare is leading to a serious deterioration in public health, with children and pregnant women most vulnerable.

At Gaza City's Shifa Hospital, obstetricians say there has been a rise in miscarriages, premature births and stillbirths since the capture of Corporal Gilad Shalit by Palestinian militants on June 25 led to an escalation in conflict.

They believe the main cause is Israel's reintroduction of sonic boom attacks in recent days in a campaign to terrify Gaza's 1.4 million people and prevent them from sleeping.

At various hours of the day and night the Israeli Air Force has sent its supersonic aircraft over Gaza to break the sound barrier. The sound is akin to that of a large bomb, and it can produce panic attacks, shock and nosebleeds.

"The sonic booms, combined with all the other stress, have a bad effect on the health of pregnant women," said Dr Adnan Radi, a senior obstetrician.

"The explosions can lead to premature contraction of the uterus and premature delivery of the baby. Whenever there is this booming, the next day we see a rise in the number of premature deliveries and miscarriages."

At Shifa doctors say the number of women miscarrying or beginning premature labour has risen from two to four a day to as many as 10. In the past 10 days there have been three stillbirths, compared with one every six months, the doctors said.

Israel began to use sonic booms against the people of Gaza last year, and security officials sought to portray the booms as a "non-lethal" and humane weapon designed to persuade the civilians of Gaza to force militants to stop firing missiles at neighbouring Israel and, more recently, to free Corporal Shalit.

There was outrage last November when the air force inadvertently set off sonic booms over Israel itself, leading to widespread civilian panic.

One Gaza resident, Areesh Bahja, said the booms were distressing for her three children. "They are very tired and very upset and they get sick and vomit very easily," she said. "They have lost a lot of their appetite. When they are watching TV ... and there is a sonic boom they jump up like they are on springs and they grab hold of me."

Sonic boom attacks spread trauma across Gaza TERRIFYING TACTICS

Her five-year-old daughter, Layan, said: "When the sound isn't big, I'm not afraid. But when it's a big one, it scares me and gives me a pain in my head."

As she spoke, an Israeli 155-millimetre shell dropped a kilometre or so away, close enough to make the walls of the house ring.

"That's the sound of a shell," Layan said disdainfully. "I'm not scared of that."

Humanitarian aid has been reduced and hospital staff wages unpaid because of the West's decision to join Israel in boycotting the **Hamas** government in the Palestinian Authority. Last week Israeli aircraft knocked out Gaza's only power plant, disrupting supplies to most of the Strip.

"We've had to halt all elective and non-emergency surgery," said the hospital's director of public relations, Dr Jumaa al-Saqqa.

"There is also a noticeable increase in gastroenteritis-type symptoms because of poor food and because the power cuts mean that people can't refrigerate their food properly anymore."

Graphic

TWO PHOTOS: Subdued ... Palestinians sit in the gas-lit living room of a house in the town of Rafah. Israel reintroduced sonic boom attacks to terrify Gaza's 1.4 million people. Photo: AP/Emilio Morenatti A Palestinian leaves his house after a missile strike. Photo: AP

Load-Date: July 17, 2007

Middle East conflict puts 'Rapture Index' up high: Websites anticipating Second Coming of Christ say events in Israel are proof the Bible's prophecy is being fulfilled

The Vancouver Sun (British Columbia)

July 19, 2006 Wednesday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A8

Length: 548 words

Byline: Charles Enman, CanWest News Service

Dateline: OTTAWA

Body

OTTAWA -- Rapture watchers, those who believe in a moment when Jesus Christ will take true Christians into heaven prior to his Second Coming, see great portent in what is now happening in the Middle East.

The website raptureready.com says it is time to "fasten your seatbelt." Its Rapture Index is now at 157 -- and those seatbelts needed fastening when the 145 threshold was passed.

The index has been higher. Following the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the United States, the index hit 182.

Raptureready.com looks at plagues, volcanoes, crime rates, and even globalism as precursors of the end times. It does not claim infallibility, but it does call the Rapture Index "a Dow Jones Industrial Average of end time activity." The higher the index, "the faster we're moving towards the occurrence of pre-tribulation rapture."

For some observers, the current hostilities between Israel, Hamas and Hezbollah are eerily reminiscent of images from the 14th chapter of the Book of Zechariah. One blogger, who calls himself Dr. Dominguez, M.D., points out on his blog biblia.com that the chapter "is about the horrible struggle between Israel, particularly Jerusalem, and the surrounding countries with the Second Coming of Christ."

The second verse of the chapter says nations will fight against Jerusalem: "The city will be captured, the houses ransacked, and the women raped. Half of the city will go into exile."

But the Lord will come and save Jerusalem: "Never again will it be destroyed," the 11th verse says. "Jerusalem will be secure."

The nations that fought Jerusalem will suffer terrible punishment: "Their flesh will rot while they are still standing on their feet, their eyes will rot in their sockets, and their tongues will rot in their mouths," the 12th verse predicts.

Dominguez cites Hezbollah's declaration of war on Israel, the rumours of Iranian involvement, the attack on an Israeli warship and the pounding Israeli counter-attack as apparent signs that the prophecy of Zechariah may be in the process of being realized.

Middle East conflict puts 'Rapture Index' up high: Websites anticipating Second Coming of Christ say events in Israel are proof the Bible's prophecy is being fu....

Gerald Flurry, editor of thetrumpet.com, an online publication of the Philadelphia Church of God, also says the world is stumbling unwittingly toward the fulfilment of the prophecies of Zechariah. He points out that the United Nations, many individual nations and even many Israeli Jews are saying Israel must give up East Jerusalem if it is to live peacefully with its Palestinian neighbours. This means, he writes, that "the prophecy in Zechariah is now in the early stages of being fulfilled, even though the world doesn't know it!"

Even American politicians are touching on the matter. Paul Schmelzer, editor of eyeteeth.blogspot.com, points out that Newt Gingrich, former Republican speaker of the House of Representatives, believes the Third World War is now in process.

"We're in a war!" Gingrich told a Fox News interviewer. Moreover, "it's clearly worldwide."

The former speaker referred not only to violence in the Middle East, but also to the recent train bombings in Mumbai, India, ongoing problems in Iraq and Afghanistan, and even to recent arrests of 17 alleged terrorists in Toronto.

"You have Canadians plotting to blow up the Canadian Parliament and behead the prime minister," he said.

A measured response is not appropriate, Gingrich said.

Graphic

Colour Photo: Ariel Schait, Associated Press; An Israeli soldier runs to reload a heavy artillery piece. Rapture watchers are being told to 'fasten your seatbelt' for the return of Christ.

Load-Date: July 19, 2006

Navy warships sail to rescue Britons caught in Beirut hell; MoD forced to act as 10,000 nationals are trapped in war zone

Mail on Sunday (London)

July 16, 2006 Sunday

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Section: 3RD 04; Pg. 9

Length: 581 words

Byline: MARTIN SMITH

Body

TWO British warships were preparing to steam to Lebanon last night to help evacuate British citizens trapped in the conflict zone.

The flagship aircraft carrier HMS Illustrious and the assault ship HMS Bulwark were deployed after criticism from Britons in Beirut, the Lebanese capital, that the Government was not doing enough to help.

Other countries have already mobilised their armed forces and around 10,000 Britons are trapped.

However, the 22,000-ton Illustrious was docked in Gibraltar last night, two days away, while Bulwark an 18,400-ton amphibious craft is on duties off Barcelona.

A military source said the Ministry of Defence could order eight helicopters Sea Kings and EH101s on board Illustrious to fly ahead of the carrier, refuel at Aviano in Italy and in Cyprus before starting an evacuation in Lebanon.

They could airlift small numbers to Cyprus. Bulwark is equipped with Merlin helicopters and is closer to the troublespot.

But before the flights begin, the SAS and SBS are likely to be sent ahead to secure the ground in order to guarantee the safety of British citizens.

One British woman yesterday described how she was hiding in terror in her Beirut home from the constant air strikes and that she felt 'completely abandoned' by the British Government.

Clair Vainola, 31, from Newcastle, working as a drug counsellor in the city since last November, said: 'There are planes overhead and I can hear bombs falling. It's terrifying.

'I rang the embassy and they told me the conflict was not serious and they would not be evacuating any British citizens.

How many more have to die before the Government classifies this as serious?'

Marnie Cashmore, 39, from Ashby de la Zouch, Leicestershire, said her partner William Rushton, 43, arrived in Beirut on business last Tuesday just before the air strikes began.

Navy warships sail to rescue Britons caught in Beirut hell MoD forced to act as 10,000 nationals are trapped in war zone

She said last night: 'Bill has been virtually trapped in his hotel. He went to the embassy on Friday afternoon for help and no one answered the door.

'He said it was just like a case of "would the last person to leave turn off the lights". He is now driving to Syria.'

It was a different story for American, Italian and French citizens as their governments swiftly arranged for evacuation by warships and aircraft.

Israel launched its offensive after Hezbollah guerrillas crossed the border last Wednesday and captured two Israeli soldiers. Israel has bombarded Lebanon's airport and main roads and destroyed Hezbollah's headquarters in south Beirut. The Israeli military has conceded that it has hit more than 150 targets.

Yesterday an Israeli missile targeted a van near the southern Lebanese port of Tyre, killing 20 passengers including women and children and wounding six, police said. The van was carrying families fleeing Marwaheen.

Israeli aircraft also bombed a Hezbollah office in southern Beirut and attacked roads, bridges and petrol stations in north, east and south Lebanon, killing at least 12 and wounding 32, security sources said.

A senior Israeli intelligence official claimed Iranian troops helped Hezbollah fire a missile that damaged an Israeli warship off the Lebanese coast killing two and leaving two missing on Friday. Israeli officials also said a Hezbollah missile sank a merchant ship with 12 sailors on board.

Last night Israeli rescue services said Hezbollah had fired a second barrage of rockets at the city of Tiberias. Israeli warplanes then destroyed the Beirut office of senior Hamas official Mohammed Nazzal. He was not hurt in the attack.

Graphic

DEVASTATION: RESCUERS REMOVE BODIES AFTER AN ISRAELI MISSILE HIT THE LEBANESE PORT OF TYRE. RIGHT: CLAIR VAINOLA

Load-Date: July 17, 2006

Israel is also part of the violence in the Mideast

University Wire
July 17, 2006 Monday

Copyright 2006 Daily Evergreen via U-Wire

Section: COLUMN

Length: 586 words

Byline: By Amelia Veneziano, Daily Evergreen; **SOURCE:** Washington State U.

Dateline: PULLMAN, Wash.

Body

Headlines reading "Mideast in crisis!" are nothing unusual.

Also regular is President George W. Bush making pandering and forgiving statements to Israel, emphasizing their rights, rather than their responsibilities, to the Middle East.

But the last seven days strayed from the time-tested path of Israeli victimization. Israel has launched a series of very aggressive attacks on their neighbor to the north, Lebanon, and on Hezbollah, an Islamic terrorist group who resides in the nation.

Israel responded to Hezbollah's kidnapping of two soldiers not with diplomacy, but with bombs. Across the planet, leaders and politicians are condemning Israel's aggression in the attacks on a nation that has been fairly westernized and liberated, unlike some of their Islamic neighbors.

The United States is on fairly good terms with Lebanon and many students come from across the world to study there.

Many Lebanese students come here as well, as one did during my senior year in high school. Her name is Fallouk and immediately after hearing of the bombings, I e-mailed her to make sure she was OK. So far, so good, she responded. As a Lebanese teenage girl, Fallouk has higher expectations of herself than many American high school students, and is very unlike the mistaken conceptions of Muslim women. She has career goals and would never dream of submitting to the burka.

Her family is not part of a terrorist group. Muslim, yes, but contrary to popular Western myth, not all Muslims are evil.

North of the current hot spot, Bush and other leaders from the free world are deep in discussion of powerful issues at the G-8 summit in Saint Petersburg, Russia, The New York Times reported. While surrounded by all this diplomacy in action, Bush can't help but be himself, clearly favoring Israel.

His most explicit and damning statement yet was reported at Yahoo! News: "Our message to Israel is, look, defend yourself, but as you do so, be mindful of the consequences. And so we've urged restraint."

Israel is also part of the violence in the Mideast

The article continues: "The United States refused to endorse calls for a cease-fire, saying that must be accompanied by constraints on Hezbollah, Hamas, Syria and Iran."

What about Israel? Will no one ever say, wait, Israel, too, is part of the violence? Many claim Israel is merely defending itself from the blood thirst of their neighboring nations.

Bush has certainly accepted this as truth. Bush's presidency has been the most pro-Israeli presidency in history. According to the Media Monitors Network, "In terms of letting Israelis commit atrocities and engage in acts of self-destruction with impunity, he's right. No other president has allowed Israel to terrorize the entire region"

Israel is in no way an innocent victim in the Middle East. Israel has launched its share of missiles and has more than a few drops of blood on her hands.

We have stood behind Israel and supplied them with weapons, when the rest of the world has asked Israel to step down. The rest of the world has avoided involvement. The U.S., especially in the last six years, has justified and validated Israel's claims on the region and supported their attempts at wars and walls. We have aligned with Israel, for better or for worse. Now, we can just hold on.

Today, Fallouk and her countrymen bunker down in various towns across Lebanon, fearing for their lives and homes, trying to survive the night.

All the while, Bush does nothing and Israel continues to bomb a nation for the acts of one renegade terrorist group.

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Load-Date: July 17, 2006

London targeted by Hezbollah bombers; Sleeper cells are poised to strike throughout Europe

Sunday Express

July 30, 2006 Sunday

U.K. 1st Edition

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Section: NEWS; 4

Length: 590 words

Byline: EXCLUSIVE By Julia Hartley-Brewer POLITICAL EDITOR

Body

HEZBOLLAH "sleeper" cells across Western Europe have been ordered to prepare to carry out terror attacks on London and other cities in protest at the Israeli bombardment of Lebanon.

The militant Lebanese group is reported to have cells in more than 20 countries around the world - and all are poised to launch deadly bombing attacks on innocent civilians.

Imad Mugniyeh, Lebanese commander of Hezbollah's overseas operations, is understood to be behind the plan and is co-ordinating its execution. He headed the FBI's Most Wanted Terrorists list until the 9/11 attacks saw Osama Bin Laden become America's public enemy number one.

According to German intelligence sources, the attacks will be launched if Israel continues its military offensive against Lebanon.

A similar alarm has been raised by Israel's Shin Bet security service and Israeli embassies and institutions have been placed on high alert.

It is believed that Hezbollah, which also has sleeper cells in Latin America and southeast Asia, has already been involved in several spectacular attacks on western targets.

Mugniyeh, who is known as "the Lebanese Bin Laden", lives in Iran and has evaded capture for more than 20 years, despite the US placing a GBP 3million bounty on his head.

Western intelligence reports claim he has connections in Europe, Africa, Latin America and the US and is said to have met Bin Laden.

He is thought to be almost impossible to trace after having plastic surgery to disguise his face and change his fingerprints.

The young Mugniyeh first attracted the attention of western intelligence services over his involvement in the kidnapping and torture of William Buckley, the CIA station chief in Beirut, in 1984. Mugniyeh, in his mid-forties, has also been linked to the bombing of the American embassy and marine barracks in Beirut in 1983, as well as the 1985 hijacking of a TWA jet and murder of one of its passengers.

London targeted by Hezbollah bombers Sleeper cells are poised to strike throughout Europe

He is wanted in Argentina for his role in recruiting the bombers of the Israeli embassy and Jewish centre in Buenos Aires in 1992.

Mugniyeh left Lebanon and fled to Iran in 1994 with his wife and son after a failed assassination attempt. He is believed to have played an active role in fomenting trouble in Iraq.

Former CIA agent Robert Baer has described Mugniyeh as "the master terrorist", saying: "He is the most dangerous terrorist we have ever faced. Mugniyeh is probably the most intelligent, most capable operative we have ever run across, including the KGB or anybody else."

Mugniyeh is known to have close links with the Iranian leadership, reportedly attending a "terror summit" in Syria this year alongside Iran's hardline fundamentalist President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. In Damascus, the pair met the leaders of Hezbollah, Islamic Jihad and **Hamas**.

US officials and Israeli intelligence sources believe Mugniyeh has now taken charge of plotting Iran's retaliation against western targets should President Bush order a strike on Iranian nuclear sites. Last night Nadim Shehadi, a Middle East expert at Chatham House, the foreign policy think tank in London, warned that the current crisis could also make a fresh Al Qaeda attack on Western Europe more likely.

He said: "There is a strong rivalry between Hezbollah and Al Qaeda. The real risk is how this will affect Al Qaeda. They have been attacking Hezbollah, accusing them of being infidels and Hezbollah have hit back saying Al Qaeda kill **women** and children.

"Now Al Qaeda are being upstaged and they need to show their might - to prove their credentials with another major attack."

Graphic

NO LET-UP: Israeli armour continues to pound targets in southern Lebanon yesterday as there was a glimmer of hope for a ceasefire

Load-Date: July 31, 2006

Blogosphere abuzz with tales of Rapture, end of the world

Ottawa Citizen

July 19, 2006 Wednesday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A4

Length: 606 words

Byline: Charles Enman, The Ottawa Citizen

Body

Have you heard of the Rapture? That's the moment when Jesus Christ will take true Christians into heaven prior to his Second Coming. Many of those who believe in the Rapture see great portent in what is now happening in the Middle East.

On the Internet, raptureready.com says it is time to "fasten your seatbelt." Its Rapture Index is now at 157 -- and those seatbelts needed fastening when the 145 threshold was passed.

The index has been higher. Just after the terror attacks on the United States in September 2001, the index hit 182.

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Raptureready.com looks at plagues, volcanoes, crime rates, and even globalism as precursors of the end times.

For some observers in the blogo-sphere, the current hostilities between Israel, *Hamas* and Hezbollah are eerily reminiscent of images from the 14th chapter of the Book of Zechariah.

One, who calls himself "Dr. Dominguez, M.D.," and whose blog is at biblia.com, points out that the chapter "is about the horrible struggle between Israel, particularly Jerusalem, and the surrounding countries with the Second Coming of Christ."

The second verse says nations will fight against Jerusalem. "The city will be captured, the houses ransacked, and the women raped. Half of the city will go into exile." But the Lord will come and save Jerusalem. "Never again will it be destroyed," the 11th verse says. "Jerusalem will be secure."

The nations that fought Jerusalem will suffer terrible punishment. "Their flesh will rot while they are still standing on their feet, their eyes will rot in their sockets, and their tongues will rot in their mouths," the 12th verse predicts.

Dr. Dominguez cites Hezbollah's declaration of war on Israel, the rumours of Iranian involvement, the attack on an Israeli warship, and the pounding Israeli counterattack as apparent signs that the prophecy of Zechariah may be in the process of being realized.

Gerald Flurry, editor of Thetrumpet.com, an online publication of the Philadelphia Church of God, seems to believe the world is stumbling unwittingly toward the fulfilment of the prophecies of Zechariah. He points out that the United

Blogosphere abuzz with tales of Rapture, end of the world

Nations, many individual nations, and even many Israeli Jews are saying that Israel must give up East Jerusalem if Israel is to live peacefully with its Palestinian neighbours. This means, he writes, that "the prophecy in Zechariah is now in the early stages of being fulfilled, even though the world doesn't know it!"

Even U.S. politicians seem to be getting apocalyptic. Paul Schmelzer, editor of eyeteeth.blogspot.com, points out that Newt Gingrich, former Republican Speaker of the House of Representatives, believes World War III is now in process. "We're in a war!" Mr. Gingrich told a Fox News interviewer. Moreover, "it's clearly worldwide."

He referred not only to violence in the Middle East, but to the recent train bombings in Mumbai, ongoing problems in Iraq and Afghanistan, and even to the recent arrests of 17 alleged terrorists in Toronto. "You have Canadians plotting to blow up the Canadian Parliament and behead the prime minister," he said.

A measured response is not appropriate, Mr. Gingrich said. Referring to the rain of missiles upon Israeli territory, he said, "if the president of the United States had 50 missiles hit south Florida (from Cuba) today, he would do something decisive. He would not show restraint."

Prophecies aside, in this heavy moment, maybe seatbelts would help.

Load-Date: July 19, 2006

End of Document

In Focus

The Gazette (Montreal)

July 6, 2006 Thursday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A2; In Focus

Length: 578 words

Byline: The Gazette

Body

Israelis Push Deeper Into Northern Gaza

Israeli forces seized control of former Jewish settlements in the northern Gaza Strip today, effectively carving out a buffer zone after **Hamas** militants fired rockets into a major Israeli city for the second straight day. Details, Page A14

Italian Spies Arrested

Two senior officials with the Italian intelligence agency were arrested yesterday in connection with the kidnapping of a radical Egyptian cleric in Milan in 2003. Details, Page A14

Obrador Takes Lead

If recount numbers thus far hold up, leftist Mexican presidential candidate Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador would beat opponent Felipe Calderon of the ruling party. Calderon had maintained a one-per-cent lead, according to a preliminary count of Sunday's vote conducted by the Federal Electoral Institute. Details, Page A14

Mixed Message in B.C.

Residents of Tumbler Ridge, B.C., were given the green light to return home yesterday, but new evacuation orders were issued for other communities in B.C. and Alberta threatened by a rash of forest fires. Details, Page A10

Notorious Rapist Freed

Martin Ferrier, a violent sex offender who once expressed a wish to become Canada's "most prolific killer," walked out of an Ontario prison yesterday after serving his sentence - with no conditions attached to his freedom. And there are reports he plans to make his new home in Quebec. Details, Page A10

Transit Tax Break Kicks in

A new tax credit program for transit users should yield a five-per-cent increase in ridership and take about 110,000 cars off congested city roads, federal Environment Minister Rona Ambrose said yesterday. Details, Page A10

Guite Must Wait in Prison

In Focus

Disgraced federal bureaucrat Chuck Guite will have to wait until later in the week to hear whether he'll be freed on bail to await the appeal of his fraud conviction. Details, Page A6

Ottawa Assailed on Rights

Canada voted last week against a new United Nations declaration on aboriginal rights and that has damaged our reputation as a world leader in human rights, says Kenneth Deer, a Kahnawake Mohawk leader. Details, Page A7

Too Frisky for Calgary

N'sabi, "a big, muscular bag of hormones," has become too amorous for the female gorillas at the Calgary Zoo, so he and his two brothers are being moved to a new bachelor pad at the Granby Zoo. Details, Page A8

Business

Hot Resto Dodges Bullet

Buona Notte, one of Montreal's trendiest bar/restaurants, has averted a lengthy summer shutdown that would have jeopardized what the owners expect to be a record year thanks to the World Outgames hitting town soon. Details, Page B1

Bikini Village Targets Men

After a tumultuous year of restructuring, Groupe Bikini Village announced plans yesterday to boost swimsuit sales through advertising campaigns targeting men and full-figured women. Details, Page B1

Sports

Late Hits Worry Calvillo

Alouettes quarterback Anthony Calvillo is concerned by the number of late hits he has received in the first two games of the season and hopes the trend will not continue. Details, Page C1

History at Wimbledon

Toronto's Daniel Nestor and Mark Knowles of the Bahamas made history at Wimbledon, advancing to the men's doubles semifinals after beating Simon Aspelin and Todd Perry in a six-hour, nine-minute match. Details, Page C5

Follow-Up

Ottawa cops ID uriners: Three young men who were photographed urinating on the national war memorial have been identified but probably won't face mischief charges, Ottawa police said yesterday. Page A10

Graphic

Photo: (See hard copy for photo description)

Load-Date: July 6, 2006

Mirror, mirror, on the world's wall

University Wire

July 19, 2006 Wednesday

Copyright 2006 Minnesota Daily via U-Wire

Section: COLUMN

Length: 564 words

Byline: By Adri Mehra, Minnesota Daily; **SOURCE:** U. Minnesota

Dateline: MINNEAPOLIS

Body

I heard a phrase recently that's been bandied about the water cooler and the radio dial alike this past week.

Is it another terse Trump aping of "You're fired"? Perhaps the under-due renaissance of MTV's self-styled "wardrobe malfunction"?

I can only wish this one was generated by the usual suspect, reality television.

Nope. The folks of Lake Wobegons everywhere have been talking about "World War III," and it ain't pretty.

Of course, there are a number of reasons for intoning a set of words better reserved for a Philip K. Dick or Frank Herbert novel (hell, I'd even give Tom Clancy naming rights in exchange for peace on Earth).

For one, we see an endgame version of our beloved Bush administration clutching at whatever hawkish straws are left in the burning barn of its failed crotch-grabbing, hyper-ambitious "cowboy diplomacy" tack.

While 2,986 people died in the attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, the British Medical Journal estimates 100,000 innocent Iraqi men, women and children killed by the three-year-old American occupation of their country.

More than 2,500 Americans have lost their lives in Operation Iraqi Freedom - a number that is added to nearly every day - and between 20,000 and 50,000 soldiers have been injured, many of them permanently disfigured, to say nothing of the lifelong psychological damage of combat.

And now what? The United States is readying the rest of the Middle East for a proxy war with Israel in its place.

For all of the purported "saber-rattling" on the parts of Hezbollah and North Korea (which, according to the United States, is out to build the next nuclear bomb), this is really the sound of one hand clapping, and it's ours.

Now in its second week, Israel has pounded the Lebanese capital Beirut, with relentless shelling and airstrikes that already have killed nearly 200 people.

Israel's prolonged and merciless action, which included the bombing of a Beirut power station that left millions of families without power and access to fresh water for days, is supposedly in response to Hezbollah's capture of two Israeli soldiers earlier this month.

Mirror, mirror, on the world's wall

But everyone knows this is just the tripwire set in place by an increasingly isolated Judeo-American dynasty in its last throes.

Flanked by rising oceans separating it from an extremely prosperous South Asia and an unsympathetic but largely unified Western Europe, the U.S. is in the home stretch of what may be its swansong power play as the world's biggest bully - with Israel as its only friend.

While our schools, libraries and young minds are disintegrating from seven years of neglect, our leaders find themselves running out of cash, oil and that most precious and nonrenewable of commodities: time.

Just like the previous two incarnations of its namesake, World War III soon could be on our doorstep - and we'll have no choice but to sacrifice our livelihoods, and eventually our lives, for the wars of our government.

So every time you hear about Hezbollah or **Hamas** or Kim Jong-il, remember this: These people have no beef with you. They're just stooges in conflicts that have been co-opted by Uncle Sam in your name.

Because when your government's bottom line is synonymous with the military-industrial complex, you need a lot of enemies to make those arms contracts pay off.

World War III. The final installment in a series that may be our last renewable resource.

(C) 2006 Minnesota Daily via U-WIRE

Load-Date: July 19, 2006

Israeli PM names pro-withdrawal foreign minister: One of few women to join upper ranks

Ottawa Citizen
May 2, 2006 Tuesday
EARLY Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A12

Length: 600 words

Byline: Amy Teibel, The Associated Press; with files The Times, London

Dateline: JERUSALEM

Body

JERUSALEM - Tzipi Livni, a rising star in Israeli politics, was named foreign minister and vice-premier yesterday in the incoming Israeli government, the second-most powerful spot in the nation's male-dominated political scene.

Ms. Livni, part of the newly named cabinet, has travelled a long ideological road, from daughter of a Zionist underground fighter to champion of Israel's withdrawal from much of the West Bank.

Incoming Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's plan to draw Israel's borders in the next four years, with or without a peace accord with the Palestinians, is the political centrepiece of his new coalition.

However, in stitching together a majority team, he had to scrap his pledge to include only parties that back the plan.

The new cabinet lineup, which Mr. Olmert presented yesterday, is expected to take office Thursday, with the government starting its term with 67 seats.

Mr. Olmert is a relatively new face in the top job, replacing legendary soldier and politician Ariel Sharon, who suffered a massive stroke Jan. 4 and is still in a coma.

Labour party leader Amir Peretz takes over as defence minister, a top post in his first cabinet appointment, drawing fire because his experience is in social issues, not security. However, the Moroccan-born politician has a reputation as a take-charge manager, and his appointment could help ease Israel's rapidly deteriorating relationship with the Palestinians following the recent election of **Hamas** to the Palestinian Authority.

A second key job goes to another first-timer, Olmert ally Avraham Hirschson, who is to become finance minister.

Of all the new ministers, Ms. Livni is most in the spotlight. She is a rare **female** power figure in a nation heavy with macho military role models. Ms. Livni is the 10th **female** cabinet minister, though Israel did have a woman as prime minister early on. Golda Meir served from 1969-74.

In just seven years, Ms. Livni, now 47, a lawyer and former Mossad spy agency recruit, has risen from relative obscurity to Israel's second-most powerful politician, earning a reputation as a pragmatic straight-talker.

Israeli PM names pro-withdrawal foreign minister: One of few women to join upper ranks

Both Mr. Olmert and Ms. Livni are heirs of what Israelis like to call the Likud "royalty" -- the leading families of the hawkish Israeli party that dominated Israeli politics for the better part of three decades. And both broke with that party after concluding that the reality of living alongside and among a fast-growing Palestinian population meant giving up some of the idea of a Greater Israel that stretched across both banks of the Jordan River.

Ms. Livni, who followed Mr. Sharon into Kadima from Likud, abandoned Likud's decades-long opposition to withdrawing from territory and became a main proponent of Mr. Olmert's plan to abandon much of the West Bank.

"We will lead in the direction of two states," -- one for Israel, one for the Palestinians -- she said, as Kadima's election campaign kicked off in November.

It was a particularly long leap for the daughter of a legendary member of the sometimes violent pre-state underground Irgun, which was the forerunner of Likud.

Other members of Mr. Olmert's new government include Avi Dichter, a former head of Shin Bet, the internal security service, who is to become public security minister and Haim Ramon, who defected to Kadima from Labour, who will be justice minister.

Shaul Mofaz, the former general who served under Mr. Sharon at defence, is now tipped to be transport minister.

Shimon Peres, Israel's elder statesman, was put in charge of developing the Negev and Galilee and given the courtesy title of deputy prime minister, junior to Ms. Livni.

Load-Date: May 2, 2006

Smooth-Talking Saudi Ambassador Fields Gentle Questions

New York Sun (Archive)

April 27, 2006 Thursday

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Section: FOREIGN; Pg. 6

Length: 582 words

Byline: By GARY SHAPIRO, Staff Reporter of the Sun

Body

Wearing a jacket with a white handkerchief neatly tucked into the breast pocket, Saudi Arabia's ambassador to America, Turki Al Faisal, wasted little time during a public appearance at Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs in denouncing Osama bin Laden, saying the terrorist's was an evil vision. "Osama Bin Laden does not speak for Muslims," Mr. Al Faisal said yesterday afternoon. "His religion is extremism."

As the discussion wore on, Mr. Al Faisal addressed topics from Israel-Palestinian relations to Iran's nuclear capacity - offering Saudi views on both, as well as some opinions on his country's domestic policies.

"We have good relations with Iran," now, improved since the 1980s, the ambassador said in response to an audience question relayed by the school's dean, Lisa Anderson. Mr. Al Faisal said his country was concerned about even a nonmilitary nuclear mishap in Iran - because prevailing winds from Iran head toward Saudi Arabia. King Abdullah has urged Iran to accept a Russian proposal whereby Iran would get its enriched uranium for civilian nuclear energy from Russia, Mr. Al Faisal noted.

A lecturer of international law at Benha University in Egypt, Wael Allam, who is a visiting scholar at Columbia and attended yesterday's event, said he would have preferred to hear more specifics on the evolution of Saudi-Iranian relations in Mr. Al Faisal's speech.

When Ms. Anderson asked Mr. Al Faisal to describe the Iraq War from a Saudi perspective, he said his country was working toward building stability and security by utilizing its contacts with "all Iraqi factions," because, he said, a unified Iraq is in the best interests for all Iraqis.

"Public opinion wants to see engagement," Mr. Al Faisal said, in comments on the Israeli-Palestinian Arab situation. "I wish I could be optimistic for peace." He quoted a poll that found 60% of Israelis and more than 70% of Palestinian Arabs think Israel and **Hamas** should be communicating.

In response to a question about a visit to Saudi Arabia by President Hu, the ambassador said, "We see China as a stable and a very friendly country," adding, "They also buy a lot of our oil."

As Ms. Anderson read other questions submitted by audience members, discussion shifted to America's diversifying energy sources. Mr. Al Faisal said America could certainly increase its ethanol usage, but that if it were increased to 6% of the country's total energy consumption, America would need to plant cornfields the size of Idaho, Nebraska, and a couple of other states to keep pace. That's "okay with us," Ms. Anderson interjected, "We're in New York."

Smooth-Talking Saudi Ambassador Fields Gentle Questions

"Our evolution and change is going to come at our own pace," Mr. Al Faisal said when talking about domestic issues. Mr. Al Faisal touched only briefly on a range of difficult internal topics, including illegal workers, offensive materials in primary school curricula, women's employment, and freedom of the press. American history, such as its Civil Rights movement and the Civil War, were helpful to Saudis, the ambassador said: "We want to learn from your experience."

A senior fellow at the National Committee on American Foreign Policy, George Gruen, who earned a doctorate at Columbia in international relations and Middle East studies, said of the ambassador: "He put the best forward" when presenting his country's views and making Saudi Arabia sound progressive. But nobody asked the ambassador whether women can drive alone in their country, Mr. Gruen added.

Load-Date: April 27, 2006

End of Document

Barrier's hardships can't compare to terrorist violence

St. Petersburg Times (Florida)

February 18, 2006 Saturday

0 South Pinellas Edition

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Section: EDITORIAL; Pg. 15A

Length: 2649 words

Body

I appreciate Susan Taylor Martin's Feb. 15 report, At barrier, real life is rerouted. It does present some of the hardships Palestinians are experiencing. But those hardships do not compare to the agony of learning your loved ones have just been blown to bits by a terrorist while riding a bus home from work or school or while eating lunch at a restaurant.

We all remember the day - 9/11 - when we experienced that same feeling of fear fueled by a terrorist attack. Yet in Israel, the horror of terror is experienced all too often. Would we in the United States leave our borders open if faced with that same dilemma time after time? I think - in fact, I know - not.

In retrospect, I have to wonder if the security fence would ever have been erected had the Palestinians themselves demanded a stop to terrorism by their own people. Whatever its grievance, a civilized society does not permit its own to act in an uncivilized way.

Lawrence Silver, Oldsmar

The apartheid cannot continue

Re: At barrier, real life is rerouted.

Susan Martin's article was excellent and to the point. What Israeli politicians have to realize (in addition to the tremendous suffering they inflicted on the Palestinians who own the land) is that this barrier will bring them misery as well. The only way Israelis will be both safe and prosperous is when the Palestinians get their legitimate rights in independence and freedom. This will open all Arab markets for the Israelis.

If the problem is not solved, it won't take much for mortars and rockets to fly over the barrier or attacks to get more high-tech. Israelis must understand that the policy of apartheid and racism cannot continue.

Saleh Mubarak, Seffner

Remember Palestinian responsibility

Re: At barrier, real life is rerouted.

Conspicuously absent from any of Susan Martin's reports from the Middle East is some acknowledgment by Palestinians that they have any responsibility at all for their sad plight. One looks in vain through dozens of

Barrier's hardships can't compare to terrorist violence

interviews recounted by her in the last year for any comment like: "We made a mistake in supporting the terror attacks on the Israelis; it hurt us as much or more than it hurt them".

In fact, Yousif Khataib's gas station was successful - not just in 1956 when his grandfather opened it - but in 2000, when Palestinian commerce still thrived under the Israeli "occupation." And Qassem Sourchi was still strolling the 500 yards to his campus in 2000, without interference. But when the Palestinian leadership decided to unleash a campaign of terror and violence against Israel, Israelis suffered the attacks, and Palestinians suffered the consequences.

So what course did the Palestinians choose in their long-awaited election two weeks ago, the first in a decade? Overwhelmingly, they voted for Hamas, whose creed makes no distinctions between an Israel with a "wall" or without a "wall," an Israel within 1967 borders or 1948 borders. None of it makes a difference: They are committed to the total destruction of Israel.

So long as the Palestinian people and their leaders reject the path of negotiation, peace and reconciliation, they forfeit any legitimate claim to the world's sympathy.

Bruce Epstein and Barry Augenbraun, Jewish

Community Relations Council of the Pinellas County Jewish Federation

Wall makes matters worse

Re: At barrier, real life is rerouted.

I commend Susan Martin for stating the facts in her article. This is reality for many Palestinians, and I know this for a fact because, although I am not a Palestinian, I have been to Jerusalem recently and have seen the wall firsthand and its effect on the Palestinian people.

Many Palestinians echoed accounts very similar to those revealed in this article. What was once a 10-minute drive to work is now, at best, an hour and a half drive and what was once a short walk to visit family is now a checkpoint nightmare.

Israel is wasting American taxpayers' money on building this "antiterrorist wall," only to isolate the Palestinian people from the rest of the world when it should be spending our money wisely building peaceful bridges.

It upsets me to hear about the hardships this wall has caused. Imagine how the people this wall affects feel. This wall is not the solution of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. If anything, it makes matters worse. This "antiterrorist wall" is a terrorist in itself because it terrorizes the lives of thousands of innocent Palestinians.

Ayesha Nasr, Tampa

Fence is well worth it

Re: At barrier, real life is rerouted.

As Susan Martin writes: "Attacks . . . have dropped as much as 90 percent" from areas where the barrier is completed. The Israeli government says that upon completion 97 percent of the barrier will be fence, 3 percent wall. Given the barrier's success at reducing the number of suicide bombings, the difficulties it causes Palestinian travel is regrettable, but well worth it.

Gilbert Kushner, Tampa

Israeli barrier crosses the line

Re: At barrier, real life is rerouted.

Barrier's hardships can't compare to terrorist violence

I had no idea that the mentioned wall has caused so much "daily" misery and hardship to Palestinian people. I can understand building an Israeli wall on Israeli land, for reasons even less than security. What I can't understand is building it on Palestinian land. While we debate in the United States building a fence on the U.S. side of the Mexican border, no one ever considered putting it on the Mexican side.

No wonder the European Union has condemned the fence. Even the Israeli courts have deemed parts of the fence illegal in June 2004 stating that "it causes too much harm for Palestinians." The article informed me that an Israeli human rights organization confirmed the negative impact on 500,000 Palestinians. There must have been another way of making it a legal fence.

Mohamed Ghabour, Valrico

The fence should be taller

Re: At barrier, real life is rerouted.

Last week I was in Israel, including some of the same areas Susan Martin writes about, and this is what I saw: Israeli citizens (including pregnant women) undergoing security searches just to enter restaurants; Israeli children growing up behind the protection of barbed wire and armed guards; Israelis living in terror that the next stranger walking past will kill them.

Susan Martin's heart goes out to a student whose commute to college is far less than the distance from Pinellas County to USF, and to a gas station owner whose business is suffering. Give me a break. Earlier this month, a terrorist got past the fence, pulled out a knife and stabbed five people because they were Jewish. Doesn't this matter?

The people I met in the vibrant, America loving Israel are sick of the violence and want freedom from fear. They want their real lives rerouted back to safety. I looked at the security fence and thought it should be taller.

Marshall Seiden, St. Petersburg

Barrier remains necessary

Times senior correspondent Susan Taylor Martin has presented readers with a fine analysis of the "barrier" between Israel and the Palestinians. Her column does motivate a number of observations.

Israel realizes that to retain its integrity as a tiny Jewish state it must separate itself from hostile Arabs. Unlike the Palestinian Hamas, it favors a two-state solution. Hamas, of course, continues the objective of "wiping Israel off the map." It should be noted that the current Arab population of Israel is some 18 percent. Israeli Arabs have the same rights as all Israeli citizens. It should be obvious that Israelis have no obligation to provide jobs, medical care, etc. to people who wish to destroy them. Our current border problems should allow us to understand this.

The Palestinians blame everyone but themselves for their plight. They have had the corruption of Arafat. Now they have chosen the terrorists of Hamas. Israel is willing to have them live in their own state. Meanwhile a "barrier" must continue.

Norman N. Gross, president, PRIMER (Promoting

Responsibility in Middle East Reporting), Palm Harbor

A disheartening gap in understanding

I've been waiting a little over four years for Muslims worldwide to rise up in anger and indignation. The wait is over but I am thoroughly disappointed that their target is paper-and-ink cartoons and not the men of the movement that hijacked their religion as well as the planes that shattered the World Trade Center and so many lives!

Barrier's hardships can't compare to terrorist violence

All I feel now is an emptiness and sadness that such a wide gulf in understanding and tolerance exists today and into the foreseeable future!

Andrew Madeloni, Port Richey

Free expression shouldn't fuel hate

As an organization whose mission it is to promote dialogue and respect among cultures and religions, we deplore the offensive publication of representations of the prophet Mohammed and the violence generated in response.

Whereas freedom of expression is a pillar of democracy, the exercise of this right carries with it a responsibility of good judgment. The use of stereotypes and labeling that insults deeply rooted religious feelings does not contribute to the creation of the type of inclusive environment that is conducive to constructive and peaceful dialogue.

Over the years, our world has become more global. The diversity of our cities, our schools and our workplaces is an irreversible reality and one that we believe enriches us tremendously. However, the changing face of our communities also raises the critical question of how to uphold one's own traditions, values and beliefs, while at the same time respecting (or not offending) the traditions, values and beliefs of others who have become our neighbors. Managing the inter-group dynamics of a diverse community is a very delicate task that requires sensitivity, openness and tolerance.

Maybe when the dust settles, we will begin to realize that building harmonious relationships between the different religions and cultures is a very serious matter in which we carry both a collective and an individual responsibility.

Birgit Van Hout, executive director, Community

Tampa Bay, St. Petersburg

The limits of a religion's power

What is missing in all the stories I read about the extreme Muslim reaction to the Danish, and other European, publications of drawings of Mohammed, is that no religion has the right to tell nonbelievers how to behave as long as that behavior is within the laws of the country in which it occurs. Hindus have no right to tell me to adhere to their practice of not eating beef. Catholics cannot tell me to avoid birth control practices. Muslims have no right to tell me not to make a drawing of Jesus or Mohammed.

In all cases the only right that any religion has is the right to require its own practitioners to behave as they wish, and, if some practitioner or believer does not properly follow those beliefs, then that religion has the right to exclude that person. No religion has the right to tell the people of Europe or the United States that they must give up one of their most basic rights - the right of free speech. Muslim prayer leaders have the right to forbid only their own believers from making or publishing those depictions of Mohammed.

That needs to be made clear to all, and our government should be doing that.

Ian MacFarlane, St. Petersburg

Changing minds at Guantanamo

Re: In legal limbo, editorial, Feb. 13.

The sub-headline reads: "A majority of the prisoners at Guantanamo Bay have no history of aggression toward the United States, and no hope of being released any time soon."

If they had no thoughts of aggression toward the United States in the beginning, I'm sure they do now!

Donald F. Kelly, St. Petersburg

Barrier's hardships can't compare to terrorist violence

Go to the Koran directly

Re: DVDs, books to inform about Islam's holy one, Feb. 15.

In this Times item, the Council on American-Islamic Relations announced it is offering to tell the truth about their prophet Mohammed.

I wonder if it will be the whole truth.

If you want to know the truth about Mohammed why not go to the Koran directly? Especially Chapters 8 and 9.

We don't have to rely on edited materials to know about Islam. The Koran is short and readily available online and in bookstores.

M. Economidis, Tampa

Fort De Soto Park is perfect as is

Re: Serving up relaxation, by Jake Stowers,

Feb. 17.

The Fort Restaurant is long gone, so is Maas Brothers, Webb's City, and Aunt Hattie's. They're called memories, and I have fond ones of the city I grew up in.

If Stowers wants to "kick back with a grouper sandwich and a cold beer," let him stop at Billy's on Tierra Verde.

As for Fort De Soto Park, leave it alone! It's perfect just the way it is.

Frank Barry, Seminole

Leave us some unspoiled areas

Re: Fort De Soto Park.

Why not develop the camp ground and put in some condos? We can't have an unimproved parcel of waterfront property in this county now can we? While you're at it, why not start on Egmont Key, too?

I hope that the sarcasm comes through in writing the same as it does in speaking. Whoever came up with this nonsense needs to be fired or voted off the County Commission. Please leave one unspoiled area for those of us who want to enjoy a natural setting that you do not need a boat to get to.

Michael J. Henry, St. Petersburg

Go elsewhere for that beer

Re: Serving up relaxation.

Jake Stowers makes the mistake that people of his ilk in county government always seem to make. The mistake is: If some is good then more has to be better. In the last decade the coastline in Pinellas County has morphed from smaller mom-and-pop type businesses to corporate/developer interests that have obliterated the soul of that area.

My Northern friends who come here every couple of years can't believe what they see regarding the growth of what they remember from their last visit. These same people who prefer to live up there in big cities and small towns alike will eventually have enough and spend their vacations somewhere else. I'm sure that will be fine for Stowers because those medium-income folks will be replaced by the higher-income people who think asphalt and concrete instead of sand along an ocean are just swell.

Barrier's hardships can't compare to terrorist violence

So here's the deal, Mr. Stowers: For a grouper sandwich and a beer at a beach go to St. Pete Beach or better yet Clearwater where county administrators have made sure there is an abundance of both.

Jason Jerald, Tampa

Too much has already been bulldozed

Re: Who wants all that icky nature stuff at a park?

Cannot the county keep a beach in its natural state? They killed Sand Key and now want to do so with Fort De Soto Park. I grew up in Largo and visit constantly. I've seen all the "improvements." Why is it up to the residents to save the local history? Too much beauty has already been bulldozed. It is past time to stop! Fort De Soto is a place I want to take my grandchildren to, in its current state.

Chris Smith, Hudson

A quiet tropical paradise

I was disappointed to read that the Pinellas County Commission is considering making changes to Fort De Soto Park. My husband and I are currently in an RV park in Largo and have spent several months in this area. In the city we are close to any and every thing commercially possible, including the ice cream truck!

We had the opportunity to camp at Fort De Soto for 10 days in December. It was wonderful! A quiet tropical paradise! Please don't change it. People need an opportunity to spend time in nature, enjoying the birds and sea life. There aren't many places left this way. Once it is changed, you can't go back.

Jane Williams, Woodstock, Ga.

A discouraging crossword

Re: The home of the Devil Rays.

When we built a baseball stadium and searched for a team for it, we often told ourselves that one of the benefits would be publicity for St. Petersburg and for Pinellas County. Then Vince Naimoli named the team the Tampa Bay Devil Rays and the name of the stadium was changed to Tropicana Field.

So, where does the country think the Devil Rays are located? The 32 Down clue in the Feb. 11 Daily Crossword on page 2F of the St. Petersburg Times was "Home of the Devil Rays."

The answer was Tampa.

Palmer O. Hanson Jr., Largo

Graphic

PHOTO, JOHN PENDYGRAFT; PHOTO, TIMES FILES

At Abu Dis, a man leaps over part of a wall that Israel has been constructing to protect its citizens from Palestinian terrorists. The 459-mile barricade of fences, trenches and huge walls makes life difficult for many Palestinians but has

sharply reduced the number of attacks on Israelis.; (2001) Kayaking is one of the popular activities at Pinellas County's Fort De Soto Park.

Barrier's hardships can't compare to terrorist violence

Load-Date: February 18, 2006

End of Document

Top Israel court backs curb on Arab spouses; Ruling blocks reunification of families

The International Herald Tribune

May 15, 2006 Monday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 4

Length: 579 words

Byline: Greg Myre

Dateline: JERUSALEM

Body

Israel's high court on Sunday narrowly upheld a contentious law that can block Palestinians in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip from moving to Israel to live with a spouse who is an Arab citizen of the Jewish state.

In a 6-to-5 ruling, the court rejected claims that the law violated the civil rights of Palestinians and Arab citizens of Israel. The majority sided with the Israeli authorities, who say that allowing young Palestinians to move into Israel through marriage poses an unacceptable security risk.

"This law prevents family reunification based simply on the nationality of one spouse," said Abeer Baker, a lawyer for Adalah, a legal center representing the couples seeking to live together in Israel. Hundreds, perhaps thousands of couples may be kept apart by the law, Baker said. But precise figures are difficult to come by, she said, because many such couples do not want to be identified for fear of legal problems.

Of Israel's seven million citizens, more than one million are Arab. The vast majority of the Arab Israelis have family ties and other relations with the estimated 3.8 million Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza.

But Israel has made it increasingly difficult for Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza to enter Israel since the Palestinian uprising began in 2000.

The measure ruled upon by the court, which amends Israel's Citizenship Law, has been criticized by human rights groups since it was approved in 2002, at the height of the uprising.

Over the years, thousands of Palestinians have been granted residency in Israel as part of family reunification, including marriage. Of this group, about 25 have been involved in terrorism, according to the Israeli authorities.

Government lawyers argued that the law was more relevant than ever now that the Palestinian Authority is led by **Hamas**, the radical Islamic group that has carried out many of the suicide bombings against Israel.

"The Palestinian Authority is an enemy government, a government that wants to destroy the state and is not willing to recognize Israel," Justice Michel Cheshin said earlier this year during arguments in the case.

Cheshin said that if the couples wanted to be together, they could live in the West Bank rather than Israel.

Top Israel court backs curb on Arab spouses Ruling blocks reunification of families

The chief justice, Aharon Barak, dissented, saying "this violation of rights is directed against Arab citizens of Israel."

Human rights lawyers argued that Israel already has laws that allow the government to revoke the residency of anyone suspected of involvement in terror.

The amended Citizenship Law says that Palestinian men over age 35 and women over 25 may apply to be with a spouse in Israel. However, these requests may be denied and often are. Critics of the amendment assert that it is intended not only for security, but also to limit the number of Arabs living in Israel.

In West Bank violence, meanwhile, Israeli troops killed four Palestinians in two separate shooting exchanges, according to Palestinian security officials and the Israeli military.

A Palestinian security officer, identified as Ali Jabarin, was fatally shot at a security building in the town of Jenin, while three Palestinians were killed in the nearby village of Qabatiya, the Palestinians said.

Two of those killed in Qabatiya were brothers, Thair and Mejahid Hanaisha, and at least one of them was believed to be linked to Islamic Jihad, according to Agence France-Presse. The third man was fatally shot after throwing stones at the troops, the agency said.

Load-Date: May 17, 2006

INNOCENTS ABROAD

The Australian (Australia)

April 26, 2006 Wednesday

All-round Country Edition

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Section: FEATURES; Leader; Pg. 15

Length: 651 words

Body

MATP

Bombers in the Sinai aim to destabilise a US ally

IN what is emerging as a disturbing pattern, terrorists have struck once again at foreign tourists in the seaside resorts of Egypt's Sinai Peninsula. Swiss, German and Russian holidaymakers are thought to be among at least 24 victims of three blasts that ripped through restaurants and a supermarket at the popular Red Sea diving hub of Dahab yesterday. The Department of Foreign Affairs has confirmed that two Australian women were injured in the explosions, which wounded as many as 60. It is the third terror attack targeting foreign tourists enjoying Egypt's Gulf of Aqaba coastline in 18 months. Thirty-four people died in bombings at the Red Sea resorts of Taba and Ras Shitan in October 2004. Nine months later, explosions killed 88 and injured hundreds in the seaside resort of Sharm el-Sheikh.

By last night no one had claimed responsibility for the latest attack, believed to have involved three suicide bombers. A short ferry ride from Saudi Arabia, close to countries where terrorist cells operate such as Jordan and Yemen, and sharing an easily breached border with the Gaza Strip, the Sinai is becoming a favourite terror target. The fact the bombers hit the day after Osama bin Laden denounced "crusader wars on Islam", and labelled Westerners as legitimate jihadist targets strongly suggests an al-Qa'ida connection. In the past few years the global terror group has been linked to attacks on Westerners in tourist meccas including Bali's Kuta Beach in 2002 and 2005, the Kenyan city of Mombasa in 2002, and Morocco's Casablanca in 2003. At the same time there is an equally strong possibility the attack was the work of local Islamic militants aiming to destabilise the Government of Egyptian strongman and close US ally President Hosni Mubarak. Under pressure from Washington, which bankrolls his secular regime to the tune of \$US2 billion annually, Mr Mubarak last year began taking tentative steps towards democracy. These included multi-party elections which saw the Muslim Brotherhood capture a fifth of the seats and exposed the Government's vulnerability. US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice is pushing for a faster pace of political reform in Egypt. The danger is that following this path could see the authoritarian Mubarak regime toppled by the fundamentalist Brotherhood. As with the Palestinian election that saw the terrorist organisation Hamas propelled into power earlier this year, a Muslim Brotherhood-run Egypt would mean unprecedented chaos for the Middle East.

Evidence of an organised pattern in the terror attacks, suggesting a sole group is responsible, is clear in that each of the last three have occurred near a national holiday. Egyptians are due to mark the 24th anniversary of Israel's withdrawal from the Sinai next week. The bombings in Dahab also came as Egyptians celebrated the ancient spring festival of Sham el-Nessim, crowds of tourists participated in the Coptic Christian observance of Easter and Israeli

INNOCENTS ABROAD

vacationers lingered after the previous week's Passover holiday. The assaults are aimed at the heart of Egypt's tourism industry, which contributes more than 5 per cent to the country's economic growth. Tourists, however, are showing themselves to be remarkably resilient in the face of terror: some eight million foreigners visited Egypt last year.

Terrorists are showing their true colours in their attacks on Egypt's booming Red Sea resorts. Their thirst for blood is unquenchable and indiscriminate. Most of the victims among the roll-call of dead and injured in yesterday's attack will be ordinary Muslims. And the damage of the bombs on the coast's tourism infrastructure means innumerable locals will lose their jobs and desperately needed incomes. Egypt is at a crossroads. Its best prospect of surviving as a moderate, secular society is with the continued strong support of Western nations.

Load-Date: April 25, 2006

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Married, but Israel forces them to live apart

The Australian (Australia)

May 18, 2006 Thursday

All-round Country Edition

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 11

Length: 591 words

Byline: Stephen Farrell

Body

The Times

Ramallah

THEY have been called the Romeo and Juliet of the Middle East. But Pyramus and Thisbe are the better parallel for this divided couple.

Like the doomed Babylonian lovers of Ovid's tale, Osama Zatar and Jasmin Avissar are separated by a wall -- in this case, the vast concrete slab that Israel has erected between their home towns.

Ms Avissar, an Israeli Jew, and Mr Zatar, a Palestinian Muslim, met while working together at an animal shelter near the border between Jerusalem and Ramallah, the West Bank capital now sealed off by a 5m concrete wall, watchtowers and razor wire.

She is a ballet dancer and he a sculptor. But although they married two years ago, he cannot travel to Israel to be with his wife.

After a Supreme Court ruling upheld a ban on Palestinians remaining in the Jewish state with their Israeli spouses Ms Avissar, 25, is forbidden to bring her husband to Israel to live together as a couple.

"We pray to God that it will work out but I have given up hoping. I am leaving it to fate," Mr Zatar said.

The court's ruling, criticised as racist by human rights groups and Israeli Arab MPs, upheld an amendment to a citizenship law introduced in 2002 at the height of the intifada. Enacted in an attempt to stop Palestinian suicide bombers and gunmen entering the country, it allowed only Palestinian women over 25 and men over 35 to apply to join their spouses. Mr Zatar is 26.

Israeli Interior Ministry spokeswoman Sabin Hadad said: "In this case, Osama is under 35, so there's nothing we can do. When there's a law, we must obey it."

Although the couple's families support their rare cross-community marriage and she can travel into Ramallah on a temporary permit, their future is uncertain because her pass expires in a month.

Married, but Israel forces them to live apart

"We're in a Kafkaesque situation. All we want is the right to live together as a married couple," said Ms Avissar, who crosses an Israeli checkpoint almost daily to work as a waitress in a Jerusalem cafe, before returning to Ramallah in the evening. "After the Supreme Court's decision, a lot of couples will have to move out of Israel altogether, or live apart. I am luckier than other couples because I have a job in Jerusalem, when many in Ramallah do not have work."

Their lawyer, Michael Sfard, has appealed to the Supreme Court seeking permission for them to be together, either in Jerusalem or Ramallah. Under the UN declaration on human rights, he argues, they "have the basic right to live a family life and free choice of spouse".

His petition even cites Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet, saying of Mr Zatar: "Being held a foe, he may not have access to breathe such vows as lovers use to swear; And she as much in love, her means much less to meet her new-beloved anywhere."

Israeli law and the construction of its controversial 800km barrier reflect the Jewish state's concern that Palestinians will soon outnumber Jews between the Mediterranean Sea and Jordan River.

Although they had an Islamic ceremony as well as a civil wedding in Cyprus, Mr Zatar remains worried about his wife being in the West Bank, amid growing hardship and fears of civil war between Hamas and Fatah gunmen.

"We haven't received any threats from any factions but I am concerned for her safety because, in all the chaos here, you never know -- someone might do anything for \$100," he said.

Ms Avissar's father, Menachem, 63, said: "We love them both and we try to support them in all ways. I feel betrayed by my country. It is cancelling a basic right of a citizen to build a home and to create a family."

Load-Date: May 18, 2006

In Focus

The Gazette (Montreal)

April 12, 2006 Wednesday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A2

Length: 587 words

Byline: The Gazette

Body

at Pakistani celebration

At least 47 people were killed and more than 100 injured yesterday when a bomber blew himself up in the port city of Karachi at a huge gathering to celebrate the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad. Afterward, angry mobs lashed out at security forces, setting vehicles ablaze, including ambulances and fire trucks, and also damaging two movie theatres. Details, Page A15

Israel stands by attacks

Israel stood by its new policy yesterday of firing artillery shells at Palestinian rocket squads operating from populated areas in Gaza, even after a round killed an 8-year-old Palestinian girl. The Israeli military intensified its offensive against Palestinian rocket fire after **Hamas** took charge of the Palestinian Authority two weeks ago. Details, Page A16

Cloutier wants out of jail

Former entertainment mogul Guy Cloutier, who was sentenced to 42 months in prison in December 2004 for sexually assaulting two minors over a period of seven years, will appear before the National Parole Board today to determine whether he qualifies for both day and full parole. Details, Page A7

Key resource for **women**

One year before Kelly-Anne Drummond was murdered by her boyfriend, she went to the local police station to find out whether he had a criminal record, but got nowhere. She should have gone to the Montreal courthouse to check on her partner's past, as hundreds of **women** do every year. Details, Page A6

MNA assails SAAQ hike

Maurice Clermont, Liberal backbencher for the Laval riding of Milles-Iles, appealed to the head of Quebec's no-fault auto insurance corporation yesterday to think of "the little guy making \$35,000 a year" before sharply increasing premiums. Details, Page A10

Cancer checks save lives

In Focus

Many more people could join the ranks of cancer survivors if screening in this country was expanded and better organized, the Canadian Cancer Society said yesterday as it released its annual calculations on the toll the disease will take in Canada. Details, Page A12

'Intelligent design' caveat

Only days after an academic controversy erupted in Canada over the theory of evolution, Britain's top science organization has taken the unusual step of issuing a warning about the global rise of "intelligent design" as a rival explanation for life on Earth. Details, Page A14

Business

Coutu's integration woes

Executives at the Jean Coutu Group drugstore chain admit the company is at least a year behind in its troubled integration of more than 1,549 Eckerd drugstores in the United States. Details, Page B1

Telephone wars heat up

The battle for telephone customers in Quebec has escalated with Videotron's launch of a cable phone service for small businesses. Details, Page B2

Sports

Robitaille hangs 'em up

Luc Robitaille, the 40-year-old forward with the Los Angeles Kings, announced his retirement yesterday. Robitaille will retire as the NHL's highest-scoring left winger. Details, Page C1

Teen skier a rising star

Marie-Michele Belanger-Timothy, 17, was competing in only her second Canadian ski championships last month when she topped two national-team stars to finish third in the super giant slalom. Details, Page C5

Arts & Life

Raising money in fat city

There's was a whole lotta eatin' goin' on at Monday's Taste of the Nation fundraiser, where, Bill Brownstein writes, the smart guests wore sneakers. Details, Page D1

Rookie playwright awed

David Sherman's been writing since he was about 12 years old, but he says it was a special thrill to see his first play hit the stage at Centaur Theatre. Details, Page D5

Graphic

Photo: (Bomber kills dozens at Pakistani celebration)

Load-Date: April 12, 2006

End of Document

Almost three months of captivity

Christian Science Monitor

March 31, 2006, Friday

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 10

Length: 615 words

Body

Saturday, Jan. 7

- * Jill Carroll kidnapped in Baghdad. Interpreter Allan Enwiya is killed.
- * The Christian Science Monitor requests a media blackout while recovery gets under way.

Jan. 9

- * Media blackout ends.

Jan. 15

- * The Jordan Times (where Carroll worked) calls for Carroll's release in editorial, titled "Our Jill."

Jan. 17

- * Al Jazeera airs first videotape from Carroll's captors. Al Jazeera says that the captors demand the release of all **female** prisoners in Iraq within 72 hours, and implies that Carroll will be killed if demands are not met.
- * The Carroll family releases a statement appealing for release.

Jan. 18

- * Prominent Muslims, including Iraq's Muslim Scholars Association, Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood, the Iraq Journalists' League, and Iraqi Accordance Front call for Carroll's release.
- * Monitor holds press conference in Washington about Carroll.
- * An editorial calling for release is published in Jordan's Al Ghad newspaper and widely cited.

Jan. 19

- * Eight Egyptian human rights groups release joint statement calling for Carroll's release.
- * The Supreme Guide of the Muslim Brotherhood releases statement calling for release.
- * Mary Beth Carroll, Jill's mother, appeals on CNN for Jill's release.

Almost three months of captivity

Jan. 20

- * First deadline passes.
- * Carroll's father appears on Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya.
- * Reporters Without Borders rallies at Grand Mosque of Paris.
- * Sunni political leader Adnan al-Dulaimi, whom Carroll was attempting to visit when she was kidnapped, calls for her release.

Jan. 21

- * Delegation from Council on American-Islamic Relations, goes to Baghdad to try to spur release.

Jan. 22

- * Carroll's father appeals on CNN.

Jan. 23

- * Liberties Committee of the Egyptian Lawyers' Syndicate calls for Carroll's release.
- * **Hamas** calls for Carroll's release.

Jan. 26

- * Five Iraqi **female** detainees and over 400 male prisoners are released.
- * 37 Arab intellectuals and politicians appeal.

Jan. 29

- * Adnan al-Dulaimi makes second statement.

Jan. 30

- * Al Jazeera airs second video. The voice-over says that Carroll appeals for release of all Iraqi **women** prisoners.

Feb. 1

- * Baghdad's New Sabah newspaper calls for release and runs the first of three front-page public-service announcements.
- * Waddah Khanfar, managing director of Al Jazeera, makes on-air appeal for Carroll's release on behalf of network's journalists.

Feb. 5

- * Poster of Carroll is hung on Rome's city hall.

Feb. 7

- * Reporters Without Borders (RWB) rallies. Former French hostage Florence Aubenas and Monitor 's Peter Ford attend.

Feb. 9

- * Kuwaiti TV station Al Rai airs third video.

Almost three months of captivity

* Jim and Mary Beth Carroll appeal on "Good Morning, America," to Sattam al-Gaood, former senior associate of Saddam Hussein.

Feb. 10

* The owner of Al Rai says Carroll is being held in Baghdad with a group of women, according to "sources close to kidnappers."

Feb.14

* Sattam al-Gaood, makes appeal.

* Al Iraqiya airs public-service video.

Feb. 16

* Students rally at University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Carroll's alma mater.

Feb. 21

* RWB launches a week-long international support campaign.

* Students at the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor hold a candlelight vigil.

March 6

* Monitor publishes tribute to Allan Enwiya, Jill's Iraqi interpreter.

March 9

* Monitor announces renewed efforts to broadcast public-service announcements.

March 20

* RWB unveils giant portrait of Carroll in the Place de la Nation in Paris. Appears next to portraits of kidnapped Iraqi journalists Reem Zeid, Marwan Khazaal.

March 24

* CNN reports on the more than 2,000 letters of support and prayers for Jill sent to Monitor.

March 29

* Katie Carroll, Jill's twin sister, appeals on Al Arabiya for information.

March 30

* Jill Carroll released in Baghdad.

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Load-Date: March 30, 2006

Passionate portrayal of an insecure idealist THEATRE

The Daily Telegraph (LONDON)

April 4, 2006 Tuesday

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Section: FEATURES; The Arts; Pg. 24

Length: 572 words

Byline: Charles Spencer

Body

My Name is Rachel Corrie

PLAYHOUSE THEATRE

REVIEW

BY rights, this production shouldn't be playing in London at all, but in America. The show was set to open last month at the New York Theatre Workshop but was pulled in what its director, Alan Rickman, has called "censorship born out of fear".

First seen in May last year at the Royal Court, this monologue is undeniably a hot potato. Rachel Corrie was a middle-class American student, who in January 2003 joined the International Solidarity Movement in Gaza, where, among other things, she acted as a human shield against the Israelis. Less than two months after arriving there, she was run over and killed by an Israeli bulldozer as she attempted to stop it destroying a Palestinian home. She was 23.

The play, culled from Corrie's own journals, letters and e-mails, which have been edited by Rickman and Katharine Viner, offers a powerful portrait of youthful idealism. But no one could call it a balanced piece of reportage on the desperately vexed nature of Israeli-Palestinian relations. And those relations have become still more difficult in recent weeks, following Sharon's coma and the Palestinian election of **Hamas**.

Corrie's assertion to her mother that "the vast majority of Palestinians right now are engaging in Gandhian non-violent resistance" strikes an especially hollow note, entirely ducking the question of Palestinian suicide bombers. And, when I reviewed the play last year, I received a poignant letter from a reader, appending a list of other young **women** called Rachel, all of them innocent Israeli victims of the Palestinian bombers.

For some, Rachel Corrie has become a heroine and martyr. Others view her as a dangerously naïve young woman who took sides in a conflict she didn't fully understand. Some even assert that the house she was trying to protect in Ramah concealed a tunnel used for running weapons in from Egypt.

There is, however, no law which states that theatre must be fair and even-handed. Quarrelling with Corrie's opinions becomes part of the dramatic engagement, and you don't need to be persuaded of the rightness of her views in order to be moved by her ardour.

Passionate portrayal of an insecure idealist THEATRE

In fact, what this play, and in particular Megan Dodds's passionately intense performance, captures most movingly is the sheer aliveness of the young woman.

Corrie appears to have been an astonishing mix: self-obsessed and insecure - "scattered and deviant and loud" in her own characteristically vivid words - but also someone who couldn't perceive a wrong without wanting to right it. At the close, we are shown a film of the golden-haired girl aged 10, outlining her dream of ending world poverty by the year 2000.

Corrie wrote with candour and precision on everything from boyfriend troubles to the suffering and endurance she witnessed in Gaza. In Dodds's performance, she can seem both a self-righteous pain in the bum, and winningly engaged, funny and vulnerable - sometimes at the very same time.

Rickman's production powerfully captures her journey from privileged student to the raw, real world of the Middle East, with the help of Hildegard Bechtler's remarkable design of blasted concrete and dust that powerfully captures the devastation of Gaza.

One leaves the theatre mourning not only Rachel Corrie's death but also the death of the idealism and ardour of one's own distant youth, those far-off days when everything seemed to matter so intensely.

Tickets: 0870 060 6631

Load-Date: April 4, 2006

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The familiar new face of British diplomacy; FOREIGN OFFICE

The Independent (London)

May 10, 2006 Wednesday

First Edition

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The  **INDEPENDENT**

Section: NEWS; Pg. 38

Length: 619 words

Body

Among the many surprises sprung by the recent Cabinet reshuffle, one stands out. This time last week the notion that we would be hearing the name Margaret Beckett and the job of Foreign Secretary combined in the same sentence would have seemed the height of improbability. The Foreign Office just did not seem to be Mrs Beckett's natural habitat. For all her Cabinet seniority and political longevity, caravanning weekends in Derbyshire always looked more her scene than jet-setting to solve international crises.

Yet within days of the announcement, here was Mrs Beckett stepping on a plane to New York, chatting to the US Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice, and successfully picking her way - with only a little diffidence - between thorny questions about the use of military force against Iran. Granted, the Foreign Office flatteringly sees itself as a Rolls Royce that purrs along regardless of who is in political charge. Granted, too, British government ministers are expected to be gen-eralists, not specialists. Even so, to go straight from dealing with air quality and agriculture to UN talks on Iran is quite a conceptual distance to cover.

We see no reason, however, why she should not make the transition convincingly. Of course, her career path falls short of classic qualifications for the Foreign Office. She made her early career in the Labour Party, when her politics was of the left. She lacks the star quality of Ms Rice. But we do not share the pessimism of some who find her hopelessly ill-equipped to take the helm of British diplomacy.

She may have no conventional diplomatic experience, but she was a successful Leader of the House' she was deputy leader, and acting leader, of the Labour Party. As Secretary of the rambling Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, she had to juggle many competing interests. The Government's record on the environment leaves much to be desired, and the delay in farm payments - for which her successor apologised yesterday - is a serious lapse. In all, though, she coped more than competently with a very tricky department.

Mrs Beckett's chief merit, however, is her political instinct and her calmness under pressure. A highly effective media performer, she manages to speak jargon-free English and avoid political mistakes. She is strongest in the presentational department, where her predecessor, Jack Straw, was weakest.

This will be a change. After a hesitant start, Mr Straw had come to command respect abroad. He was the driving force behind the European initiative on Iran - even if his determination to stick with the diplomacy may have cost

The familiar new face of British diplomacy FOREIGN OFFICE

him his job. But his lack of influence with 10 Downing Street as the Iraq war was in preparation and his tonguetied way with the media were real liabilities. Earning plaudits abroad is not enough' foreign policy has to be "sold" to the home constituency, too.

Britain faces a host of foreign policy dilemmas, of which Iran is currently only the most acute. There is the disaster of Iraq, the looming disaster in Afghanistan and, in the Middle East, the repercussions of the **Hamas** victory in the Palestinian Authority. There are still post-Iraq fences to be mended in Europe and the future architecture of the EU to be negotiated. The very basis of the transatlantic relationship would also be on the agenda, should the US decide to act against Iran.

This is where we hope that Mrs Beckett might come into her own: a seasoned Labour politician strong enough to say "No" to George Bush. With her clear head, firm sense of purpose and keen awareness of the national mood, there is no reason why Britain's first **female** Foreign Secretary should not be the right woman in the right place at the right time.

Load-Date: May 10, 2006

End of Document

Keeping the streets safe - from threats great and bird-sized - at home and abroad

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

March 22, 2006 Wednesday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; Entertainment; Pg. 17

Length: 573 words

Byline: Doug Anderson

Body

Dateline

8.30pm, SBS: Before he took ill, Ariel Sharon floated the notion of unilateral disengagement regarding disputed borders with the Palestinians. This seems to mean rejecting the peace process and negotiated agreements by saying: we'll disengage from certain parts of the West Bank (but keep troops there) and put up a huge wall to define the borders of Israel. If this policy is enforced, as the acting Prime Minister, Ehud Olmert, proposes, Israel will control the Jordan Valley, encircle the West Bank and deprive Palestinians of a border with Jordan. UN official David Shearer tells Dateline there are already 470 roadblocks and checkpoints on the West Bank. Israeli elections are imminent and the unilateral disengagement proposal is a key plank in the Kadima Party's policy. Can a fait accompli deliver hope for peaceful coexistence or will **Hamas** resist the wall and allied proposals with the only means left at its disposal? Acceptance? Compromise? Resistance?

Beyond Tomorrow

7.30pm, Seven: Tool across Australia on a single tank of fuel, then join Matt Shirvington at the world's biggest gadget show. How deliciously appropriate.

The Biggest Loser

7pm, Ten: Immunity, in the form of cupcakes, is the temptation as contestants are lured into yet another trap by the devious bastards who make Marjorie from Fat Fighters look like Mother Teresa. Image conformity and food inform two eps of The Simpsons, which follow at 7.30pm. When Marge sees Homer responding in an unreconstructed manner to two well-endowed **women**, she decides it's time she had her own bosom renovated - with surprising results. Later Homer cultivates his inner gourmet and, in a welter of foodie pretension, becomes a lacerating restaurant reviewer.

NCIS

9.30pm, Ten: A marine's wife kills a home intruder who attempts to rape her. The NCIS team investigates and finds, in the woman's computer, a swag of suggestive emails dispatched to a website where sexually explicit messages are exchanged. These seem to indicate she may have lured the attacker to her home under false pretences. All

Keeping the streets safe - from threats great and bird-sized - at home and abroad

very well but what about the marine? If the tale sounds familiar, it is. This is not what you'd call a Premiere Event or Special Presentation. It's a repeat. Nothing exceeds like excess.

Deal or No Deal

5.30pm, Seven: Er ... no deal.

The New Inventors

8pm, ABC: Viewers who have been inconvenienced by bird droppings after parking their cars in Plunkett Street - where birds sit in the trees and go plunkett, plunkett - will be intrigued by tonight's program, which unveils an innovative device to keep the streets safe from dung-shower ping. Also on display - a new kind of crash helmet and an ingenious gauge that should appeal to farmers during crop spraying and to firefighters - particularly in rural situations - needing to know how much water they have left when tackling a blaze.

Living Black

6pm, SBS: Warren Mundine, national president of the ALP, had a chat with Kerry O'Brien recently and gave the impression that factional backstabbing and jobs for the blokes wasn't really an issue within the Labor Party. Plenty of calming phrases and the usual blah about pulling together as a team. They all know how t'parrrrty - as Frank Gallagher reminds us. Rima Tamou conducts a tete-a-tete with Mr Mundine tonight and might come up with something a little less like flannel. Also featured, a profile of the indigenous discus thrower Ben Harradine going for gold in Melbourne.

Graphic

DRAWING: By Rocco Fazzari

Load-Date: July 17, 2007

Letters / Letters

The Philadelphia Inquirer
February 15, 2006 Wednesday

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The Philadelphia Inquirer

Found on Philly.com

Section: EDITORIAL; Pg. A14

Length: 630 words

Body

The blame game

I loved your Tuesday Page One headline: "Cheney Shooting: Who's at Fault?"

The answer is obvious: Democrats. And the media. I think all patriotic people can agree that the most appropriate response to this unfortunate incident is a tax cut.

Linda HoltzmanMarlton

Trigger-happy

Vice President Cheney's weekend escapade is a perfect reflection of his administration's attitude: Shoot first, look later.

In addition, he acts above the law, not even bothering to obtain the required stamp for his hunting license. Finally, he delayed release of the event and let someone else leak it to the press.

Marlene LieberMedford

A careless accident

Accidents happen. This one may have been Vice President Cheney's fault, but it was a careless accident. What makes me angry are the cover-up and the fact that Cheney was hunting without the proper stamp.

This is just another demonstration of how above the law these people think they are.

Simon DickerPhiladelphia

Inciting the masses

I find the current intellectualizing over Muslim and Western differences to be beside the point. The ongoing difficulties arise from the fact that there always are rabble-rousers who will use their version of religion to mobilize the masses in pursuit of their own, power-seeking agenda.

This was the case with the Crusades, with the Ottoman Empire's conquest of large portions of Europe, and is the force behind the current attacks on the West - verbal as well as physical - by substantial segments of the Muslim world. The sooner we recognize this, the sooner we will be able to deal with this evil.

Peter R. Lantos

Erdenheim

PeterrL@aol.com

Lack of tolerance

Trudy Rubin is correct in counseling irate Muslims to avoid turning concerns over cartoons in a Danish newspaper "into a war of civilizations" ("Outrage of Muslim world is misplaced," Feb. 5). Unfortunately, she may be too late.

It is not democracy but tolerance they do not understand. That is a path those rioting over cartoons in a Danish newspaper show no interest in following. Apparently, while we have focused on the presence of terrorism, the crucial but absent "T-word" appears to be *tolerance*.

John R. Cohn

Philadelphiajohncohnmd@hotmail.com

No interest in peace

In his letter of Feb. 5, Roger Othman wrote: "The Palestinian people have made it clear that they want new leadership. They are tired of corruption, the inability to improve the standard of their daily lives, and the inability to secure a peace deal."

Really? For in voting for Hamas, what the Palestinians have made clear is that they don't want peace with Israel; they just don't want Israel.

N. Harry Gartzman

PhiladelphiaNHarryG@webtv.net

Wrong on Friedan

Patricia Bradley writes a catfight attack on Betty Friedan ("Friedan lacked discipline and sacrifice," Feb. 7). Bradley and I come from different schools of thought and different schools: She from Temple's department of journalism; I from the Medill School of Journalism, Northwestern University. I believe that Friedan was recognized for pioneering the ideals of feminism and equality of women.

Out of touch with reality, Bradley labels Friedan a "commercial writer." Journalists call this freelance writing.

Back, Bradley, to Journalism 101.

Harriette B. Rhawn

Philadelphia

A powerful book

I never heard of Patricia Bradley and don't know if she has lived a life of discipline and sacrifice. I do know that Bradley has joined the ranks of people who have condemned women like Betty Friedan for demanding media attention for their cause, for being too outspoken - and not being nice enough!

When I read *The Feminine Mystique* as a young woman, my life changed. Did it provide every answer for every woman? Of course not. But the book gave voice to the previously silent and gave us a new lens for seeing the world.

Sharon Barr

Philadelphia

Load-Date: February 15, 2006

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Tribals seek revenge for Bajour killings

The Nation (AsiaNet)

January 27, 2006 Friday

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Section: NATIONWIDE INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 632 words

Dateline: ISLAMABAD JAN 27

Body

Hundreds of protesting traders from Bajour Agency joined by parliamentarians of combined opposition here Friday asked the government to allow the tribesmen to take revenge from the US over its bombardment that killed 18 innocent people, including women and children. Traders from Anjuman-i-Tajiran Bajour Quami Ittehad, Rawalpindi, gathered here in front of Parliament House to protest the US air strikes on the innocent villagers of Bajour in violation of all norms and principles of human rights. The rally was held when both the houses of parliament were in session and the proceedings had just adjourned due to the sad demise of ANP Rehber Khan Abul Wali Khan.

They rally leaders unanimously asked Shaukat Aziz-led government to expel the US Ambassador in Pakistan by declaring him persona non grata and officially demand the US to tender apology to the affected families.

The organizers of the protest, President of the Anjuman Haji Dilawar Khan, its Secretary General Haji Fazlur Rehman and Haji Sher Zamin condemned the US attack and expressed concerns over the government's silence on the issue. Opposition leaders, including MMA's Hafiz Hussain Ahmad, Liaquat Baloch, PML-N's Khwaja Asif MNA, PPP-P's Qurban Ali Shah MNA, Maulana Sadiq MNA, Maulana Meraj-ud-Din MNA from North Waziristan and Maulana Akbar Chitrali MNA also joined the protest rally.

The protestors were carrying placards inscribed with slogans such as "killing of innocent civilians a brutal act", "shame on US-the world No.1 terrorist", "expel US ambassador", "US should tender apology", "let the tribals take direct revenge from US", etc. Addressing the rally, MMA leader Hafiz Hussain Ahmad warned the government that if these voices were not heard in the Parliament then they would come out to the streets, which would be the beginning of anti-US and anti-Musharraf movement. He said the government should seriously take up the issue with the US government to offer apology to the bereaved families of Bajour, otherwise it should prepare itself to face the music.

He was critical of the prime minister's visit to the US at a time when the US carried out unprovoked bombardment on the civilian population in Bajour tribal area."Shaukat Aziz left the dead bodies here and rushed to Washington without asking for apology," Hafiz noted. He warned the government to shun its pro-US policy otherwise the people would be left with no choice but to declare a disobedience move.

Tribal MNA Maulana Sadiq charged the government for keeping silence over the air strikes that the US forces carried out in violation of all international norms and rules."It is lamentable that the government has no courage to raise the genuine issue with the US," he added.

Tribals seek revenge for Bajour killings

MMA leader Liaquat Baloch said that the US wanted to gain complete control over Pakistan and the attacks in the tribal areas reflected its ulterior designs. He said that the people of Pakistan would foil all such attempts or plans of any foreign intruders, including the US. "The masses will stand in their way and also force the government to quit," Baloch announced. Referring to the ***Hamas*** victory in Palestine, the MMA leader claimed that the government would also see the same results here if fair elections would be held.

MNA from North Waziristan Maulana Merajuddin pressed President General Pervez Musharraf to quit politics and resume his constitutional duty of safeguarding the borders of country.

"If the government can't protect our borders and lives from the foreign aggression it should let us (tribesmen) to fight the intruders and the aggressors," he said. The rally demanded immediate apology from the US, and withdrawal of FCR laws by the government. It also asked the government to explain its silence over the US air strikes on Damadola village of Bajour Agency.

Load-Date: January 29, 2006

End of Document

**Cartoon protests hit london; Threat to Danish Embassy and demo outside
BBC HQ**

The Evening Standard (London)

February 3, 2006 Friday

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**London
Evening
Standard**

Section: A MERGE; Pg. 4

Length: 627 words

Byline: ISABEL OAKESHOTT

Body

THE outcry over cartoons mocking the Islamic faith threatened to bring protests to London today.

Outraged Muslims were organising a demonstration outside the Danish embassy in Sloane Street amid calls for a "day of anger" against the images.

Earlier, a peaceful protest was held outside BBC headquarters after the corporation broadcast the controversial pictures in news bulletins.

Around 30 people shouted and waved banners but there was none of the violence unleashed in other countries.

An extraordinary furore has erupted over the dozen cartoons which have been printed in Denmark, Germany, France and Spain as a gesture of free speech that outraged Muslims. So far, no British publication has printed the images.

The Muslim Association of Britain today said the use of the images on the BBC was an incitement to racial hatred unprecedented in the corporation's history.

Its president, Ahmed El Sheikh said: "They are offensive and we do not like to see them published here. We enjoy a homogenous society in Britain and we don't want people trying to divide us.

"We want people to debate the issue, but we don't want to see people trying to hurt us by publishing them."

The controversy comes amid mounting tensions over freedom of speech in Britain. Muslim MPs claim that watered-down laws against religious and racial hatred, introduced this week, are too weak to guarantee the Muslim community "freedom from fear".

Cartoon protests hit london Threat to Danish Embassy and demo outside BBC HQ

The pictures, first published by a newspaper in Denmark, were also shown on ITV and Channel 4. They have also been printed in newspapers in Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Spain.

All publications said they were expressing free speech.

A demonstration outside the Danish Embassy in London, due to take place tomorrow, is being organised by the Islamic political group Hizb ut-Tahrir.

Spokesman Dr Imran Waheed warned that the Muslim community would not remain silent over "cheap insults in the name of freedom of speech".

He said: "While some Western governments seek to silence opposition to their brutal occupation of Iraq through medieval laws and others prevent Muslim women from wearing the Islamic dress, they expect Muslims to accept their freedom to insult and disparage Muslims and Islam."

The controversial cartoons include an image of the prophet Mohammed with a turban shaped like a bomb, and another showing him saying that paradise was running out of virgins. Islamic tradition bans any depiction of the prophet or Allah.

As the international furore escalated, protesters forced their way into the Danish embassy in the Indonesian capital Jakarta and burned a Danish flag.

The Palestinian party Hamas called for mass demonstrations in Gaza while demands for a boycott of European goods spread.

One Danish food company today told how sales in the Middle East have dried up completely in the wake of the row.

Astrid Gad Nielson, from Arla Foods in Denmark, told BBC Radio 4's Today programme: "It can't get much worse.

At the moment we are selling no products at all."

Danish diplomats launched a desperate damage limitation exercise, arguing that the government was not responsible for the media in the country.

The protests in London come amid mounting anger over the acquittal of Nick Griffin and fellow BNP activist Mark Collett. The pair were cleared of race hate offences after making inflammatory speeches filmed by undercover reporters.

The jury reached its verdict the day after the Government suffered a spectacular defeat over new religious hatred laws.

The new legislation, which was designed to protect the Muslim community in Britain from incitement to hatred, was watered down after MPs agreed tougher legislation would threaten freedom of speech.

Today some politicians claimed the Government was to blame for Mr Griffin walking free.

Load-Date: February 6, 2006

THE CIVILIAN CASULTIES ARE AWFUL BUT ISRAEL IS FIGHTING FOR ITS EXISTENCE

Daily Mail (London)

August 4, 2006 Friday

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Section: ED 1ST; Pg. 17

Length: 1341 words

Byline: RICHARD LITTLEJOHN

Body

THERE'S no doubt Israel is losing the propaganda war. You don't have to be a paid-up peacenik to find some of the pictures coming out of the Middle East distressing.

No one with an iota of humanity wants to see the corpses of women and children caught up in the conflict.

But you don't have to be a conspiracy theorist, either, to wonder how many of the male 'civilians' killed by the Israelis are actually Hezbollah terrorists or whether everything we're being shown from Lebanon is for real.

Islamonazis are sophisticated propagandists and they know they'll find a gullible audience in the civilised world for their carefully-strewn teddy bears, strategically-placed 'Baby Milk Factory' signs (in English) and wailing widows from central casting.

Have you ever noticed how every time a coalition air strike goes astray in Iraq, it always manages to hit a 'wedding party'?

Why is there only ever one child's shoe in the rubble, never a pair? There always seems to be a broken medicine box, too, with a handy red cross never a red crescent, mind you - on the lid, just in case we haven't got the message.

Credulous CNN correspondents and handwringing BBC reporters fall over themselves to sign up for the Hezbollah guided tour of the ruins.

I use a rough rule of thumb whenever I watch television coverage of the Middle East. Anyone who pronounces Hezbollah as 'Hiz-bull-arrrrgh' and Israeli as 'Izza-ra-ay-lee' is almost certainly telling lies.

The bien-pensant buzzword used to describe Israel's bombing is 'disproportionate'. But what's 'proportionate'? Are the thousands of rockets fired at genuine civilian targets in Israel 'proportionate'?

It is only because Israelis are hunkered down in underground shelters built out of necessity and bitter experience, or have fled out of range of Hezbollah's salvoes, that there haven't been piles of bodies on their side of the border.

What would 'world opinion' consider an acceptable death toll before acknowledging Israel's right to retaliation and self-defence - 1,000? 10,000? 100,000? 1,000,000?

THE CIVILIAN CASUALTIES ARE AWFUL BUT ISRAEL IS FIGHTING FOR ITS EXISTENCE

Hezbollah has started a war it knows it can't win in the certain knowledge that there will be civilian casualties. Its stated aim is to kill as many Israelis as possible and if innocent Lebanese get caught in the crossfire, tough.

These fanatics have little or no regard for human life. Their tactic is to hide among civilians; to use terrified women and children as human shields; to deploy school playgrounds as rocket launch sites; hotels and apartment blocks as command centres; homes as weapons dumps; mosques as air-raid shelters.

I've heard reporters referring to Hezbollah as a 'resistance' movement.

They love it, don't they? Just as they insist on calling terrorist murderers 'radicals' or 'militants' as if there's no difference between Al Qaeda and Aslef train drivers on unofficial strike.

What they never point out is that if Hezbollah didn't exist, there would be nothing to resist. Israel is the Tony Martin of the Middle East, lashing out in fear and frustration after enduring years of provocation.

Just as Tony Martin was abandoned by the police to endure burglary after burglary at his remote farmhouse, so the 'international community' has done nothing to disarm and disband Hezbollah or prevent it and Hamas repeatedly attacking Israel.

The United Nations hasn't lifted a finger to stop Iran and Syria supporting and supplying a standing terrorist army in Lebanon.

There are no sanctions against the barking mad president of Iran when he constantly threatens to wipe Israel off the face of the earth and is hell-bent on obtaining nuclear weapons.

Iran has put Lebanese civilians in the front line of its lunatic war against Israel and the U.S. in particular and Western civilisation in general. So where's the international condemnation?

Hezbollah is the provisional wing of Iran. Would it be 'proportionate' if Israel attacked the paymasters and ringleaders of Hezbollah in Tehran?

It may yet come to that. But first Israel has to remove the immediate threat to its security.

The United Nations isn't going to do that. The UN is a busted flush, led by the laughable Kofi Annan - the Chauncey Gardiner of world diplomacy. When it left the U.S.-led coalition to go it alone in Iraq, it sent a clear message to other tyrants and rogue states that they had nothing to fear from the UN.

Listening to 'world opinion' has got Israel nowhere. It was told it should trade land for peace. So it did. It got war. Israel pulled out of southern Lebanon six years ago. Hezbollah boasts that it has spent that time preparing for this fresh assault, building tunnels and bunkers and stockpiling a deadly arsenal of 13,000

weapons, which it is now raining down on Israeli civilians.

There are hourly calls for a ceasefire, but when Tel Aviv suspended bombing for 48 hours the response was a record number of Katyusha rockets fired into Israel in return.

I saw a BBC reporter standing on a hillside trying to convince us that because missiles were still being fired from Lebanon despite three weeks of fighting, it was evidence that Israel's tactics weren't working and it couldn't win.

Hezbollah has spent six years building up its arsenal in preparation for this war. Who said an Israeli victory would only take three weeks?

If there is a ceasefire, Hezbollah will simply regroup. There's talk of a negotiated settlement, but how do you cut a deal when one side says it will not be satisfied until the other is totally eradicated?

Lasting peace has only ever

THE CIVILIAN CASULTIES ARE AWFUL BUT ISRAEL IS FIGHTING FOR ITS EXISTENCE

followed total victory in war. Even if Israel and Hezbollah/Iran agree to walk away tomorrow, we'll be back here again in a few years.

Then there's the Palestinian question. Again, even though Israel ceded territory in pursuit of peace, terror attacks and kidnappings on Israeli soil have continued.

There's talk about dusting off the old 'road map'. Israel accepts there will have to be a two-state solution, but the only 'road map' of the Middle East its enemies will accept is one without Israel on it at all.

Meanwhile, spare a thought for the Jewish community in Britain. They're as distressed by the carnage as the rest of us and there are divisions over Israel's actions. No one wallows in the death of innocents - except, of course, Hezbollah and its Iranian puppet-masters. AT THIS time of year, there are 15,000 British Jewish teenagers in Israel on the traditional summer rite of passage. And there are 30,000 British passport holders living in Israel.

Although we had wall-to-wall coverage of grumbling British passport holders being evacuated from Beirut, there doesn't seem to have been equal concern about our fellow citizens under bombardment on the other side of the border.

What struck me about the recent pro-Israel demonstration in London was the number of Union flags in the crowd. These are our people.

I didn't notice any Union flags at the Stop The War rally, though there were plenty of 'We Are All Hezbollah Now' banners. It doesn't seem to dawn on them that if you want to stop the war you've got to stop Hezbollah.

But what drives most of these 'peace campaigners' is not so much a desire for peace as a hatred of Israel.

Every time something goes off in Iraq we're told it will radicalise young Muslims back in Britain. We hear that Tony Blair's failure to call for an immediate halt to the Israeli offensive has put us at imminent risk of another Islamist homicide attack on our streets.

Despite the Hezbollah war on Israel and the mounting casualties - and the widespread condemnation of Israel in this country - I've yet to hear anyone warn that young British Jews are queueing to blow up themselves and hundreds of others at Brent Cross shopping centre.

I repeat, this war is awful. The civilian deaths are a tragedy.

But there won't be peace in the Middle East until the likes of Iran, Hezbollah and **Hamas** recognise Israel's right to exist.

And, I'm afraid, this side of kingdom come, that just ain't gonna happen.

Israel may be losing the propaganda war, but it isn't fighting a propaganda war - it's fighting a real war for its very existence.

Load-Date: August 4, 2006

ARTICLE: Viceroy Dubya comes calling

The Nation (AsiaNet)

March 3, 2006 Friday

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Section: NATIONWIDE INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 1531 words

Body

By IMRAN HUSAIN - Virtual master of all he surveys, George W Bush, President of the USA arrived in Afghanistan the other day at the start of his much-publicised visit to South Asia. His "subjects" readied themselves to receive their honoured leader; one can hardly call him guest by the way in which the governments of the concerned countries have made preparations. While in Afghanistan he made plain his intent as to how he proposed to deal with the issues confronting success in the war against terror just as he did his attitude over the remaining issues. Hundreds of personnel have almost invaded the residential resources of Islamabad, so I can only imagine that Kabul must have been worse. Delhi of course can cater to them and more. The "officer" dogs, too, have been properly cared for, thank God for his smaller mercies.

Even before Man Mohan Singh had been body searched, at Indra Ghandi International Airport, waiting to receive him, Bush had told Afghan President Hamid Karzai that he intended to raise with Musharraf the issue of cross border terrorism. This was said almost at the very moment Musharraf had scoffed at the list of terrorists operating from Pakistan that Karzai handed over to him the week before. There is no question in anybody's mind that the body language of the Bush aides towards Pakistan's President is totally different than Bush's. The rabid neoconservatives that form the major part of the Bush administration do not take well to Musharraf's efforts to control the Taliban upsurge in this area.

Bush as Viceroy and Musharraf as his general, are both gung-ho, straight talking types with little care for finesse. They don't mince words and both have objectives, not necessarily identical, but objectives nonetheless. Bush suffers from the neocon-sponsored idealism of using American power to enforce democracy and human rights in other countries, seeking unprecedented success as his legacy. Musharraf, on the other hand, wishes to use this strategic alliance, to sustain himself in power and toys with democracy just enough to keep Bush interested. Of course, Bush sees Musharraf as a major ally in his plans and gives him outright support. The neoconservatives and American people see it differently though.

In an article written jointly, former ambassador Teresita Schaffer and former Assistant Secretary of State Karl Inderfurth have considered Bush's engagement with Pakistan as based on the single issue of fighting this war on terror, while neglecting other "important US interests in the country". They quote critics voicing the opinion that Bush's personal equation with Musharraf is too myopic and that there is a Pakistan beyond Musharraf, which if not Bush, other US administrations will have to engage. This angers the democratic forces in Pakistan who feel the lack of interest in the country's democratic institutions.

This brings us to the important fact of who is and who is not doing "enough." Well let us ask ourselves first. I believe Musharraf is, within the parameters available, doing one heck of a lot. Short of running riot and killing everything in sight the way US bombs did in Afghanistan, he is, at great personal risk, delivering the goods. Yes, the confines of

ARTICLE: Viceroy Dubya comes calling

equipment and the sentiments of the people must be considered and that does slow one down. But allowing these recent protests to prolong and having them fanned by inflammatory speeches given by functionaries of his government has earned him negative points rather than, as believed, alerted the minds and hearts of the western world. You have to think like they do to understand how they react. Unfortunately, Musharraf's reading of the west is less than limited. A quick look at the results should put an end to whatever is going on. The big "if" is whether they now have control and how much of this is against the government rather than in protest of the publications.

Is the United States doing enough for Pakistan is my question? Very firmly, Schaffer and Inderfurth have suggested to Bush to visibly support his statement that next years Pakistan elections will be an important test of its commitment to democracy. They suggest he address the Pakistani parliament. A brilliant idea for sure, but with the situation as it is, when even the Pakistani President cannot address it, I feel he will think a hundred times before does it. But if he does do so, it will certainly serve as a formidable step towards the eventual restoration of democracy. Their other suggestions are equally positive. Bush needs to engage the Pakistani press, Pakistan's successful civil society, its talented women and its educational institutions. These are the important sectors that need to be developed and the US has the resources, not just financial, to come forward. Who better to kick start this than the US President himself?

But just as Bush wishes to discuss cross border terrorism with Pakistan, one strongly urges Musharraf to forthrightly tackle Bush on the issue of the terrorism that is being perpetrated against Pakistan from the Afghan side of the border. India has installed more than seven consulates in various parts of Afghanistan, even a few miles from the Chaman border, from where sophisticated arms are being supplied to the tribals leading the insurgency in Balochistan. These arms are being used to create a major upheaval in our country. The bomb that went off in Karachi on Thursday is ample proof of the fact that large sums of money are being spent to undermine Pakistan's security. And Afghanistan needs to urgently contain anti-Pakistan activities being conducted from its territories rather than simply dump the dirt in our laps.

Considering that both America and India have come out in the open and sealed the controversial civilian nuclear technology transfer agreement, regardless of how much of a staunch "good steward of nuclear materials" Bush must realise this will create a strong negative perception in Pakistan. After all we are on the frontline for the US, not the Indians. Undoubtedly this is an historic decision and India will make great strides in development with cheaper energy to fuel it. And yes, one must take note of the proliferation factor. But we too need the best possible energy resources and we too are a country with massive poverty conditions. It is imperative that the Bush administration engages vigorously by Pakistan on this issue. India has expressed setting up a separate civil power institution but signing of the NPT has still not taken place. If facts can be condoned to engage India as a "bulwark" against China, perhaps the US should consider giving Pakistan's its just due. Kashmir must be resolved too. In today's violent world amicable interaction may be the best bet.

America's attempts to use its power to exert "benevolent hegemony" from a high moral ground, to fix rogue states and correct human rights abuses while democratising the "other world" have failed miserably. The Iraq fiasco, a product of disastrous intelligence collapse has led them into an abyss and into a situation where a pull out at this stage could seriously damage its prestige. Its credibility is already under question. But the interesting part is that this attitude has created a massive democratic resurgence of the forces pitted against the United States. The strong showing of the Islamic Brotherhood in Egyptian elections, Iraq's election ascendancy of the Shias close to Iran, Ahmedinejad's victory in Iran and now the huge Hamas election victory in Palestine will certainly force America to put its faith in its pseudo-democratic strongmen. But the age for US friendly dicto-democrats suppressing benign populations and providing indefinite stability has long gone.

If the US government is serious about good governance, then it should focus on the reform and financing of those of its institutions that will actually promote development and rule of law all over the world in order to win over its foes. These two factors provide the foundation for poverty alleviation and good governance requires this as much as it does democracy to quell violent conflicts. The fact that the original neocon agenda is being distanced should now change the projection of democracy phenomenon in US foreign policy. The obtaining situation in the Muslim world certainly will drive more democracy towards more radicalisation and therefore more terrorism sadly. Critics

ARTICLE: Viceroy Dubya comes calling

expect that **Hamas** running Palestine may finally produce, in time, peace because the realities of governing will compel them to rationalise.

The Washington Post has been highly critical of Pakistan's President and talked of his "aides" and "surrogates" but it must realise, while it advocates a coercive regime change at this point, the famous intelligence failure which has led to the major fiascos in Bush's expansionist policy may well lead to a victory by fundamentalists in 2007. Who should the US administration deal with in that case? The Viceroy must pull out the plugs in all his benevolence and give Pakistan what it needs most development, poverty alleviation and high-class education. We are a country with high ideals and huge resources all we need is a break.

Load-Date: March 5, 2006

End of Document

Hezbollah stages a massive 'victory' celebration

The International Herald Tribune

September 23, 2006 Saturday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 1

Length: 683 words

Byline: Michael Slackman and John O'Neil

Dateline: BEIRUT

Body

Defying Israel and the United States, Hezbollah's leader, Hassan Nasrallah, appeared at a giant "victory" rally Friday and declared that the militant group still possessed 20,000 rockets and would never disarm.

"No army in the world is strong enough to disarm us," he told a cheering crowd that appeared to number in the hundreds of thousands.

Nasrallah's presence was meant to underscore the idea that Hezbollah had triumphed over Israel, which has vowed to kill him. It was the first time he had been seen in public since July 12, when he announced the capture of two Israeli soldiers in a cross-border raid, the event that precipitated Israel's 34-day invasion of southern Lebanon.

His speech was both a fiery tirade addressed to Israel and the United States and a giddy celebration of Hezbollah's strengthened position within Lebanon since the end of the war.

"During the war, I said we had 11,000 rockets, but it was really more," he told the crowd. "Is it 12,000?" some members of the audience called out.

"Keep counting!" he replied.

"Is it 13?"

"Forget counting!" he said, to hearty laughter. "We haven't even begun rearming, and we have more than 20,000!"

Israeli officials have estimated that Hezbollah has about 10,000 rockets, mostly short-range Katyusha missiles that could not reach Israeli territory if the group is prevented from operating south of the Litani River, the area where a UN-supported peacekeeping force is being deployed under the cease-fire agreement.

At one point in Nasrallah's speech, which was part olive branch, part power-play, he called on the pro-Western governing coalition in Lebanon to step down in favor of a government of national unity one in which Hezbollah would probably hold more than the two cabinet seats it won in elections last spring. He also warned UN peacekeepers not to spy on "the resistance."

Nasrallah congratulated the crowd for what he called a "divine, historic and strategic victory" over the United States as well as Israel, and said the conflict was "an American war" because Washington provided the weapons, planning and diplomatic support that made possible the Israeli assault on Lebanon's infrastructure.

Hezbollah stages a massive 'victory' celebration

When the fighting ended, he said, it was not because of the suffering of the Lebanese or any weakness on the part of Hezbollah, but because "the Zionists realized that if it continued, it would be a catastrophe."

"The Americans agreed to stop the war, not for the women, not for the children of the Lebanese they stopped the war for Israel," he said.

He said the Bush administration had allowed the war to go forward as part of the plan to create "a new Middle East."

"This Middle East was illegitimate," he said, and its defeat has become an inspiration "for people who fight for their freedom and dignity" around the world.

The rally Friday once again demonstrated Hezbollah's organizational abilities, which have allowed it to take the lead in the reconstruction of southern Lebanon, reinforcing the sense that it, rather than the central government, is the dominant force in the country.

Many people at the rally said they had walked to Beirut from southern Lebanon, setting out early in the week.

The vast area in the Beirut suburbs where the event was held was filled with one-piece white plastic chairs that had been set up the day before, with a hat of red, green or white Lebanon's national colors on each chair. Thousands of yellow Hamas flags were waved steadily during the speeches and the martial choral music that preceded Nasrallah's surprise appearance.

Some Lebanese have criticized Hezbollah for its role in the start of the war. Shortly after the cease-fire, Nasrallah said in a televised address that the cross-border raid and capture of the two Israeli soldiers was a miscalculation and that he would not have ordered the raid if he had known how fierce the response from Israel would be.

But on Friday he said that part of the Israeli and U.S. plan had been to set the rest of Lebanon against Hezbollah by inflicting widespread punishment. "They thought that we would be divided," he said.

Load-Date: September 27, 2006

The failure of Israeli unilateralism; Middle East II

The International Herald Tribune

July 22, 2006 Saturday

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Section: OPINION; Pg. 4

Length: 728 words

Byline: Manuel Hassassian

Dateline: LONDON

Body

In less than four weeks, the civil infrastructure of two emerging Middle Eastern democracies has been laid to waste, and over 400 Palestinians and Lebanese, mostly civilians, have been killed by Israeli forces.

The urgency of finding a just solution to the Israeli-Palestinian dispute has never been more compelling. But if calm is to be restored, the international community must convince Israel that security comes not through warfare but through peace.

While Israel enjoys the security rewards of peace agreements with Egypt and Jordan, it has been strangely reluctant to pursue the same with Lebanon or the PLO.

Instead, at the heart of Israeli policymaking today lies a deluded faith in the benefits of unilateral action over diplomatic engagement; in tactical military redeployments over comprehensive military withdrawal, and in conflict "management" over conflict resolution.

Nowhere has the faulty logic of Israel's approach been more transparent than in its purported disengagement from occupied Gaza. When Israel pulled its soldiers and settlers out of Gaza last year, the move was marketed internationally as a brave step that would bring the Middle East closer to peace.

Yet Israel itself sabotaged that opportunity. Israel could have responded to President Mahmoud Abbas's invitation to use the impetus of the Gaza withdrawal to repair the diplomatic process and create a political horizon. It could have ended the occupation of the Gaza Strip instead of retaining effective control over Gaza's borders, sea- and airspace.

Instead, Israel chose a strategy of collective punishment by prohibiting goods and people from moving between Gaza and the West Bank, blockading Gaza from international markets and denying its residents such basics as flour, milk and sugar.

The U.S.-led boycott of the Palestinian Authority that followed our democratic parliamentary elections in January only exacerbated the economic and humanitarian crisis.

Meanwhile, Israel's bombardment of civilian population centers aggravated tensions. In the month leading up to the capture of the Israeli soldier now held by Palestinian militants, Israel assassinated eight Palestinian leaders and killed 28 civilians, including nine children and a pregnant woman.

The failure of Israeli unilateralism Middle East II

Despite the dismal failure of the disengagement policy, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert appears determined to repeat its mistakes. Israel is entrenching its control over those areas of the West Bank that are essential to the viability of a future Palestinian state through accelerated construction of the wall and settlements.

The resulting political geography would concretize the imprisonment of over two million Palestinians in a fractured West Bank, just as 1.4 million Palestinians are currently caged up in Gaza. Needless to say, there is no possibility of establishing a Palestinian state under such conditions.

In order to continue its occupation and colonization of Palestinian lands, Israel perpetuates the myth that it lacks a Palestinian interlocutor with whom to negotiate. When Fatah and Hamas unveiled the National Conciliation Document, offering united support for a two-state solution, Israel drowned out the good news by pummeling Gaza's civil infrastructure and terrorizing its residents.

There is a way out of this spiraling crisis. Israel originally committed itself to releasing hundreds of Palestinian prisoners during the Sharm el-Sheikh summit in February 2005.

Palestinians have proposed that the Israeli corporal be returned safely to Israel in exchange for a fraction of the more than 9,000 Palestinians Israel has imprisoned or detained, including 120 women and nearly 400 children.

But Israel is refusing to negotiate a prisoner exchange. Instead, it abducted 33 Palestinian ministers and parliamentarians and intensified its bombardment of Gaza.

Israeli unilateralism is founded on the false premise that Israelis can attain peace and security without affording Palestinians their liberty and independence.

Ten months after Israel's redeployment from Gaza, the escalating crisis throughout the Middle East demonstrates the resounding failure of this policy.

It is a failure that must be rectified immediately, and one that none of us can afford to see repeated.

Manuel Hassassian is the Palestine Liberation Organization representative to Britain.

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Load-Date: July 28, 2006

Escalation feared as 10 reservists killed; SINGLE STRIKE MIDDLE EAST CRISIS

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

August 7, 2006 Monday

Fourth Edition

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Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; International News; Pg. 6

Length: 646 words

Byline: Jonathan Pearlman in Jerusalem and Ed O'Loughlin in Beirut and agencies

Body

TEN Israeli soldiers were killed in a village near the Lebanese border yesterday in the single deadliest strike by Hezbollah since the conflict began.

During a 15-minute barrage around midday, a Katyusha rocket struck a group of reserve soldiers preparing to cross into Lebanon at the northern village of Kfar Giladi. Israel's Channel Two said at least 10 people were killed and four seriously injured.

The attack could lead to a serious escalation in hostilities. An army spokesman said troops were gathering at the northern border.

After the attack, the Israeli Defence Minister, Amir Peretz, cancelled a meeting to discuss a ceasefire with a visiting US delegation led by an assistant secretary of state, David Welch.

At least 100 rockets landed across northern Israel yesterday morning, including 35 around Kfar Giladi and the nearby town of Kiryat Shmona.

Israeli authorities warned residents in the north to stay in secure rooms or bomb shelters after a barrage of missiles hit Haifa, Safed, Acre and Kiryat Shmona.

Also yesterday, Israel said it had captured a member of the Hezbollah cell that killed eight Israeli soldiers and kidnapped two four weeks ago, prompting Israel's attacks all over Lebanon.

The head of Israeli army intelligence told a cabinet meeting the prisoner was being interrogated.

In Lebanon yesterday, an Israeli aircraft attacked a van travelling just ahead of a United Nations convoy carrying food and other aid to the southern port city of Tyre, killing two civilians, a Lebanese security source said.

Aid workers complain that Israeli air strikes prevent them reaching the estimated 800,000 to 1 million people displaced by the nearly month-old conflict.

Escalation feared as 10 reservists killed SINGLE STRIKE MIDDLE EAST CRISIS

Others among the Lebanese dead at the weekend were at least five civilians killed in an air strike on a family home near the southern town of Nabatiyeh and six people - the Lebanese authorities say civilians; the Israelis, Hezbollah militants - who died in an inconclusive Israeli commando raid on Tyre.

The bodies of five more Syrian labourers were found in the ruins of a food depot on the Syrian-Lebanese border that the Israelis bombed on Friday, bringing the death toll from the incident to 28. The Israelis say they thought the depot was being used to transport weapons.

The Israelis lost at least two more troops in fighting along the border, and three Israeli-Arab women were killed when a Hezbollah rocket hit their village.

The latest violence brings the Lebanese death toll in the 25-day war to at least 577, although the Lebanese Government says that the real toll, including bodies hidden in rubble in inaccessible border areas, may be more than 900.

Most of the dead are civilians hit by Israeli air strikes in the far south and Shiite districts of Beirut.

Hezbollah admits it has lost about 50 of its fighters, though Israel claims more than 400, including 50 this weekend. In contrast, 56 of Israel's 89 casualties are combatants, while the remaining 33 are civilians killed by Hezbollah long-range bombardment of northern Israeli towns and cities.

In addition to the human toll the war has caused tremendous dislocation and economic disruption on both sides. In Lebanon, Israeli precision bomb attacks have struck airports, harbours, oil plants, power stations, bridges and highways. Over the weekend fighter-bombers destroyed parts of the coast road linking Beirut to northern Syria, cutting Lebanon's last main link to the outside world and a vital aid route.

There seemed little prospect of an end to the violence in the near future, with the Israeli Justice Minister, Haim Ramon, saying Israel will continue to "hit Hezbollah" until a new multinational force is deployed in south Lebanon - a process that could take weeks if it happens at all.

* Israeli security forces arrested the Palestinian parliamentary Speaker, Aziz Dweik, a Hamas leader, in the West Bank city of Ramallah yesterday.

Graphic

TWO PHOTOS: Devastation ... the bodies of a group of reserve soldiers in Kfar Giladi who had been due to cross into Lebanon. Photos: AFP/Hrvoje; Polan In shock ... an Israeli soldier surveys the damage after the strike.

Load-Date: July 17, 2007

**NAVY GO IN; CARRIER TO EVACUATE BRITS FROM ISRAELI BLITZ 15
CHILDREN DIE AS JETS POUND VILLAGERS HEZBOLLAH MUST BE
REINED IN, SAYS BUSH**

Sunday Mirror

July 16, 2006 Sunday

0 Star Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 11

Length: 639 words

Byline: BY STEPHEN HAYWARD

Body

TWO Royal Navy warships were put on standby last night to help with the evacuation of thousands of British nationals trapped in war-torn Lebanon.

The aircraft carrier HMS Illustrious and HMS Bulwark - the Navy's newest assault ship - could be on their way as early as today, according to reports. There are 15,000 Brits trapped in Beirut.

As Israeli jets pounded Lebanese border villages yesterday, more than 20 people - including 15 children - were killed when their van was ripped apart as they tried to escape the deadliest attack yet in the escalating conflict.

Twelve more were killed in Beirut as Israeli air strikes against Lebanon-based Hezbollah guerrillas continued for a fourth day.

And in other key developments:

President Bush, speaking at the G8 meeting in St Petersburg, called on Syria to rein in the Iran-backed Hezbollah. Russia warned other nations could be drawn into the crisis and urged Israel to show restraint.

Israel claimed Hezbollah had missiles that could reach as far as 125 miles into the country, putting Jerusalem and Tel Aviv at risk.

Lebanon's PM Fouad Siniora demanded an immediate ceasefire backed by the UN and declared Lebanon was a "disaster zone".

The van carrying two Lebanese families was hit as they tried to escape from the border village of Marwaheen, near the southern port of Tyre, just hours after Israeli forces warned them by loudspeakers to leave.

NAVY GO IN CARRIER TO EVACUATE BRITS FROM ISRAELI BLITZ 15 CHILDREN DIE AS JETS POUND VILLAGERS HEZBOLLAH MUST BE REINED IN, SAYS BUSH

Dramatic photos showed a young child - perhaps six years old - lying dead near the wreckage of a blown-up vehicle after the midday attack.

One resident told al-Jazeera TV the victims had been hit after being refused shelter by UN forces. "Their bodies litter the road," said Akram Ghannam. Another said: "Where is the international justice when children, women, and the elderly are killed?"

In separate strikes, Israeli war-planes blasted the southern suburbs of Beirut, a Hezbollah stronghold, killing at least 12 and wounding 32.

Israel launched US-made Patriot missiles over the northern Israeli city of Haifa - just 25 miles from the border - to intercept rockets fired from Lebanon.

Israeli jets targeted petrol stations and fuel tanks on the coastal road linking Beirut to the south, along with ports in the capital and Lebanon's northern-most city of Tripoli. They also destroyed the Beirut office of a senior Hamas official, who escaped unhurt.

Hezbollah guerrillas fired dozens of rockets at northern Israel towns, including the resort of Tiberias, 25 miles from the border and their deepest strike so far into Israel, wounding several civilians.

In London, the Ministry of Defence and Foreign Office were working on plans for a possible evacuation of the Lebanese capital.

"We are advising British nationals to get ready to depart at short notice, if the situation changes," said a Foreign Office spokesman.

But the MoD refused to officially comment on the reports of Navy warships being drafted in. HMS Bulwark, with 500 Marines on board, will take two days to get to Lebanon from Spain, while HMS Illustrious is moored at Gibraltar.

The Israeli raids began on Wednesday after Hezbollah militants seized two Israeli soldiers. More than 70 Lebanese and four Israelis have been killed.

TONY Blair warned last night that "urgent action" was needed in the Middle East as he also arrived for the G8 summit in St Petersburg. "The implications are very serious," he said.

Street children in the city have been banished to remote camps while the summit takes place.

The authorities have clamped down on the city's "rogue elements" in an attempt to improve the country's image on the world stage.

OUR SHIPS

HMS Illustrious

Launched: 1981

Length: 194 metres

Speed: 28 knots (52 km/h)

Range: 5,000 nautical miles

Complement: 685 crew

HMS Bulwark

Launched: 2001

NAVY GO IN CARRIER TO EVACUATE BRITS FROM ISRAELI BLITZ 15 CHILDREN DIE AS JETS POUND
VILLAGERS HEZBOLLAH MUST BE REINED IN, SAYS BUSH

Length: 176 metres

Speed: 18 knots (33km/h)

Range: 7,000 nautical miles

Complement: 325 crew

COMMENT: Page 14

Graphic

The body of a young - Lebanese child lies near the wreckage of the van close to the border village of Marwaheen yesterday

Load-Date: July 16, 2006

End of Document

Israeli phone calls mean attack is on the way

The Philadelphia Inquirer

August 3, 2006 Thursday

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The Philadelphia Inquirer

Found on Philly.com

Section: NATIONAL; Pg. A02

Length: 633 words

Byline: Ashraf Khalil, Los Angeles Times

Body

A man with an Israeli accent called Omar Mamluke on his cell phone just before midnight and asked for him by name.

"You have just a few minutes to get out of the house," the man said. An Israeli missile was about to hit.

"I asked if he was joking, and he told me: 'The Israeli Defense Forces don't joke,' " Mamluke recalled.

Mamluke, a police officer, wasted no time; he had heard what happened to others in Gaza who had received such calls. He gathered up his two wives and 15 children, and they ran out of the house in their nightclothes, yelling for their neighbors to do the same.

The missile struck within half an hour, lifting Mamluke's house in the air, sending the foundation columns across the street. But no one was hurt, which the Israeli army says is the point of the phone calls.

The Israeli military, which launched campaigns in the Gaza Strip and Lebanon after soldiers were captured last month in border incursions, says it does its best to warn civilians of impending military action.

Its warnings to civilians to leave southern Lebanon are at the center of controversy over the air strike early Sunday in the village of Qana that killed almost 60 people, many of them women and children.

Although many have fled the region, some say they are afraid to travel roads that have been bombed by Israeli planes. The sick or injured, the very young and the elderly sometimes cannot travel, Lebanese say.

Israeli officials have suggested that, after several warnings, those who remain behind are responsible for their own fate.

"Those who stay have apparently decided to take the risk, or are being held by Hezbollah, which has accepted the risk on their behalf," Brig. Gen. Alon Friedman, deputy head of the army's northern command headquarters, said last week. "We have no intention of hitting innocent civilians and will do all possible to avoid harming them, but the fighting has a price."

Israeli phone calls mean attack is on the way

In Gaza, where the military began issuing specific warnings in recent weeks, the practice has not won many over. Few Palestinians accept the idea that Israel really is trying to limit civilian deaths.

At best, the warnings are decried as cynical attempts to portray the military campaigns in a better light. Palestinian Authority Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh calls it psychological warfare.

"They just want to sow fear and confusion among the people," Haniyeh said.

Although Palestinians report that dozens of warnings have been received in the last two weeks, only a handful of buildings have been hit.

Israeli army officials are tight-lipped about the practice, but the official daily updates of army attacks on suspected Gaza weapons factories and warehouses invariably mention steps taken to warn residents and limit civilian casualties.

"It is a method that's being used to prevent the harming of innocent civilians," said one army spokeswoman, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Calls have also targeted official buildings such as the main Gaza City courthouse and the ambulance dispatch center at Khan Younis Hospital, said Iyad Nasr, spokesman for the International Committee of the Red Cross. Neither has been hit.

"It's still collective punishment," he said. "Dozens of families have been informed and have evacuated their homes."

The first known case of a pre-strike warning call came July 23, targeting the Gaza City home of Mohammed al-Sheik Dib. In that case, neighbors generally acknowledged that Sheik Dib was a ranking member of Islamic Jihad and that rockets probably were being stored in the house.

Other, less personal forms of warnings have also been used. Leaflets have been dropped onto Gaza towns. Last week, Khan Younis residents answered the phone and heard a recorded warning message. The Israeli army also has broken in on the frequency of the **Hamas** radio station to broadcast warnings.

Load-Date: August 3, 2006

CHILDREN KILLED IN AIRSTRIKE MASSACRE; MIDDLE EAST 'JUST DAYS FROM OPEN WAR'

Sunday Mercury
July 16, 2006, Sunday
First Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 2

Length: 694 words

Byline: ROY BAYLISS

Body

A SCHOOLBOY lies dead in the wreckage of a burned-out car - the latest innocent victim of the descent into hell in the Middle East.

The youngster was one of 12 Lebanese villagers, including women and children, who were killed in an Israeli airstrike on a convoy of vehicles.

The massacre happened on the main road in the southern Lebanese community of Ter Harfa, near the Israel border. All the dead were civilians.

Last night, the latest spark to the powder-keg in the troubled region threatened to escalate into all-out war as both sides fired missiles at cities.

There were fears that the conflict could spiral out of control with talk of 'open war' being only days away.

The crisis began when Israeli soldier Corporal Gilad Shalit was seized by Palestinian militants in the Gaza Strip last month. In retaliation, Israeli tanks drove into Gaza and air strikes were launched against Hamas targets.

Meanwhile, to the north of Israel, more than 70 Lebanese people died in a bid to put pressure on Hezbollah guerillas.

The tit-for-tat campaign escalated when two Israeli soldiers were captured by Hezbollah and four Israeli sailors were missing after an explosion on a naval vessel off the coast.

It is believed that the blast was caused by a radar-guided missile fired from 60 miles away..

Yesterday, Israeli warplanes repeatedly blasted Beirut's southern suburbs for the second day running.

Hezbollah launched retaliatory cross-border rocket attacks on Israel, killing a grandmother and a child in a house, and last night hitting the city of Tiberias.

CHILDREN KILLED IN AIRSTRIKE MASSACRE MIDDLE EAST 'JUST DAYS FROM OPEN WAR'

Intelligence reports say the militants have missiles with the range to reach major cities, including Tel Aviv, and families in the north of Israel have taken to bomb shelters or have fled. Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah has vowed to wage open war on Israel after his offices in Beirut, the Lebanese capital, were bombed on Friday.

There is major concern in the international community that the whole of the Middle East could implode, dragging in other countries including Syria and Iran. Meanwhile, foreigners in Lebanon are trapped because Israel has bombed the runway at Beirut International Airport.

Yesterday, 15 Irish citizens managed to travel out of the country in an Italian convoy, en route to Cyprus. But many others remained stranded in what was increasingly becoming a war zone.

Former Tory defence minister Nicholas Soames has accused Israel of 'disproportionate, dangerous and destructive' behaviour and called on the British Government to make a statement on the crisis.

He said that Israel was acting 'like a rogue state'.

Prime Minister Tony Blair arrived in St Petersburg yesterday for a G8 Summit being held in the shadow of the Middle East crisis.

The gathering of world leaders will seek to focus on an official agenda of global energy, security, education and the fight against infectious diseases including AIDS.

But the escalating Israel-Lebanon conflict will inevitably dominate discussions as Russia hosts its first G8 since joining the club of the world's leading industrialised democracies.

Mr Blair's official spokesman said there was now a 'very serious situation' in the Middle East adding: "The implications are very serious and we need to address it with urgency."

SundayMercury@mrn.co.uk

...NOW BRITAIN GETS INVOLVED

BRITISH aircraft carrier HMS Illustrious was last night being readied to sail for the Middle East as the conflict sucked more nations into the turmoil.

The ship is likely to be used as part of any multi-national security force drafted in to calm the situation, and could also help evacuate stranded Britons.

The move came as the Arab League said the Middle East peace process had failed - and called on the UN Security Council to intervene to stop

escalating violence in the region.

Earlier, it had emerged that a Hezbollah missile had accidentally sunk an Egyptian merchant ship, and 12 crewmen were missing, feared drowned after the incident.

The tragedy came during a guided-missile attack on an Israeli warship off the coast of Beirut -boasted about by Hezbollah leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah during a television interview.

"The surprises that I had promised you start now," he said.

Graphic

CHILDREN KILLED IN AIRSTRIKE MASSACRE MIDDLE EAST 'JUST DAYS FROM OPEN WAR'

HORROR: death and destruction near the Lebanese town of Ter Harfa

Load-Date: July 16, 2006

End of Document

How Canadian labour can truly help Palestinians

The Toronto Star
July 17, 2006 Monday

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Section: OPINION; Pg. A15

Length: 751 words

Body

CUPE Ontario says that it wants to help the Palestinians and to promote Middle East peace. Indeed, there is a great deal that labour unions in Canada can do in this regard, and here are some practical suggestions:

Canadian labour can help address the challenge of creating in Palestinian society an authentic economy and the dignity of work, as Canadians have done through their interventions in post-conflict and developing societies in Latin America, Africa, and Asia.

Canadian labour can share with Palestinian workers its experience in establishing credit unions, whereby workers' savings are invested back into local industry and educational and employment opportunities for new generations of workers.

The Canadian experience can be instrumental in exploring the creation of a Palestinian equivalent to the credit union movement (Caisses populaires) or the Quebec Federation of Labour's Fonds de solidarite.

Canadian labour can consistently demand that Palestinian government officials accord Palestinian workers the fundamental rights and freedoms granted to working people in all democratic societies. These include freedom of association, freedom of expression, and the right to strike for fairer wages and better working conditions.

Canadian labour can assist Palestinian workers in asserting their independence and status - essential preconditions for a sustainable Palestinian democratic civil society and statehood.

Canadian labour can help develop the Palestinian General Federation of Trade Unions, and also assist in rehabilitating the professional associations in the West Bank and Gaza, which have become so permeated with anti-Israel animus as to make meaningless their original labour mandates.

Unfortunately, there is considerable work to be done to secure the place (let alone the rights) of women in the Palestinian workplace - an effort made significantly more complex by the retrogressive policies and practices of the current Hamas-led government.

In Israel today, Jewish and Arab workers sit as equals in the country's powerful general labour federation (the Histadrut), which I head.

With support and encouragement from Canada's trade unionists, a "brotherhood and sisterhood of workers" involving Israeli and Palestinian workers can help establish the people-to-people contacts which are the necessary foundation to stabilizing the current situation.

How Canadian labour can truly help Palestinians

When Canadian common sense and goodwill are applied to helping Palestinians find concrete solutions to the genuine problems that confront their society, recourse to cynical comparisons to apartheid will be correctly understood as a thinly veiled attempt to demonize and delegitimize Israel.

No friend of the Palestinians or supporter of true Palestinian-Israeli peace can afford to ignore the harsh realities of recent months and years.

Unfortunately, Palestinians have not capitalized upon Israel's withdrawal from Gaza and its announced withdrawal from significant portions of the West Bank - moves so long demanded by many voices in the international community - for positive momentum toward the establishment of a peaceful Palestinian state.

Instead, the Palestinians have elected a radical Islamic government whose raison d'etre is the destruction of Israel, which has continued to promote terrorism against Israel, and which has mired Palestinians in internal chaos.

They also continue to waste the billions of dollars invested in their economy by the international community on a wildly bloated public sector and on massive corruption, substituting aid for the development of an authentic domestic economy.

This is not to diminish current Palestinian suffering. But to become a strong and independent force for positive change in civil society, those who support the Palestinian cause must place Palestinian suffering in its proper perspective.

Specifically, they must acknowledge that many social injustices experienced by Palestinians cannot be blamed on external factors such as Israeli occupation. This is especially true when Israel is withdrawing from the disputed territories.

Israelis, and the Israeli labour movement, stand in support of those in Canada who are prepared to act in a positive and constructive manner to help create the conditions that will allow Palestinians to live in prosperity, dignity and freedom side by side with Israel.

Let's see CUPE Ontario act concretely and responsibly in this regard.

Ofer Eini is chairman of Israel's Histadrut General Federation of Labour Unions, which represents 700,000 workers.

Load-Date: July 17, 2006

Fire rains down in endless war

The Toronto Star
July 23, 2006 Sunday

Copyright 2006 Toronto Star Newspapers, Ltd.

Section: OPINION; Pg. A17

Length: 647 words

Body

There is one thing everyone in northern Israel knows at this time: how to get to a bomb shelter within one minute once the warning siren sounds. That's the amount of time to spare before a Hezbollah rocket lands, somewhere. And there is one thing no one knows: when and how it will all end.

Israel's military chiefs have set the limits of their military campaign to "as long as necessary." Some days that means weeks. Some days they speak of months. But two other clocks are also ticking. When does international pressure, the rising crescendo of alarm and anger over Lebanon being "torn to shreds," become impossible to resist as Israel pursues its "very clear goals" to stop Hezbollah rockets and mortars from raining on Israel and to eliminate this very threat? And then there's what Israel calls the Home Front - the Israeli public, including residents in the north who have been in and out of bomb shelters, or "safe rooms" of reinforced concrete in their homes, for nearly two weeks?

Aside from rare voices of dissent, opinion polls show a solid majority of Israelis backs their leaders' military drive to end this once and for all. But what does "the end" mean in a conflict where, as Prime Minister Ehud Olmert sees it, Hezbollah and the Palestinian militant group Hamas are simply subcontractors for Syria and Iran? What constitutes "victory?" Israeli leaders no longer speak of crushing Hezbollah, which they know has real grassroots support in Lebanon's Shiite community, seats in Parliament and ministries in government. What will Hezbollah be, "the day after," whenever that is?

There is unusual confidence in Israel that, now, they have more time because they have set this battle at the front line of other battles being waged from Washington and other Western and indeed some Arab capitals. This is the Middle East post 9/11, in the full flow of George Bush's "war on terror." Mr. Olmert gave his own axis of evil speech when he spoke of Tehran-Damascus-Beirut-Gaza. But, in some eyes, this is another of the asymmetrical battles Israel has often fought with its Arab neighbours, which end up creating more problems in their wake, not to mention another armed conflagration somewhere down the line.

Every Israeli government minister I interviewed during this crisis insisted they know this won't be solved by force alone. Israel is judging how much it can achieve militarily before it turns, or is made to turn, to the international community, and what is left of the Lebanese government, to achieve the rest. Does there have to be a ground offensive to root out Hezbollah's well-entrenched network of tunnels and towers? For now, Israel's generals say no, while they mass their formidable firepower along the border and conduct limited forays inside. Israel's first invasion of Lebanon in 1978, which led to a costly occupation that only ended in 2000, is still etched in Israel's national conscience, and is a painful chapter in Lebanon's own tortured history.

Fire rains down in endless war

As Condoleezza Rice heads to the region talking of the "birth pangs of a new Middle East," some of it feels very much like the region of old. The towns on Israel's border, a land of breathtaking beauty in clear sight of Lebanon, are virtually deserted. Lebanese towns straddling the rolling hills on the other side are under constant fire but that still hasn't stopped mortars and katyushas from flying across. Some Israelis rarely leave their bomb shelters. But a bit further south, some now rarely go in, emboldened by almost two weeks of survival.

"Where is the bomb shelter when the siren sounds?" we asked two elderly women sitting quietly on their balcony in Haifa, knitting calmly, at a centre for holocaust survivors. "My dear, we just put our fingers in our ears." Such is the home front.

Canadian journalist Lyse Doucet is a world news presenter and foreign correspondent for BBC Television in Haifa.

Load-Date: July 23, 2006

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ADVANTAGE HIZBULLAH

The Nation (AsiaNet)

August 1, 2006 Tuesday

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Length: 710 words

Byline: S.M. HALI

Body

The relentless pounding of Lebanon by Israeli Defence Forces has gone on for nearly three weeks, killing innocent civilians and children by the hundreds, yet Hizbullah or the Lebanese have shown no signs of battle fatigue nor have they been hounded by the Lebanese nation to return the abducted Israeli soldiers and thus end their misery.

Messer's Bush and Tony Blair, who could have played their part in urging Israel to cease its hostilities, desisted from doing so perhaps in providing time to Israel to exterminate Hizbullah through "clean surgical strikes, sparing innocent women and children". Mr Bush's administration went to the extent of expediting the delivery of satellite and laser-guided precision bombs to Israel to perhaps help the Lebanese civilians escape from the wrath of "Goliath" Israel, which has picked on "David" Lebanon. The simile is painful since for far too long Israel has pretended to be "David" taking on the mighty Arab "Goliath."

It is ironical that even as Israel and its Western allies were condemning Hamas and Hizbullah "terrorists," in Jerusalem a right-wing group of influential Israelis, including the former Prime Minister, Binyamin Netanyahu, was celebrating one of the worst acts of terrorism against Britain in a foreign land: the 60th anniversary of the bombing, on July 22, 1946, of the King David Hotel, the headquarters of the British Government's representatives in the region.

The UN Security Council too has been lethargic. The only demur from it came when four UN peacekeepers became targets of Israeli air attacks and when angry Lebanese attacked the UN mission at Beirut to protest the atrocious and merciless bombings by Israel. It finally took the massacre of more than 65 civilians, at least 34 of them children, in another ruthless Israeli air raid on a building in the Lebanese village of Qana, for the world leaders to take notice.

If Israel and its mentors USA and Britain thought Hizbullah would be a turkey shoot, and the citizens of Lebanon would turn against them for bringing misery through their firebrand tactics (the way they did against the Syrians in February-March 2005), they could not be more wrong.

American and Israeli frustration arises from the fact that neither the ceaseless pounding of Gaza nor Lebanon has caused the capitulation of its people. To their consternation, they are witnessing the metamorphosis of a new breed of fighters, who have shed aside their sectarian and religious differences and in unison they are rising like a Phoenix from the ashes of fires set by Israel.

Robert Fisk in his article 'Is Israel losing the war?' answers the question himself by referring to the bloody mauling it received in the Lebanese town of Bint Jbeil, which it claimed to have captured, only to walk into a "devastating ambush" by Hizbullah guerrillas. With 13 Israeli soldiers dead and numerous injured, it managed a hasty retreat.

ADVANTAGE HIZBULLAH

The Asianage in its Op-ed of 26/7 titled 'A crusade gone haywire' does not need to elaborate. The title is self-explanatory; yet it reveals: "America's ruling establishment comprising the government, academics and particularly legislators are terrified of saying anything remotely against Israel, with Senator Hillary Clinton, among others, being in the lead in support of Israel's war aims in Lebanon. Indeed, it took courage for the former US secretary of state, Zbigniew Brzezinski, to criticise Israel by declaring, "You are killing hostages (in Lebanon) in the hope of intimidating the people you want to intimidate."

The rise in the stature of Hizbullah can be gauged from Pepe Escobar's article: 'The spirit of resistance' where he reveals, "According to Jane's Weekly...Hezbollah's moral and political cache could not but rise among peoples and movements worldwide who keep being bombed to oblivion but never had a chance to bomb back."

It is high time that the civilised world took cognisance of the barbaric Israeli aggression, based on the arrogance of power, which has violated all principles of inter-state relations and conduct. The use of brute force as an instrument of policy and international acquiescence in this policy create enormous risks to its small and defenceless neighbours and amounts to state terrorism in its worst manifestation

Load-Date: December 6, 2006

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13 killed as fighting intensifies in Gaza

The International Herald Tribune

July 7, 2006 Friday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 5

Length: 713 words

Byline: Steven Erlanger and Greg Myre

Dateline: BEIT LAHIYA, Gaza Strip

Body

In sometimes fierce fighting involving everything from rifles to missiles, Israeli troops and Palestinian militants on Thursday waged their most intense battles since Israel re-entered the Gaza Strip last week to secure the release of a captured soldier and stop rocket fire into Israel.

At least 12 Palestinians and one Israeli soldier were killed amid shootouts, artillery fire and airstrikes. Most of the deaths were in northern Gaza, but two Palestinian militants were killed in southern Gaza.

After days of sporadic clashes, Israeli forces pushed farther into northern Gaza, moving south from the destroyed former Israeli settlements to the outskirts of Beit Lahiya, in the northwestern corner of Gaza, where Palestinian fighters had been preparing earth barricades, explosive charges and shooting positions.

The Israeli defense minister, Amir Peretz, said that although Israel pulled out of Gaza last year, "no one should see that as a guarantee that we cannot reach territory in which we feel we have no choice but to operate."

Heavy fighting soon erupted in and around Beit Lahiya, especially in the western Atatrah and Sultadin neighborhoods, closer to the sea. Palestinian militants were armed with light weapons like Kalashnikovs, M16s and anti-tank grenades, and fought running battles with Israeli troops who were in armored personnel carriers, modern tanks and armored D9 bulldozers.

Palestinians were seen planting explosives underneath manholes in streets, hoping to blow up a vehicle as it drove by. A masked fighter rode a bicycle away after laying one such charge, a spool of electrical wire unrolling from the back of his bike.

Israeli tanks fired shells at houses where Palestinian fighters sheltered, and soldiers fired at groups of armed Palestinians who fought in the streets, sometimes surrounded by curious and excited children. At times, Israeli soldiers fired toward groups of children in what appeared to be an effort to get them to run away.

Three Israeli airstrikes near the town killed six Palestinian militants, according to the Israeli military. Palestinians asserted that some of the dead were civilians. An Israeli tank shell killed two militants and one civilian, Palestinians told Reuters.

About 30 Palestinians were wounded in the area, according to Palestinian medics. An Israeli soldier was killed by a sniper, the Israeli Army said after claims made by the Popular Resistance Committees, a faction made up of

13 killed as fighting intensifies in Gaza

militants from various groups, that it had shot and killed an Israeli soldier in Beit Lahiya. The military said a second soldier was wounded.

In southern Gaza, an Israeli airstrike killed two Islamic Jihad militants in Abassan, near the southern town of Khan Yunis, according to Palestinian witnesses and security officials. The men were firing an anti-tank rocket at Israeli tanks and troops positioned there.

Before daybreak, two Palestinians were killed in airstrikes, according to Palestinian security officials. Israel's military has re-entered both the north and the south of Gaza for what it says is a two-pronged mission.

In the south, the troops were sent in shortly after Corporal Gilad Shalit, a tank gunner, was captured by militants and taken to Gaza on June 25.

Ghazi Hamad, a spokesman for the **Hamas**-led government, said the sides should seek a diplomatic solution that would lead to Shalit's release.

"We don't want Gaza destroyed, nor do we want attacks," Hamad told Israel radio. "And you want him to return to his family."

Israel says it will not negotiate for the release of the soldier, and has rejected Palestinian demands that large numbers of Palestinian prisoners be freed.

The Arabic-language newspaper Al Hayat, which is based in London, reported Thursday that militants had revised their demands, saying that Shalit could be freed if all Palestinian **women** were released from Israeli jails along with 30 men who are serving long sentences.

The Israeli military said that Palestinians fired eight rockets from Gaza at Israel on Thursday but that they did not cause any injuries.

Only four of the rockets made it into Israeli territory, the military said. Three apparently landed inside Gaza, and one fell in the ocean, the military added.

Steven Erlanger reported from Beit Lahiya and Greg Myre from Jerusalem.

Load-Date: July 7, 2006

Another lady who is not for turning; CRISIS IN LEBANON

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

July 29, 2006 Saturday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; News Review; Pg. 28

Length: 2218 words

Byline: Michael Gawenda

Body

Condoleezza Rice is toughing it out amid international criticism over the US stance on Lebanon, writes Michael Gawenda.

PHOTOGRAPHS can lie but the one of Condoleezza Rice at a press conference in Rome as she stood listening to Lebanon's Prime Minister, Fouad Siniora, say his country was being torn apart by war was stark and dramatic.

Published on the front page of many American newspapers, it shows Rice not looking at Siniora - in fact, not looking at anyone. She has her left hand covering her forehead and her eyes are closed, her mouth set in a grimace.

Photographs can lie, but this one captures what confronts this most powerful of women representing the most powerful of nations: the most difficult - and defining - moment in her glittering career.

The wars between Israel and Hezbollah and Israel and the militants in Gaza, the hopes of a settlement between Israel and the Palestinians, the survival of the democratically elected government of Lebanon, indeed the whole of the Bush Administration's democracy project, including the outcome in Iraq, are on the line.

And Rice knows her career is on the line; that history will judge her a success or a failure on what happens in the Middle East. For in this second Bush term, she has, with George Bush's blessing, determined the Administration's Middle East policies.

From the time she became Secretary of State in January 2005, Rice made it clear one of her goals was to repair the ruptured relationships with US allies in Europe, to practise what she labelled "transformational diplomacy", to move away from the unilateralism of Bush's first term.

While Bush's approval ratings fell relentlessly, month after month, as Americans came to believe that the President, after Hurricane Katrina and the mess in Iraq, was incompetent, Rice's approval ratings soared.

While the approval rating of the Vice-President, Dick Cheney, dropped to about 17 per cent and there have been increasingly insistent calls, even from Republicans, for Bush to sack the Defence Secretary, Donald Rumsfeld, Rice was in the ascendant. She even sidelined Cheney, the architect of the Administration's foreign policy in Bush's first term.

Another lady who is not for turning CRISIS IN LEBANON

Rice persuaded Bush to take the diplomacy route with Iran on its nuclear program, backing the European Union negotiations that Cheney had described as useless, even persuading Bush that the US should join the EU talks with Iran and offer a package of inducements if Tehran suspended its uranium enrichment activities.

Despite that as national security adviser in Bush's first term Rice had been involved in the decision to go to war in Iraq, she has managed to distance herself from the Iraq fiasco.

Rice, the celebrity Secretary of State, was nowhere to be seen in Rome this week, nor in Lebanon and Israel and Gaza before that. There were no children to greet Rice when she arrived in Rome for a day-long conference with European allies, Russian officials and Siniora on the crisis in the Middle East.

Rice knew that she would stand alone at the conference, isolated, with only lukewarm support from Britain for her position that there could be no ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah that, in her words, "did not deal with the fundamental issues".

Any agreement would have to involve Hezbollah returning two kidnapped Israeli soldiers, stop the rocket attacks on Israel, the creation of an international UN-sanctioned force to help the Lebanese army take control of south Lebanon from Hezbollah and Hezbollah's disarming.

In a sense, the outcome of the Rome conference - that there would be no call for a ceasefire - was predetermined, for Rice had made it clear during her lightning visit to Lebanon just days before that the US remained adamant Israel would be given time to seriously weaken - if not destroy - Hezbollah.

"There was disagreement going into Rome and there was disagreement coming out," says Robert Malley, a National Security Council official during the Clinton administration. "I'm not sure it was worth having."

The US position - Rice's position - has been clear from the time Hezbollah crossed the northern border with Israel more than two weeks ago, killed eight Israeli soldiers and kidnapped two others.

Some Hezbollah officials have said they were surprised by Israel's overwhelming response to this provocation and it is not clear whether Israel informed the US of its plans before it began the bombing campaign in Lebanon, but from the time the first bombs landed, Bush and Rice made it clear that the US would not seek to restrain Israel's assault on Hezbollah.

As the crisis has worn on, Rice's language has become blunter, angrier, less diplomatic. Before she left for Rome, she was asked whether the Bush Administration's democracy project in the Middle East - especially, but not only in Iraq - had failed and had benefited only terrorist organisations such as Hezbollah and Hamas.

"The suggestion that somehow Hezbollah and Hamas are recent creations and threats is pathetic," she said. When asked why she was not prepared to engage in the sort of shuttle diplomacy undertaken by previous secretaries of state in the Middle East, she replied: "I am prepared to do what I can but to shuttle for shuttle's sake, for no purpose, makes no sense."

IN THE Administration's view, what's at stake in the fighting between Israel and Hezbollah - and in Gaza - is not just Israel's security, but a threat of victory for Islamist totalitarianism and for Iran, one of its sponsors. As Martin Peretz, the editor-in-chief of the liberal The New Republic and no friend of Bush, put it: "Israel is fighting for themselves but the Israelis are also fighting for us."

"The Administration has evinced stunning moral and military clarity in the face of international pressure to rush towards a premature resolution ... Condoleezza Rice has been a compelling voice in the public argument and in the argument among allies as well."

But Anthony Cordesman, a Middle East specialist at the Centre for Strategic and International Studies, says even if the Administration is right about what's at stake, its diplomacy is wrong-headed.

Another lady who is not for turning CRISIS IN LEBANON

"The Administration's posture of standing aside and bipartisan pandering in Congress have left the US without any effort to create a meaningful buffer between Israel and Hezbollah or help the Lebanese Government disarm it," he says. Passively waiting for Israel to make things worse for itself does not help.

"Failing to be seen to take visible action to resolve the crisis ... makes the US seem to be a partner to Israel with little regard for the Arab world. This is not a posture that helps Iraq, that helps regimes in Egypt and Jordan or helps build up support for dealing with Iran and Iraq. It is not a strategy that helps win the war on terrorism."

Among foreign policy analysts and even Administration supporters, there is a consensus emerging that the US has been too passive, too disengaged in the Middle East and that this has to change.

Edward Luttwak, a senior fellow at the centre, believes that despite the apparent support for an international UN-sanctioned force which would be stationed in southern Lebanon after a ceasefire, such a force, given the history of UN-sanctioned peace keeping operations, would be useless.

If that's the case, Luttwak says, then there is only the "horrible to contemplate" but irresistible diplomatic option and that is to get the Syrians involved to disarm Hezbollah and get Hezbollah more politically involved in Lebanon's Government, eschewing violence.

While that would mean recognition that Syria has some influence over Lebanon, despite last year's withdrawal of its forces, this is a price worth paying if it results in the Syrian President, Bashar Assad, abandoning his alliance with Iran.

"But unlike the military option, which is simply impossible, the diplomatic option is merely humiliating," Luttwak wrote this week in The Wall Street Journal.

But there is little evidence Rice will engage any time soon in the shuttle diplomacy she has just so recently fiercely rejected. Bush has more or less left it to Rice to explain and "own" the Administration's position on the war between Israel and Hezbollah and Israel's action against Hamas militants in Gaza, which is probably a wise decision given his two horror days this week in Washington during the visit of the Iraqi Prime Minister, Nouri al-Maliki.

What was meant to be a visit to shore up support for Maliki's embattled Government and to allow him to use an address to Congress to show that the democratically elected Prime Minister of Iraq was on board in the war on terrorism, became a fiasco when Maliki, on the eve of his visit to Washington, condemned Israel for its "criminal actions" in Lebanon and refused to condemn Hezbollah.

Bush had to stand in silence at a joint press conference as Maliki again refused to condemn Hezbollah even as some members of Congress announced that they would boycott Maliki's address to protest against what the Democratic National Committee chairman, Howard Dean, described as Maliki's "anti-semitism".

The Democrats who criticised Maliki were undoubtedly playing politics but they were making a point that is resonating with many Americans: that, in their view, the Iraq project, far from establishing a democratic system in Iraq friendly to the US - and Israel - has brought Iraq to the brink of civil war.

It has emboldened terrorists everywhere in the Middle East, increased Iran's influence in Iraq - and the region - and left the US disengaged and helpless to influence events in Gaza and Lebanon that could well lead to a region-wide conflict.

It is not only Democrats who hold this view. A former senior Administration official told the Herald that he had supported the war in Iraq, but that he was now convinced it will be seen by history as America's greatest foreign policy blunder.

"It has distracted us from other major foreign policy challenges in the region, including the Israel-Palestinian conflict. It has dramatically increased Iran's reach and influence in the region and, meanwhile, in other parts of the world, China is eating our lunch."

Another lady who is not for turning CRISIS IN LEBANON

Rice would accept none of this. People who know her say she is incredibly self-confident, that she loves challenges, that far from being disheartened by criticism, she is energised by it. As far as her position on Israel and Lebanon - and Gaza - is concerned, she has a couple of things going for her. For a start, unlike her predecessor, Colin Powell, she is close to Bush and has his complete support. Unlike Powell, she has not had to worry about being undermined by Cheney and Rumsfeld.

And, critically, there is virtually total support across the US political spectrum - if not among the foreign policy establishment - for Israel's actions in Lebanon and Gaza.

Polls consistently show a clear majority of Americans view Israel as a democratic ally of the US and the latest CBS poll, taken this week, shows 61 per cent are favourably disposed to Israel compared with 13 per cent for the Palestinians.

IN PRIVATE conversations, strictly off the record, there are some Republicans and Democrats who will tell you that what they describe as the lack of debate in America about the US-Israel relationship is unhealthy - the "elephant in the room" one described it - that can't be discussed.

Then they will tell you that three months before mid-term congressional elections is a bad time to raise the issue and, anyway, they basically support Israel in the war against Hezbollah, an organisation, they invariably point out, that killed 241 US marines and peacekeepers in a suicide bomb attack in Beirut in 1983.

As Israeli military commanders were saying that the bombing campaign in Lebanon and the fighting just across the Israeli border could continue for weeks, Rice was telling reporters in Malaysia where she was attending the ASEAN security conference that she was planning to return to the Middle East this weekend.

And Bush was telling reporters in Washington that he was not prepared to accept what he called a "fake" ceasefire and, after pointing the finger at Iran as Hezbollah's sponsor, said "now is the time to address the root causes of the problem and the root cause of the problem is terrorist groups trying to stop the advance of democracy".

"I view this as a clash of forms of government," he said.

Rice will go back to the Middle East reluctantly for she knows she has nothing new to offer except words of sympathy for the Lebanese people and the people of Israel and Gaza who are living with the consequences of this war. It is not even clear where she will go, though it is clear she won't head for Damascus, let alone Tehran.

In Malaysia, Rice apparently declined to take part in what has become a custom at the gala dinner of the annual Association of South-East Asian Nations meeting: a comedy skit by each delegation. Last year, for instance, the then deputy secretary of state, Robert Zoellick, sang My Darling Clementine and the Russian Foreign Minister, Sergey Lavrov, came dressed as Darth Vader.

Rice said she would not be doing a skit because the fighting in the Middle East was not a time for jokes. "I will play the piano," she is reported to have said. "A reflective piece. Brahms is always good for that."

As that photograph from Rome so dramatically illustrated, she has a lot to reflect about.

Graphic

TWO PHOTOS: A look that speaks volumes ... Condoleezza Rice reacts at the Rome press conference as Fouad Siniora gives details of how Lebanon is being torn apart. Photo: AFP Bad hit ... soldiers carry the body of a UN observer killed by an Israeli strike. Photo: Reuters

Another lady who is not for turning CRISIS IN LEBANON

Load-Date: July 17, 2007

End of Document

Arab world's reaction to alleged killing is muted; American troops often commit such acts, many believe. Two U.S. probes are under way.

The Philadelphia Inquirer

May 31, 2006 Wednesday

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The Philadelphia Inquirer

Found on Philly.com

Section: NATIONAL; Pg. A02

Length: 648 words

Byline: Hamza Hendawi, Associated Press

Body

Allegations that U.S. Marines killed 24 civilians in Haditha, a volatile town in western Iraq, have caused barely a stir in Iraq and much of the Arab world - where American troops are reviled as brutal invaders who regularly commit such acts.

Arab media have largely ignored the allegations, though a few publications have made highly critical comments and said events in the small Euphrates River town northwest of Baghdad were neither the biggest alleged atrocity by American forces nor would they be the last.

The pan-Arab daily Asharq al-Awsat focused on the role of the Western media in exposing the allegations.

"As soon as I read the news, the immediate question that came to mind was: 'Why wasn't the tape broadcast by an Arab channel or published in an Arab newspaper?'" asked Diana Mukkaled in the newspaper's Sunday edition.

Mukkaled referred to a videotape shot by an Iraqi journalism student and later obtained by Time magazine that showed the bodies of women and children, some in their nightclothes.

Reports of what happened in Haditha did not surface until March, when the incident began to be seriously investigated. An Associated Press report in March included accounts from people in the town who said they had witnessed killings.

But for now, renewed U.S. interest in the allegations has drawn only a muted response from the media in Iraq. That also appeared to be largely the case elsewhere in the Arab world.

Dawood al-Shirian, a Saudi commentator and TV talk-show host, said other regional issues, like the Fatah-Hamas rivalry in the Palestinian territories, could have overshadowed the Haditha killings.

"But this issue cannot be hidden for long," al-Shirian said. "Sooner or later, it will come to the surface."

Arab world's reaction to alleged killing is muted American troops often commit such acts, many believe. Two U.S. probes are under way.

"This crime shows that the American administration did not only fail politically, militarily and financially [in Iraq], but has specifically failed morally," said Lebanese rights activist Maan Bashour.

The killings have prompted two U.S. investigations, one into the deadly encounter and a second into whether it was covered up. The Marine Corps had initially attributed 15 civilian deaths to a car bombing and a subsequent firefight that left eight insurgents dead.

What happened in Haditha remains unclear. Rep. John Murtha, a Pennsylvania Democrat and decorated war veteran, said a Marine was killed when a bomb hit a military convoy. Angered by the loss of a comrade, the Marines shot and killed unarmed civilians in a taxi, then went into two homes and shot the occupants, including women and children.

The Prime Minister's Response

Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki broke his public silence yesterday on the alleged killing of about 24 civilians by U.S. Marines, saying that such deaths were never justified, even in the fight against terrorists.

Al-Maliki, speaking in a television interview with the British Broadcasting Corp., expressed remorse over the reported killings last November in the western Iraqi city of Haditha.

"**We emphasize** that our forces, that multinational forces will respect human rights, the rights of the Iraqi citizen," al-Maliki said. "It is not justifiable that a family is killed because someone is fighting terrorists; we have to be more specific and more careful."

Pentagon investigations into the shootings are focused on about a dozen enlisted Marines and do not target their commanding officers, the lawyer for one of the officers said yesterday.

The highest-ranking Marine targeted by the investigations is a staff sergeant who led the convoy, said attorney Paul Hackett, a Marine reservist and Iraqi war veteran who last year narrowly lost a special election for a U.S. House seat in Ohio.

Hackett represents Capt. James Kimber, one of three battalion officers relieved of command last month.

"**My purpose** is to separate his name from the alleged war crimes that took place," Hackett told The Associated Press in a telephone interview.

Load-Date: May 31, 2006

World briefing: Egypt finds democracy can wait

The Guardian - Final Edition

May 16, 2006 Tuesday

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Section: GUARDIAN INTERNATIONAL PAGES; Pg. 18

Length: 664 words

Byline: Simon Tisdall

Body

President Hosni Mubarak's enforcers have a particular way of dealing with **female** demonstrators: they sexually humiliate them. The case of journalist Abir al-Askari is but one example. When she arrived at Cairo's high court last week for a disciplinary hearing against two pro-democracy judges, she was grabbed by several men.

"They drove me to Sayyida Zeinab police station. I screamed and resisted and they beat me and pulled my hair and my veil," Ms Askari said. "Right in front of the police station they kicked me. When people gathered and told them to stop they replied: 'She's been committing adultery.'"

Ms Askari told Human Rights Watch investigators that she was taken to a room where three **female** activists from the Kifaya reform group had previously been abused. "Nobody will know where you are," the officer said. "You are lost." They tore at my clothes, my shirt buttons. They continued to slap and punch me . . . I was lying on the floor. He placed his shoe on my face." She was later released.

Ms Askari's ordeal recalled a similar outrage in May last year when **women** protesters were assaulted and groped by plainclothes security men as police looked on. That incident was especially embarrassing for Mr Mubarak. Under US pressure, he had just promised a new era of democratic reform and announced Egypt's first contested presidential election (which he later won by a landslide). He ordered an investigation. But no charges have been brought.

So far last week's sexual assaults, which were less widely reported, have not been deemed worthy of an official inquiry. Nor have the beatings, arrests, and continuing detention without trial of hundreds of mostly male pro-democracy activists from the banned Muslim Brotherhood and other groups in Cairo and elsewhere. Officials at the Egyptian embassy in London were not available for comment yesterday.

The two judges at the centre of the protests and ensuing repression, Mahmud Mekki and Hisham Bastawisi, alleged vote-rigging in last year's parliamentary polls and were accused of bringing the judiciary into disrepute. This strikes government critics, including other members of the pro-reform Judges' Club, as ironic. They claim Egypt's judiciary is mostly controlled by the ministry of justice and the two were performing a public service.

"The political and economic reforms needed to achieve democracy and restore public faith in government can be achieved only under an independent judiciary," Mr Mekki and Mr Bastawisi wrote in the Guardian last week.

But Egyptians and outside commentators accuse Mr Mubarak, spooked by rising Islamism, sectarian tensions and renewed terrorism, of ditching the reform agenda as US pressure has relaxed. Hated emergency laws were recently

World briefing: Egypt finds democracy can wait

renewed. "The government is apparently determined to stamp out peaceful dissent. Mr Mubarak sees growing popular support for the reformist judges as a real challenge to his authoritarian ways," said Joe Stork of Human Rights Watch.

"There is no prospect of significant political reform in Egypt in the foreseeable future. It's dead in the water," said Hugh Roberts, a Cairo-based analyst. "Western efforts to shape reform in Egypt have been a fiasco."

The state department said it was "deeply concerned" by last week's violence and politely reminded Egypt that it receives \$1.9bn annually in US aid. But Bush officials recently told congressional budget watchdogs that Egypt was a key Arab ally, providing support on Iran, Sudan, and Afghanistan and allowing Suez Canal transit shipments and overflights to US forces in Iraq.

Washington fears the rise of the Muslim Brothers as much as it deplores the success of **Hamas** in Palestine. The implication was that democracy could wait.

That is not a conclusion shared by Egypt's opposition. The hearing of the judges' case has been rescheduled for Thursday. That is also the day set for an appeal by Mr Mubarak's jailed presidential opponent, Ayman Nour. More protests and more brutal abuse may be on the way.

Load-Date: May 16, 2006

End of Document

The world is not black and white even for one-eyed ignorants

Canberra Times (Australia)

April 21, 2006 Friday

Final Edition

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Section: A; Pg. 14

Length: 629 words

Byline: The Canberra Times

Body

So The Canberra Times that gave us the ignorant, one-eyed, rambling, whining Angela Shanahan now gives us the ignorant, one-eyed, rambling, ranting David Barnett (Opinion, April 20), who complains that the poor, set-upon Americans are too fair for their own good in the face of all those terrorists on the other side.

The world is not so black-and-white.

For all the good things that come out of the United States, it still sponsored terrorists in Central America, it still sponsors them via Turkey, and it sponsors or tolerates plenty of tyrants that it hasn't taken the trouble to invade and overthrow, notably in Pakistan.

If Hamas should swear off terrorism then so should Israel which, many people conveniently forget, was founded on terrorism.

Then there are the democracies the US has conspired to overthrow, including Iran, Congo and Chile.

And no, David, I am neither socialist nor anti-American (I'm married to one). What I am against is the harm inflicted on the world by ignorant, one-eyed people of any persuasion.

Geoff Davies, Hawker No flaw in Legacy Ian Warden (Dawn Service is poignant and almost perfect .., Opinion, April 18) refers to part of the recitation of Joel McCrae's poem In Flanders' Fields as a flaw, because of the words, "Take up our quarrel with the foe: To you from failing hands we throw The Torch:" This is no flaw: This is not a call for "maintenance of a rage against the foe". This is a call to comrades to take up The Torch.

Legacy took up The Torch in 1923 after Australia suffered horrendous casualties in World War I, leaving thousands of widows and children without support. The Torch became the symbol of Legacy.

Legacy still cares for the dependants of veterans of World War I, World War II and subsequent wars, including our most recent losses in the helicopter crash in Nias.

Legacy now cares for 132,000 women and children throughout Australia who are the dependants of servicemen and women who made the supreme sacrifice or who have since died.

Legacy has adopted "The Answer" from a poem by an American R.W.

The world is not black and white even for one-eyed ignorants

Lilliard.

"Fear not that you have died for naught; The torch you threw to us we caught! And now our hands will hold it high, Its glorious light shall never die.

We'll not break with you who lie On many a field."

When you make a donation to Legacy you buy a badge with the Legacy symbol of The Torch.

Ray Sunderland, Canberra Legacy Cycling still a danger Cycling in Canberra is a popular recreational and commuting activity.

Those who ride to work enjoy many benefits including: better health and fitness, petrol savings, and just the sheer pleasure of getting to work while enjoying Canberra's natural beauty; but Canberra also benefits through reduced traffic, parking and pollution problems.

Cycling infrastructure is required for all major destinations to maximise these benefits.

Unfortunately, the fast-expanding Brindabella Business Park at Canberra Airport remains an unsafe destination for cyclists. In the case of Brindabella Business Park, the last section of road leading to Canberra Airport is unsuitable for cyclists.

This problem has been recognised for some time and a cycle path was to be included as part of the capital works project "Pialligo Ave Stage One Upgrade". Due to cost blow-outs for the GDE, the Pialligo upgrade is unlikely to be built in the near future.

Ironically, 8 Brindabella Park has received a five-star environmental rating, partly because of its provision of amenities for cyclists.

The problem is that this rating does not take into account actually getting to the buildings - merely building facilities is sufficient to be a good corporate citizen!

No business should consider moving to Brindabella Business Park until suitable cycling infrastructure has been constructed.

Warwick Bradly, Duffy

Load-Date: October 11, 2011

At Home With the Olmerts in Israel's Corridors of Power

The New York Times

March 28, 2006 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2006 The New York Times Company

Section: Section E; Column 3; The Arts/Cultural Desk; Pg. 7; TELEVISION REVIEW

Length: 645 words

Byline: By NED MARTEL

Body

In a new installment of "Frontline/World," Israel's acting prime minister, Ehud Olmert, and his wife recall the January night that their home became a kind of fortress, guarded by government agents and gawked at by reporters and onlookers. Prime Minister Ariel Sharon had suffered a stroke from which he has yet to recover, and succession plans went into effect. Today's election could formalize for Mr. Olmert a boost in power and, for his wife, Aliza, a loss of freedom.

This is Mrs. Olmert's primary lament in the 30-minute segment, produced by her close friend Ofra Bikel. As a trusted confidante entering the fortress, Ms. Bikel rewards her hosts with a kindly portrait. But as a deft documentarian who recently found fresh things to say on "Frontline" about the stale-for-a-decade O. J. Simpson verdict, she also successfully balances the interests of the viewer and the viewed, and both sides should feel grateful for her measured reading of delicate matters.

Mrs. Olmert, who speaks in English, is clearly fixated on fragility. A playwright and visual artist, she is shown piecing together a new work with a preferred medium: eggshells. But she is hardly a mute helpmeet. In fact, when asked about what might be seen as her husband's great political fortune, she explains that it's actually an imposition, and, by the way, no fun at all.

Now more of a moderate, her husband has also played the political provocateur, and Mrs. Olmert freely admits she has found his nationalism hard to abide. He grew up in what is often referred to in the program as a nationalist settlement and enjoyed imagining broader borders for the Jewish state. Mrs. Olmert and her husband have had, she says, "a different basic understanding about this place," adding, "I couldn't cope with this rhetoric at all."

Ms. Bikel is most adept at showing how the family balances emotional support and political opposition. The couple have long disagreed, and the arguments have spread to their children. Several Olmert offspring are active in groups that have opposed their father on one issue or another. The patriarch keeps his political enemies from using his own children as weapons against him, albeit in a crafty way. "What's the big deal?" he says, the magnanimous papa. "They're entitled to have their own opinions." Then he follows with, "I never questioned their right to be wrong."

Then comes the mom. "Ehud is a very tolerant man," she confides. You're going along with her here, and then she demonstrates the occasional need to sound a "Father Knows Best" note: "Otherwise, he couldn't have lived with me." Mr. Olmert acknowledges the favor, offering that they all are in fact tolerant of him.

At Home With the Olmerts in Israel 's Corridors of Power

Now that **Hamas** will rule the Palestinians, Mr. Olmert's patterns of aggression and concession might again come into play. He insists that his flexibility is a virtue. "I have changed my opinions about some fundamental issues, and I'm proud of it," he says.

As Ms. Bikel pans for an overhead shot in the Olmert dining room, there's a reassuring sense that the candidate knows how to keep opponents at the table. There's a baby gate guarding the staircase, his daughter has brought her **female** partner to the gathering, and the onetime hard-liner is feeding a toddler, sipping wine, demonstrating a mutual respect that has led, we are meant to believe, to a workable, if hard-won domestic peace. If he can manage that, this cozy scene suggests, there's hope for a few nonviolent years under an Olmert-led Israel.

Frontline/World

Israel: The Unexpected Candidate

PBS, tonight at 9; check local listings.

Reported, produced and directed by Ofra Bikel; Stephen Talbot, "Frontline/World" series editor; Ken Dornstein, "Frontline" series editor; Sharon Tiller, "Frontline/World" series executive director; David Fanning, executive producer. Produced by WGBH Boston.

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Graphic

Photo: Ehud Olmert at a rally, shadowed by a picture of Ariel Sharon. (Photo by Muhammed Muheisen/Associated Press)

Load-Date: March 28, 2006

End of Document

WORLD IN BRIEF

The Evening Standard (London)

March 10, 2006 Friday

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London Evening Standard

Section: A MERGE; Pg. 10

Length: 649 words

Body

Falconio appeal delays Pounds 100,000 reward for naming of murderer SEVERAL claims have been made for the Pounds 100,000 reward offered to find the killer of British backpacker Peter Falconio but a decision on who gets the bounty has been delayed. Australian police said today they would have to wait for the outcome of an appeal by the man convicted of the crime. Bradley John Murdoch, 47, was found guilty in December of Mr Falconio's murder and of attacking and kidnapping the backpacker's girlfriend, Joanne Lees, at gunpoint 200 miles north of Alice Springs in 2001. The body of Mr Falconio, 28, has never been found.

Jackson's staff are barred from Neverland as insurance runs out MICHAEL JACKSON has been fined Pounds 40,000 and staff have been barred from Neverland because the the estate's workers insurance policy has lapsed.

California officials issued a "stop order" after finding that cover for 69 employees at the ranch had run out on 10 January. "In effect, it shuts them down," said a state spokesman. Jackson, 47 - who has lived in Bahrain since being acquitted of child molestation charges last year - can appeal, or hire an outside company to run the 2,600-acre estate if its own staff have the appropriate insurance.

Child walks after surgery in womb SURGEONS have hailed revolutionary surgery on a foetus as a success after the child, now 14 months, took her first steps. A team from the Monash Medical Centre in Melbourne operated on Ella Turner after only 28 weeks in the womb.

Part of the uterus of Ella's mother Joanna Dalton, from Tasmania, had wrapped around her foot, cutting off the blood supply. To stop her losing the foot, doctors used tiny telescopes and lasers to remove the tissue. Surgeon Andrew Edwards said: "It's terrific. We're very excited."

Tests confirm 21st bird flu death INDONESIA'S bird flu death toll hit 21 today after test results confirmed that a three-year-old who died last month was infected with the virus. The boy died in a hospital in Semarang, central Java, apparently after coming into contact with sick chickens, an official said. It is rare for humans to catch the deadly H5N1 strain of the virus but scientists fear it could mutate into a form easily transmitted among people and trigger a pandemic.

WORLD IN BRIEF

Israel plans West Bank pullout ISRAEL will determine its border with the West Bank by 2010 if there are no negotiations with the Palestinians, then build a wall and move all settlers to the Israeli side, acting prime minister Ehud Olmert said today ahead of elections on 28 March. The plan would mean pulling out from most of the West Bank, but permanently annexing some land.

With a new Hamas government about to take power, a resumption of peace talks appears unlikely.

Tourists' bodies in Bolivian grave THE bodies of two Austrian backpackers missing in Bolivia since January have been found in a shallow grave in an Andean village. Police said Peter Kirsten Rabitsch, 28, and his girlfriend, Katharina Koller, 25, had been strangled and buried near the village of Calamarca on the highway linking La Paz to the city of Oruro. Their bank accounts had been emptied since they were last seen alive.

Nine die in Japan suicide pacts JAPANESE police found the bodies of five men and one woman today in a parked car north-west of Tokyo in an apparent group suicide arranged over the internet. Three charcoal stoves were still smoking in the car and the windows were taped up. Kyodo News also reported a group suicide of three people in northern Japan.

Sex dolls fight harassment Mexico is deploying inflatable sex dolls dressed as office executives in a campaign against workplace harassment of women. The TV advertisements show the dolls with staring eyes and red mouths dressed in suits and sitting at computers. "No woman should be treated like an object," says a voiceover as a man walks past one of the dolls and casually strokes her shoulder.

Load-Date: March 10, 2006

End of Document

Carroll: Statements on video made under captors' threats; Former hostage arrives in Germany on a U.S. military transport plane

Telegraph Herald (Dubuque, IA)

April 2, 2006 Sunday

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Section: WISCONSIN; Pg. a8

Length: 625 words

Byline: ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dateline: RAMSTEIN AIR BASE, Germany

Body

Protected by the U.S. military and far from the country where she had been held hostage, Jill Carroll strongly disavowed statements she had made during captivity in Iraq and shortly after her release, saying Saturday she had been repeatedly threatened.

In a video, recorded before she was freed and posted by her captors on an Islamist Web site, Carroll spoke out against the U.S. military presence. But in a statement Saturday, she said the recording was made under threat. Her editor has said three men were pointing guns at her at the time.

"During my last night in captivity, my captors forced me to participate in a propaganda video. They told me I would be released if I cooperated. I was living in a threatening environment, under their control, and wanted to go home alive. So I agreed," she said in a statement read by her editor in Boston.

"Things that I was forced to say while captive are now being taken by some as an accurate reflection of my personal views. They are not."

Carroll arrived in Germany on Saturday on a U.S. military transport plane on her way back to the United States and was expected in Boston today. The Islamic headscarf she wore as a hostage was gone, and she instead wore jeans and a gray sweater.

The 28-year-old journalist - a freelancer for the Boston-based Christian Science Monitor - was seized Jan. 7 in western Baghdad by gunmen who killed her Iraqi translator. She was dropped off Thursday - 82 days later - at an office of the Iraqi Islamic Party, a Sunni Arab organization, and later escorted by the U.S. military to the Green Zone, the fortified compound in Baghdad protecting the U.S. embassy and other facilities.

In the statement, Carroll also disavowed an interview she gave to the party shortly after her release. She said the party had promised her the interview would not be aired "and broke their word."

"At any rate, fearing retribution from my captors, I did not speak freely. Out of fear, I said I wasn't threatened. In fact, I was threatened many times," she said. "Also, at least two false statements about me have been widely aired: One, that I refused to travel and cooperate with the U.S. military, and two, that I refused to discuss my captivity with U.S. officials. Again, neither statement is true."

Carroll: Statements on video made under captors' threats Former hostage arrives in Germany on a U.S. military transport plane

Carroll has said her kidnappers confined her to a small, soundproof room with frosted, opaque windows.

After a day in seclusion, she left Balad Air Base near Baghdad on Saturday on a plane also carrying several wounded soldiers. Carroll smiled and peered with bemusement through the cockpit window at the dozens of television cameras on the tarmac at Ramstein Air Force Base.

"I'm happy to be here," she said to Col. Kurt Lohide, the U.S. officer who greeted her.

Carroll, who had studied Arabic and was widely respected for her balance and fairness as a reporter, attracted a huge amount of sympathy during her ordeal, and a wide variety of groups in the Middle East, including the Islamic militant group **Hamas**, appealed for her release.

Aside from the short interview aired on Iraqi television upon her release, Carroll had otherwise not shown herself in public prior to her brief appearance Saturday.

The kidnappers, calling themselves the Revenge Brigades, had demanded the release of all **female** detainees in Iraq by Feb. 26 or Carroll would be killed. U.S. officials did release some **female** detainees at the time, but said it had nothing to do with the kidnappers' demands.

In the video posted Friday, her abductors said they freed Carroll because "the American government met some of our demands by releasing some of our **women** from prison."

According to Richard Walsh, a spokesman for the Massachusetts Port Authority, Carroll was to land at Logan International Airport in Boston late this morning.

Graphic

AP Photo

Load-Date: April 2, 2006

Letter - Evil men are using religion to pursue their own global agenda;

Irish News
March 20, 2006

Copyright 2006 The Irish News Limited

Section: Pg. 22

Length: 667 words

Body

I was shocked at the outrageous way many decent, law-abiding and otherwise peace-loving Muslims reacted to 12 satirical cartoons in a Danish newspaper.

These caricatures merely depicted what many peoples and nations are experiencing - fanatical 'Muslim martyrs' carrying explosives annihilating innocent men, women and children including themselves and fellow Muslims.

But where are the angry Muslim protests after these atrocities?

How many Hamas, Hezbollah and Al-Qaida flags have been burned?

If ordinary decent Muslims and their Imams are afraid to oppose these extremists what hope is there for the rest of us mere infidels?

How many Syrian and Iranian embassies have been torched in protest by decent Muslims in response to state sponsored terrorism?

What about the many anti-Semitic (satirical?) cartoons in numerous Arab/Muslim media outlets?

Of course the Israelis have a lot to answer for in the treatment of Palestinians but who protects the Dome of Rock from Jewish extremists and Christian fundamentalists?

The Jews do and get no thanks for protecting Islam's second holiest of places.

Imams, where are you?

Oh yes ... that statement about 'wiping the Jewish State off the map'?

The same president of Iran, who remains unapologetic for his racist remark, wants to have button access to a nuclear bomb!

Foolish, irreverent satirical cartoons in newspapers are unlikely to kill people - Inflammatory words do.

We in Ireland have bitter experience of such like - our 30 years of terror followed someone's stupid political and religious rhetoric.

Destruction, death and misery for Protestants, Catholics and dissenters alike.

Letter - Evil men are using religion to pursue their own global agenda;

Peaceful protests and the burning of a few flags is one thing.

But, tolerant imams, don't you think that worldwide Islamic boycotts of Danish exports, torching embassies and threatening the Danish, Norwegian and others with Jihad is a little extreme?

Those involved in the torching of the British embassy in Dublin in 1972 were condemned as terrorists but their action 'logically' followed the murders (by British state terrorism) of 14 innocent Catholic men during a peaceful Civil Rights march in Derry.

I served with United Nations forces in Cyprus and the Lebanon. I met Norwegians, Danish and Swedish personnel.

Never once did I hear from them a derogatory word against Muslims or the Islamic faith.

They are among the most tolerant and fair-minded people in the world and have proved it in respect to the Israeli/Palestinian conflict.

I believe this violent backlash has been orchestrated by fanatics, terrorists and foreign government interests and the Danes provided a 'soft' target.

I am reminded of Nazi Germany and Communist eastern Europe. These extremely dangerous people are trying to establish Taliban-type Islamic states throughout the world - by force if necessary!

During my life I have mingled with many people of different nationalities, politics and faiths including Muslims and Jews, Turkish and Greek Cypriots, Iraqis, Protestants, Catholics, Christians and Dissenters.

I also served with the UN in Iraq and was there in 1989 to assist with the body exchange of Iraqi/Iranian war dead.

I saw both sides haggling over the decomposing remains of their fallen soldiers lying patiently to attention in lines of open coffins.

Most of the people I met wanted only peace and prosperity for themselves and their children.

We need to encourage each other to work for 'the common good'.

We all have a short life time in an ever shrinking, ecologically threatened world.

And - oil or no oil - if we don't live together in peace we will perish together.

If God, Allah, Yahweh, Buddha and the Holy Prophets have been offended, then let him/her or them deal with the 'evildoers' in the next life.

I grew up in Belfast in the sixties and seventies and plucked the lesson of peaceful coexistence from a society where religious bigotry was in abundance, civil rights denied to one third of the citizens and tolerance was in short supply.

JOE O'NEILL - Taghmon, Co Wexford.

Load-Date: March 20, 2006

Cherie's sister: How I was strip searched by Israeli police; ... and given just a piece of loo paper to cover up my modesty

Mail on Sunday (London)

January 29, 2006 Sunday

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Section: FB 04; Pg. 55

Length: 597 words

Byline: EWAN FLETCHER

Body

LAUREN BOOTH, the Prime Minister's sister-in-law, reveals today how she was detained for more than two hours and stripsearched by Israeli security forces while reporting on the Palestinian elections.

Ms Booth, a columnist with The Mail on Sunday, was escorted from a passenger queue at Tel Aviv's Ben Gurion Airport and placed in the custody of 15 guards, many armed, before being subjected to a body search.

She was taken to a cubicle by two **female** officers where she was ordered to strip naked so that a handheld metal detector could be used to scan her for concealed weapons. Meanwhile, her luggage was also thoroughly searched and the linings of her bags ripped open.

Writing in today's Live magazine about her humiliating experience, Ms Booth, 38, said: 'The interrogation wouldn't have been so bad if I'd had any underwear on. The **women** in the cubicle told me to drop my trousers. I'd already removed my bra. I refused unless they brought me a towel. The best they could do was loo paper.' Ms Booth, who is Cherie Blair's halfsister, was then questioned for an hour and a half before being allowed on to her return flight to Heathrow.

Speaking from her home in the Dordogne, France, last night, she said: 'It must have been a punishment. They know who I am. I had accreditation from their government, from Ariel Sharon's office. I posed no threat nor harm to Israeli security but I was being persecuted for doing my job as a member of the Press.

'They had a problem because I'd spent two days visiting Interpal centres.

It's a Palestinian charity which is deemed illegal by Israel and the US even though they are perfectly legitimate and work for the poor.

'Israel wants to harass those of us who are going to bear witness to the intimidation in Palestine. I refused to be intimidated so I was actually quite amused as I stood there naked with toilet paper wrapped around my groin.

'But If I hadn't already been expecting that appalling treatment, I would have been in tears. They went as far as they could go without me demanding a call to the British consulate.

'There were 15 people looking at me and my baggage, a quarter of whom were armed. I felt I was being treated like a terrorist. Every bit of makeup, a cake I'd bought for my daughter, absolutely everything was examined.

Cherie's sister: How I was strip searched by Israeli police ... and given just a piece of loo paper to cover up my modesty

It was just pure persecution.

'The man who interrogated me, who I believe was a government agent, seemed cross that I wasn't more intimidated. He said, "My problem with you is that you're not acting like a normal tourist." He meant I wasn't quivering and crying.

'When I was eventually frogmarched on to the plane I wasn't allowed to see my luggage. It was only when I got home that I realised that they'd taken a razor blade to my case. They'd torn all the linings and broken bits of it. I don't think there is any point in making a complaint. They'd simply laugh at me.' A photographer who travelled out to work with Ms Booth on the project was subjected to a similar ten-hour interrogation on arrival in Israel. He was forced to return to London immediately.

During her stay, Ms Booth also received a call from Israeli security services on her borrowed mobile phone in which she was subjected to a stream of 'thinly-veiled threats'.

Speaking about last week's shock election success for Hamas, Ms Booth said: 'I feel very positive about it.

'Having met so many erudite and well-spoken members of that organisation I feel confident that if they feel this represents a chance for peace they will be happy to renounce violence.' No one from the airport or the Israeli Embassy was available for comment last night.

Load-Date: January 30, 2006

End of Document

'Radical Islam Week' sparks campus furor: University of Toronto

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

February 6, 2006 Monday

All but Toronto Edition

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Section: CANADA; Pg. A6

Length: 644 words

Byline: Peter Kuitenbrouwer, National Post

Body

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"Radical Islam is a geo-political ideology of oppression affecting the entire world," says the program for the lectures, "an abuse of the religion of Islam in order to harness the power of religious devotion to oppress human and civil rights."

Radical Islam is the faith of Hamas, al-Qaeda, Islamic Jihad and the President of Iran, the program adds.

Jonathan Jaffit, 21, a U of T student with a double major in human biology and Jewish studies, is among organizers of the week. He is director of campus affairs for Betar-Tagar, a worldwide group which aims to "present the public with accurate facts about Israel and the Middle East."

"Radical Islam is a distortion of the Koran," Mr. Jaffit said. "We want people to understand that it exists. People don't know that 70% of women in Egypt undergo female genital mutilation."

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"We should be working to de-escalate tension on campus," said Safiyyah Ally, 23, a PhD student in political science and spokeswoman for the Muslim group. "I'm concerned that Islam might be demonized and vilified unfairly."

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"The ability to question, examine and comment on issues of the day, even when such commentary may be repugnant to some, is central to the mission of the university," Mr. Farrar wrote. He added, "without being illegal or otherwise prohibited, some speech may be perceived as hurtful because of the pain that it surfaces."

'Radical Islam Week' sparks campus furor: University of Toronto

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But Ms. Ally said both groups should look to ease tensions, not raise them.

"I don't see the two groups promoting peace on campus and promoting dialogue on campus," she said.

Simon Deng, whom the program defines as a "former Sudanese slave," will give the first lecture of Know Radical Islam Week at noon today in the school's Sidney Smith Hall, in the heart of the downtown campus.

Among other guests are Khalet Abu Toameh, Palestinian affairs columnist for the Jerusalem Post and a "former PLO journalist," who speaks on Wednesday. On Thursday David B. Harris, former chief of strategic planning for the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, is set to speak on "Terrorism at Our Doorstep."

Among other speakers is Barbara Cook, a founder of a group called Palestinian Media Watch, which analyzes Palestinian Authority culture and society by looking at its summer camps, poetry, schoolbooks and crossword puzzles.

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Co-sponsors of the event are Betar-Tagar and the Los Angeles-based Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies.

Mr. Jaffit said his group has held discussions with campus police and has assurances that the school's security service will protect the speakers from any potential protests.

"I'm sure it will stir up controversy," he said. "The university is not a place where we could shy away from controversy."

The Arab Student Collective and Canadian Islamic Congress did not return calls.

Load-Date: February 6, 2006

A candidate called Hitler: Jamal Abu Roub, running in the West Bank, doesn't mind his controversial nickname

The Gazette (Montreal)

January 22, 2006 Sunday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A8

Length: 629 words

Byline: GREG MYRE, New York Times

Dateline: JENIN, West Bank

Body

The candidate's name is Jamal Abu Roub, but everyone here calls him Hitler because, well, that is the name he has answered to quite comfortably since he was a teenager.

Roub, 40, is a leader of the militant Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades in this turbulent corner of the West Bank, and has spent the past five years leading his ragtag band of gunmen in frequent clashes with the Israeli military. Roub's deeds include hauling a Palestinian suspected of molesting his daughters and collaborating with Israel into a town square, where the man was shot to death.

Now, Roub is Fatah's No. 12 candidate for the Palestinian parliament and is virtually assured of winning a seat in Wednesday's election. He is wanted by Israel and, therefore, does not appear at rallies, yet this seems only to have bolstered his reputation.

In an interview here, Roub said with a crooked smile that it was his first campaign appearance, and probably his last.

"I leave the campaigning to my brother and my supporters, but this is not a problem because people here know me and trust me," Roub said. His eyes are bloodshot and his hair is tousled, giving him the look of a man pursued. He chain-smokes Marlboros and gulps his coffee. His face features several days worth of stubble, and he does not look like someone who has slept in his own bed recently.

He is the rare fugitive who likes to see posters of himself. Roub and other candidates for the Fatah movement appear in campaign advertisements that vie for space among the thousands of posters plastered on every flat surface in town.

The Palestinian leader, Mahmoud Abbas, is seeking to co-opt the militants who have been fighting Israel, and the election is sure to bring at least a few of them into parliament. It is not clear how they will participate, though, since Israel has said it will not grant them immunity if they are elected.

The Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, made up of members of Abbas's Fatah party, emerged soon after the latest Palestinian uprising began in 2000.

A candidate called Hitler: Jamal Abu Roub, running in the West Bank, doesn't mind his controversial nickname

Al Aqsa factions largely have ignored Abbas's calls to lay down their weapons. At Abbas's urging, a large number of militants have been incorporated into the Palestinian security forces in the past year, and the Islamic faction Hamas is taking part in national elections for the first time.

But Israelis often argue that Abbas, who came to power after the death of Yasser Arafat in 2004, is rewarding men he should be jailing.

While Palestinians generally support Abbas's effort, many describe the results as mixed.

"We are in the post-Arafat era, and we can no longer be governed by the same old, impotent cardinals of Fatah," said Mahdi Abdul Hadi, a moderate who heads Passia, a Palestinian research centre in Jerusalem. "Fatah is very much divided and fragmented, and Abbas is trying to bring it together."

Roub contends the election offers him a better way to continue his struggle with Israel, which has consumed his life.

Roub said he has always been adamant about his beliefs, so much so that when he was 16 a high school friend began calling him Hitler, and it stuck. Roub said Hitler's slaughter of the Jews was wrong, yet he seems quite willing to keep the nickname.

When Roub was leaving after an interview, a group of Palestinian women spotted him. "It's Hitler; it's Hitler," they said. Roub could not resist speaking to them.

"Some groups have misused their weapons," he said. "If it's necessary to keep them, with the agreement of the political leadership, then we will. But if it's not necessary, then we can hand them in."

"What are you doing now?" the questioner then asked.

"I'm carrying my gun, but just for protection," Roub said.

"I'd love to live a normal life," he said. "It's not my hobby to live like this. But we will not have a normal life until we have a state."

Load-Date: January 22, 2006

Washington State U. group brings Jewish students together

University Wire

February 7, 2006 Tuesday

Copyright 2006 Daily Evergreen via U-Wire

Length: 649 words

Byline: By Ingrid Rachinski, Daily Evergreen; SOURCE: Washington State U.

Dateline: PULLMAN, Wash.

Body

The Jewish community in Pullman, Wash., isn't a very prominent one. It's not very visible on the Washington State University campus or in the surrounding area. However, for those who practice Judaism the culture and community has been maintained on a smaller scale.

"I think it's really hard for Jews here because there are so few -- it's hard to build a Jewish community," said Laura Geller, a Rabbi who visited WSU Jan. 27.

Some Jewish students have been able to build strong relationships with each other.

"We have so much in common for how different we all are," said Rebeka Lambert, a sophomore genetics major.

The Hillel Jewish Student Organization has worked to bring a few of these students together, meeting weekly for food, company and commonality.

"I was pretty nervous about coming here because there weren't as many Jews," said Danielle Soffer, a freshmen human development major. "But I was able to connect with [those involved in Hillel] just as easily as I did with people at home."

Soffer comes from California, where there was a larger Jewish community than there is here.

Others in the group have experienced the same sort of transition.

When Jessica Hyde, a junior communication major, first came to Pullman she immediately encountered a problem with the low number of Jewish students at WSU. To begin with, she was a little shocked to find out that her new roommate would be a starkly conservative Christian, she said.

Her family, too, was concerned about the lack of Jewish community.

"When my grandmother found out that I was going to WSU, she literally pulled out the phone book and began looking for Jewish last names," Hyde said. After finding none, her grandmother told her she would never be able to get married because she would never find a good Jewish boy in Pullman.

The problem is not only with finding a Jewish community, but also with perceptions they felt were cast upon them.

"I'm still the first Jewish person that people are meeting," Lambert said.

Washington State U. group brings Jewish students together

For many people, Judaism can be summed up in a Hanukkah song by Adam Sandler and what little they know about other Jewish holidays and the politics of the Middle East. But for those in Hillel, it is much different.

"Judaism is a lot more important to me than a song in pop culture," Soffer said. "It can kind of be paralleled to Christmas and all the presents."

The group's definition of Judaism was different than how it's reflected in the media.

"You have the culture, the state and the religion," Hyde said. "It's very difficult to sum up."

In many ways, the students found their religion was intertwined with numerous other aspects of being Jewish.

"The uniqueness of Judaism is the culture," said Joshua Goldstein, a senior women's studies major.

Israel's politics are also one of the unique aspects of what it means to be Jewish.

"All the politics are really involved with Judaism, it's not always necessary to separate it," Goldstein said. "In a lot of ways they are inseparable."

With respect to recent events in Israel and the Hamas election, politics becomes a frequent topic of discussion.

"Israel is a central part of my identity. It's as central to my identity as the United States," Geller said. "I think it's pretty common for American Jews."

Israel's situation and the heated conversations it causes is not new to any American Jew, and has existed at least as long as Israel has been a nation.

"There's always [political] debate in Jewish circles. If you look at the way the Jewish state was created after World War II ... the creation of the country wasn't organic, and so it has a lot of problems," Goldstein said.

However, the definition of Judaism does not hinge entirely on the state and politics.

"For me, the politics are a part of [Judaism], it is an integral part of our faith and our culture," Hyde said. "But Israel is just a part of Judaism, it's the food and the language."

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Load-Date: February 7, 2006

Frankly, my dear, I do give a damn

The West Australian (Perth)
February 1, 2006 Wednesday
METRO

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Section: FEATURES; Pg. 18

Length: 617 words

Byline: MICHELE PHILLIPS

Body

It's a bit of an epidemic in Hollywood at the moment.

Gwyneth Paltrow, Brooke Shields, Katie Holmes, Mira Sorvino - all up the duff and no doubt knitting booties and hanging stimulating baby mobiles as we speak.

Plus, there's Meg Ryan, just back from China with a newly adopted baby girl but keeping mum, so to speak, about the details.

Thank God then for Russell Crowe and Danielle Spencer, who were kind enough to let us know where the two of them actually did the deed. ("She's due in July," Russ said, "so it's a French conception.")

You could ask at this point, "Who gives a damn?"

And I did, many times - in fact, whenever a celebrity pregnancy hit the headlines.

But that was BBA: Before Brad and Angelina. These days, I care.

It started when I was driving back from the shops and heard the news about baby Brangelina on the radio.

Before you could say "bun in oven", the words "Poor Jen" were out of my mouth and I knew at that moment I'd reached the point of no return.

It probably didn't help that my daughter was staying with us, convalescing in front of pay-TV after a nasty illness.

Feed anyone a steady diet of E! News and E! Entertainment Specials for a couple of weeks and you either end up brain dead or convinced that the state of Jennifer Aniston's emotional life really matters. (OK, up until then I'd thought brain death and worrying about Jen were the same thing but I'm not ashamed to admit I was wrong.)

The funny thing is, it used to be quite straightforward. The whole Angelina bizzo could be summed up very easily.

Angelina Jolie: husband stealer.

Nobody: surprised.

Frankly, my dear, I do give a damn

Small wonder, we all thought, she's got the nickname Groom Raider. But - whatever - good luck to her. But then she went and stole the husband who's lusted after by every **female** under the age of 99; stolen from the girl who - I have no doubt after watching several thousand episodes of E! News - has to be the sweetest and most badly treated on the planet.

And that was when it really hit the fan.

The Hilton sisters came out of the closet on the subject, emerging from LA designer store Kitson with the latest show-your-allegiance T-shirts.

Paris was wearing one emblazoned with the words Team Jolie; Nicky sported Team Aniston.

We all knew from that point it was OK to be proud and loud and that Paris Hilton, if ever we were in any doubt, was indeed not a nice girl. It's now got to the point where discussion forums and chat rooms on the internet are ablaze with arguments on the subject.

Forget the **Hamas** party victory and the state of Iraq. The state of Jen's psyche is the news everyone's typing about.

Everything from "How could Brad want Freaklina to be the mother of his child?" to "I think she got pregnant just to irritate Jen."

To which Angelina loyalists reply with witty ripostes like: "Please do society a favour and pull your head out your ass before you have to become a full functioning adult."

My own feelings on the matter are summed up by a chat-room poster whose heart, if not her spelling, is in the right place.

She wrote: "you know i personally would have felt happy if brad and angelinas thing started correctly. it started with them saying they were co-stars and that nothing is going on with them - then step by step he died his hair, learned to drive a plane, adopted angelinas kids etc. like whatever! just say your togather and stop lying! where they ashamed of what they are doin?! what dose angelina consider herself?! like seriously whatever!!!! no one is jelous! it was just wrong to start with!!! i honestly feel sorry with jennifer!! sheeesh!!!"

I just hope Jen is aware of how much people care about her. I mean, like, seriously, who needs Brad and baby mobiles when you've got support like this?

Graphic

Photo montage of Jennifer Aniston., Gwyneth Paltrow, Brooke Shields and Angelina Jolie.

Load-Date: January 31, 2006

Radical Islam seminar puts U of T on alert: Muslims urge boycott on grounds lectures will 'demonize and vilify'

Ottawa Citizen

February 6, 2006 Monday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A3

Length: 630 words

Byline: Peter Kuitenbrouwer, National Post

Dateline: TORONTO

Body

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"We want people to understand that it exists. People don't know that 70 per cent of women in Egypt undergo female genital mutilation."

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"I'm sure it will stir up controversy," he said. "The university is not a place where we could shy away from controversy."

The Arab Student Collective and Canadian Islamic Congress did not return calls for comment.

Load-Date: February 6, 2006

Harper unlikely to ever be called 'Stevemeister'

The Star Phoenix (Saskatoon, Saskatchewan)

January 28, 2006 Saturday

Final Edition

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Section: THIRD PAGE; Pg. A3; Les MacPherson

Length: 593 words

Byline: Les MacPherson, The StarPhoenix

Body

When a cleaning staffer went to empty my wastebasket the other afternoon, it was empty. "You don't make any garbage," observed the cleaner. "Oh yes, I do make garbage," I replied. "Only mine goes into the newspaper." Here, then, are two dozen, random observations that anyone else might have consigned to the trash.

1. When you hear someone declare that it's time to "move forward," this means he doesn't want to hear any more about a recent embarrassment.
2. Some things just don't make sense. For example, we fear global warming but we can't wait for spring.
3. The automobile remains the last enduring stronghold of male dominance. So much so that, if you see a car with the wife driving and the husband in the passenger seat, you can't help but wonder if he's lost his licence on an impaired charge.
4. If you don't learn to skate backward by age 10, you probably never will.
5. Any company with "enviro" as part of its name is probably dealing with something toxic.
6. If you reply too quickly to e-mails, people will think you're not busy. If you reply too slowly, people will think you're discourteous.
7. The age of your vehicle, plus its size, times the number of dents, equals the amount of room other drivers will give you when you change lanes.
8. Toast is the leading cause of crumbs.
9. If for some reason you have to get your children to say, "Not mine," just ask whose turn it is to clean up the kitchen.
10. Disproportionate numbers of football referees are nicknamed "Bud."
11. Most women will never know what it feels like to stick an arm out the car window and feel the breeze tickle her armpit hair.

Harper unlikely to ever be called 'Stevemeister'

12. On any home maintenance project, you can expect to spend at least a third of your time looking for a screwdriver you just put down.
13. The one on sale is rarely the one you want. 14. Instead of making passengers feel more secure, airport security only makes them feel more nervous. Isn't this the opposite of security?
15. Prime Minister-elect Stephen Harper does not seem like the kind of guy you'd ever call "Steve" or "Stevie," or, least of all, "The Stevemeister."
16. Here's a word I'd like to never hear again during any future election campaign: "Values."
17. Any plant or tree with "Siberian" in its name will do well in Saskatchewan.
18. Except during the Winter Olympics, no one pays much attention to the luge. Incidentally, a person who rides a luge is properly called a luger (pronounced LOOJ-er). You won't hear this on TV, however, because luger sounds too much like the past participle of loogie. That's why Olympic broadcasters invariably refer to lugers as "luge athletes."
19. People who have worked in a food processing plant often refuse to eat, ever again, the product made in that plant.
20. Among those not entirely displeased by Monday's election result will be the 262 Paul Martins listed in Canadian telephone directories. Among those less than entirely thrilled will be the 12 Stephen Harpers.
21. Here's something that not too many women will be hearing this weekend from their husbands or boyfriends: "Hey, let's go see Brokeback Mountain."
22. Is it possible there are too many handicapped parking spots?
23. When you try to plug in an electrical cord, the plug's wider blade is always on the wrong side. Especially so if the receptacle is behind a bookcase and you have to guide in the plug by fee . . . Bzzzaaaap!
24. The late Israeli foreign minister Abba Eban once said of the Palestinians, "They never miss a chance to miss a chance." By electing Hamas this week, they continued their streak.

Imacpherson@sp.canwest.com

Load-Date: January 28, 2006

'Radical Islam week' sparks U of T furor

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

February 6, 2006 Monday

Toronto Edition

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Section: TORONTO; Pg. A7

Length: 619 words

Byline: Peter Kuitenbrouwer, National Post

Body

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Load-Date: February 6, 2006

Danish leader draws battle lines; Outrage is mixed with faith in allies and confidence in path

The International Herald Tribune

February 11, 2006 Saturday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 3

Length: 686 words

Byline: John Vinocur and Dan Bilefsky

Dateline: COPENHAGEN

Body

Attempts by European companies in the Middle East to disassociate themselves from Denmark or Danish products are "disgraceful," according to Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen.

In an interview Thursday, Rasmussen tried at the same time to shield the Bush administration and some of Denmark's partners in NATO from accusations that they had been tardy and overcautious in coming to Denmark's defense in the crisis, which he attributed more to attempts by Iran and Syria to cause diversions in the Middle East than to a few satirical cartoons depicting the Prophet Muhammad in a Danish newspaper last fall.

Looking tired after what he acknowledged had been a difficult week, Rasmussen said that attempts to gain commercial advantage at Denmark's expense had struck at the hearts of all Danes.

Rasmussen did not refer to a particular business organization or country. But his response came in reply to a question referring to attempts in the Arab world by companies associated with Nestle, the Swiss food giant, and Carrefour, the French retailer, to distance themselves from Denmark.

But the prime minister declined to criticize the Bush administration for its cautious defense of an ally. Bush referred to his solidarity with Denmark for the first time on Wednesday, after five days of rioting in the Middle East against Danish interests.

"I have never doubted that Bush would stand up for Denmark," Rasmussen said. "He values faithfulness and loyalty. I was not surprised he decided to call me and express support."

Rasmussen reiterated that there would be no Danish apology for the cartoons. He brushed aside any suggestion that Denmark's policies requiring immigrants to accommodate themselves to Danish tradition were at fault, and he asserted, "We are on the right track." More broadly, he said, "I see a very clear tendency that other European countries will go in our direction."

In light of statements in Denmark that the country had been abandoned in the early phase of the crisis, Rasmussen was asked if Parliament would maintain troops in Iraq and Afghanistan if it were asked to vote on the issue now. "The situation would be the same; we haven't changed," he said.

Danish leader draws battle lines Outrage is mixed with faith in allies and confidence in path

Rasmussen argued that the cartoon crisis had been hijacked by Middle East interests using the caricatures for domestic ends.

He said Iran, isolated over its nuclear program, was using the cartoons to generate support in the Muslim world, while Syria, under investigation for the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, was trying to cause a distraction. He said the Palestinian Authority, divided over the recent election victory by Hamas, was exploiting the cartoon crisis to unite its disparate elements.

"We have religious extremists who exploit the situation and fuel the flames to pursue their own agenda," he said. "Religious extremists aim at destabilizing the situation in the whole region."

Rasmussen said he believed Islam was compatible with democracy but argued that it was incumbent on Muslim immigrants in Denmark and Europe in general to embrace the liberal values of their adopted countries.

"Denmark is a liberal country," he said. "We do believe in individual liberty and freedom. People can live according to their own customs. However, I think we have to insist on respecting our core values, including freedom of expression, gender equality for women and men, and a clear distinction between politics and religion."

Rasmussen said the perception of Denmark in the Muslim world had been distorted by falsehoods spread across the Middle East.

In particular, he said the government was re-evaluating relations with local Muslim leaders who traveled to the Middle East in December, stoking tensions by showing the cartoons to religious leaders (including a depiction of Muhammad as a pig that never appeared in the Danish press).

Asked if he would have done anything differently in retrospect, Rasmussen said he had no regrets.

"I don't think we could have done something in another way," he said. "We are witnessing events with deep sadness and disbelief. We are not used to it in Denmark."

Load-Date: February 12, 2006

Revealed: civilian toll of a deadly assault that has ravaged Gaza;
PALESTINIAN CRISIS

The Independent (London)

September 19, 2006 Tuesday

Fourth Edition

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The  **INDEPENDENT**

Section: NEWS; Pg. 2

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Byline: Donald Macintyre In Rafah

Body

Nayef Abu Snaima says his 14-year-old cousin Jihad had been sitting on the edge of an olive grove talking animatedly to him about what he would do when he grew up when he was killed instantly by an Israeli shell.

He says he clearly saw a bright flash next to the control tower of the disused Gaza international airport, occupied by Israeli forces after Cpl Gilad Shalit was seized by militants on 25 June. "I went two or three steps and the missile landed," said Nayef, 24. "I thought I was dying. I shouted 'La Ilaha Illa Allah' [There is no God but Allah]."

When Jihad's older brother Kassem, 20, arrived at the scene: "My brother was already dead. There was shrapnel in his head. Nayef was shouting 'Allah, Allah'. The missile landed about four metres from where Jihad had been standing. There was shrapnel in his body as well, his legs, everything. He had been bleeding a lot everywhere."

Jihad Abu Snaima was just the most recent of more than 37 children and teenagers under 18 killed [out of a total death toll, including militants, of 228] in the operations mounted by the Israeli military in Gaza since 25 June, according to figures from the Palestinian Centre of Human Rights (PCHR).

Of these, the PCHR classifies 151 as "civilian", although beside non-combatants and bystanders, that total also includes militants or faction members not involved in operations against Israel at the time - for example those deliberately targeted in Israeli air strikes because of their involvement in previous attacks. The Israel Defence Forces have always maintained that being under 18 does not automatically exclude a person from taking part in action against them.

The conflict in Gaza has attracted relatively little international attention, not least because for five weeks it was overshadowed by that in Lebanon. But the death toll has continued to rise.

Nayef, who was speaking from his hospital bed, has multiple shrapnel-inflicted cuts on his plaster-covered arms and legs. But he was lucky compared with Jihad. A school caretaker with a five-year-old daughter, Nayef insists the evening of Jihad's death was just a family get-together. It is normal, he said, in this Bedouin community in the Al

Revealed: civilian toll of a deadly assault that has ravaged Gaza PALESTINIAN CRISIS

Shouka hamlet outside the southernmost Gaza town of Rafah to socialise at each other's homes on a summer evening, and that he and Jihad were especially close.

"I was always with him. He was an innocent person, kind. He was talking to me about how he was going to inherit part of his father's land and farm it and how he was going to get married and stay here." Nayef added tearfully: "He was a boy who had hopes. He wanted to live his life." He added: "What is my daughter going to think? She is going to grow up hating the Israelis."

The family say there was no shelling in the area at the time either before or after the incident; and that they therefore presume Jihad and Nayef were targeted by a tank crew. They insist there was no activity by militants against Israeli positions on the day of the attack. "This is an open area," said Nayef. "The resistance would not go there because they would be seen."

By contrast, the Israel Defence Forces said, without specifying Al Shouka, that on 10 September it had identified and hit "two men" moving near its forces in southern Gaza crouching on the ground, and "apparently planting explosives". Nayef is adamant that on the night in question he and Jihad were merely pausing on an evening stroll to his own house. The PCHR, which seeks to monitor every violent Palestinian death, does not only focus on the Israel-Palestinian conflict. It has, for example, repeatedly condemned the killing and injuring of growing numbers of civilians, also including children, during mounting inter-Palestinian disputes in Gaza; shootings by Palestinian security forces themselves; attacks on Christian churches by Muslims protesting against the Pope; the injury of civilians, including children, by Palestinian-fired Qassam rockets which fall short of targets in Israel; and the kidnapping last month of two Fox TV employees which has deterred journalists from visiting Gaza.

But Hamdi Shaqqura of PCHR's Gaza office - which accuses Israel of using repeated closures and destruction of the power supply to operate a policy of "collective punishment" in breach of international law in Gaza, argues that the excuse of "collateral damage" cannot justify the "very high" death toll in the operations since 15 June. He adds: "Israel's forces have been acting excessively and disproportionately, and this explains the high figures for the number of innocent civilians killed by them."

At the other, northern end of Gaza, close to the al-Nada apartment blocks between Beit Ha-noun and Beit Lahiya, Aref Abu Qaida, 16, was killed by an artillery shell on 1 August. Sharif Harafin, 15, said: "We had been playing football and we had just finished. I was carrying the ball. I was going to my home, and [Aref] was going to his home. I heard a loud boom and then I saw him cut to pieces."

As his family displayed Aref 's shredded red baseball cap, Sharif said he saw his friend's severed head on the ground, adding: "His chest was torn out by the rocket. People were collecting parts of his body. I was crying a lot."

The IDF says that on 1 August it had fired and hit "a number of Palestinians" in "the area of Beit Lahiya" who had "approached a number of rocket launchers placed in the area". Both PCHR and local residents, including Mohammed Abu Qaida, 39, the dead boy's uncle, say that, while three other civilians were wounded, the only other death in this incident was that of Mer-vat Sharekh, 24, a woman who was visiting relatives from Rafah and who died in hospital an hour later.

Although the area had been shelled before, and some residents had fled in response to Israeli warnings the previous week, Mr Abu Qaida said the area had been quiet on the day - except that Qassam rockets had been fired about four hours earlier from northern settlements more than a kilometre away from the flats.

The IDF said last night that, of those killed in Gaza, it had the "positive identities of over 220 gunmen killed in fighting, and can confirm their affiliation with terror organisations". The 220 figure - said to be "unbelievable" by Mr Shaqqura - coupled with another 20 dead which the military acknowledges as genuine civilians, is all the more strikingly at variance with PCHR figures since it produces a total exceeding the centre's own records. Mr Shaqqura said that, at the absolute minimum, the IDF figures do not take into account the casualties under 18 - which PCHR estimates at 44 and from which he said every effort is made to exclude the "rare" teenagers with militant connections - or eight women killed since 25 June. "We do not believe their figures. We do not believe their investigations." The IDF said: "Since the abduction of Cpl Gilad Shalit by the Hamas and PRC terror organisations,

Revealed: civilian toll of a deadly assault that has ravaged Gaza PALESTINIAN CRISIS

the IDF has been operating in the Gaza Strip against terrorist infrastructure and in order to secure the release of Cpl Shalit. In the course of the operations, the IDF engaged in intense fighting with Palestinian gunmen, who chose heavily populated areas as their battlegrounds. The IDF takes every measure to prevent harm to civilians, often at a risk to its soldiers."

The forgotten war in the Middle East

25 June Palestinian gunmen from the Hamas-linked Izzedine al-Qassam brigades cross from Gaza into Israel and launch a raid on an Israeli military patrol. Two Israeli soldiers are killed, four wounded and one, Cpl Gilad Shalit, is captured and taken back into Gaza.

28 June Israel masses troops before launching a reoccupation of the Gaza Strip under the code-name Operation Summer Rains. Civilian casualties mount as Israeli forces search the Khan Younis refugee camp for Cpl Shalit.

12 July Mimicking the tactics of Palestinian militants, Hizbollah launches mortars and rockets into northern Israel from southern Lebanon to divert attention from a cross-border raid that ambushes an Israeli military patrol, killing three soldiers and capturing two others. The raid threatens to draw the whole Middle East into conflict.

13 July International attention is diverted from Gaza as Israel launches a full military invasion of southern Lebanon in response to Hizbollah's attack. The mounting civilian death toll across Gaza pales in comparison to Lebanon as Israeli jets pummel infrastructure.

24 July As world powers frantically search for a UN-backed ceasefire in Lebanon, Israel increases its bombardment of the Gaza Strip in an attempt to force Palestinian militants to release Cpl Shalit. Under the codename Operation Samson's Pillars, Israeli jets pound Gaza's roads and buildings, including the power station.

14 August UN approves a ceasefire for Lebanon after four weeks of fighting which has left approximately 1,500 Lebanese and 150 Israelis dead. International community continues to ignore the conflict in Gaza over fears that Lebanon could slip back into warfare unless a UN peacekeeping force arrives in the region.

Mid-August-present Israel continues to carry out air strikes and raids in Gaza. At least 33 civilians have been killed since the beginning of August, 10 of whom were under the age of 18.

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Hopes grow for Kember's freedom

The Observer (London)

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TheObserver

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Byline: Jamie Doward, Home Affairs Editor

Body

THE IMMINENT release of hundreds of prisoners by the Iraqi authorities has raised hopes for the safe release of British hostage Norman Kember.

A video of the 74-year-old peace campaigner and three other hostages was shown on Arabic TV channel al-Jazeera yesterday with final demands from his kidnappers. The footage, dated 21 January, showed the men, seized in Baghdad last year, looking dishevelled and grim.

An al-Jazeera newsreader said the kidnappers, the little known Swords of the Righteous Brigade, had issued a statement with the tape saying it was the 'last chance' for the American and Iraqi authorities to 'release all Iraqi prisoners in return for freeing the hostages, otherwise their fate will be death'.

Anas Altikriti, the envoy dispatched by the Muslim Association of Britain to Iraq last year to co-ordinate appeals for Kember's release, said the fact the men were still alive was a 'huge relief'.

'I understand from my contacts in Iraq that between 200 and 300 detainees are going to be released in a week or so,' Altikriti said.

'We hope the group will see this as some sort of response to their initial demands. We will appeal to them to reciprocate. We're going to utilise the release of detainees to push for the release of the hostages.'

Altikriti said some 500 detainees had been released, following recent elections. Last week the US military said it had released half the Iraqi women in its prisons, but denied the move was a response to demands from any group of kidnappers, including those holding the American journalist Jill Carroll.

Altikriti said the new footage would give fresh impetus to moves to free the men. Unprecedented condemnation of their detention from all quarters of the Muslim world, including fundamentalist organisations such as Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood, raised hopes that the hostages would be spared the fate of Ken Bigley, the British contractor who was beheaded in October 2004.

Hopes grow for Kember's freedom

Last year the kidnappers dropped the deadline for executing the men, whom they accuse of being spies, following an appeal by Altikriti in the Iraqi media. There had been concerns the kidnappers had sold the hostages to other groups who were planning to ransom them.

Al-Jazeera's editor, Saad al-Dosari, declined to say how the station obtained the 55-second tape. Along with Kember, it shows Canadian hostages James Loney, 41, and Harmeet Singh Sooden, 32, and 54-year-old American Tom Fox. All four are members of Christian Peacemaker teams, which have been working in Iraq since October 2002, investigating claims of abuse by American and Iraqi forces against Iraqi detainees.

Kember's wife, Pat, made a televised plea to her husband's captors broadcast on al-Jazeera on 6 January. She said her husband had travelled to Iraq to promote peace. 'He is a very good man, always helping others,' she said. 'He has been a pacifist all his adult life. You will know that he and his three friends are against the war. They went to Iraq to listen to, and if possible help, the Iraqi people.'

A friend of the Kembers, Sue Claydon, said it was 'wonderful' to see evidence the captured Briton was still alive. 'When the abduction took place, a number of people asked how we thought Norman would cope. I said he was a rational, sensible man, and also a man of great faith, as is true of the other three men, and I think that is what is seeing them through this.'

A vigil for the four captives was held in Lodon's Trafalgar Square last Thursday evening to mark two months since they were taken hostage. Claydon said Mrs Kember was 'holding up very well' and was well supported by friends, family and members of her Baptist church.

More than 250 foreigners have been taken hostage in Iraq since the 2003 US-led invasion that toppled Saddam; at least 39 have been killed.

Norman Kember was shown, dishevelled but alive, with his co-captives on al-Jazeera yesterday.

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And Now, Islamism Trumps Arabism

The New York Times

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Length: 1456 words

Byline: By MICHAEL SLACKMAN; Mona el-Naggar contributed reporting from Egypt for this article, and Souad Mekhennet from Amman, Jordan.

Dateline: CAIRO

Body

SHE grew up in Cairo with the privileges that go to the daughter of a military officer, attended a university and landed a job in marketing. He grew up in a poor village of dusty unpaved roads, where young men work long hours in a brick factory while dreaming of getting a government job that would pay \$90 a month.

But Jihan Mahmoud, 24, from the middle-class neighborhood of Heliopolis, and Madah Ali Muhammad, 23, from a village in the Nile Delta, have come to the exact same conclusion about what they and their country need: a strong Islamic political movement.

"I have more faith in Islam than in my state; I have more faith in Allah than in Hosni Mubarak," Ms. Mahmoud said, referring to the president of Egypt. "That is why I am proud to be a Muslim."

The war in Lebanon, and the widespread conviction among Arabs that Hezbollah won that war by bloodying Israel, has fostered and validated those kinds of feelings across Egypt and the region. In interviews on streets and in newspaper commentaries circulated around the Middle East, the prevailing view is that where Arab nations failed to stand up to Israel and the United States, an Islamic movement succeeded.

"The victory that Hezbollah achieved in Lebanon will have earthshaking regional consequences that will have an impact much beyond the borders of Lebanon itself," Yasser Abuhilalah of Al Ghad, a Jordanian daily, wrote in Tuesday's issue.

"The resistance celebrates the victory," read the front-page headline in Al Wafd, an opposition daily in Egypt.

Hezbollah's perceived triumph has propelled, and been propelled by, a wave already washing over the region. Political Islam was widely seen as the antidote to the failures of Arab nationalism, Communism, socialism and, most recently, what is seen as the false promise of American-style democracy. It was that wave that helped the banned but tolerated Muslim Brotherhood win 88 seats in Egypt's Parliament last December despite the government's violent efforts to stop voters from getting to the polls. It was that wave that swept **Hamas** into power in the Palestinian government in January, shocking **Hamas** itself.

And Now, Islamism Trumps Arabism

"We need an umbrella," said Mona Mahmoud, 40, Jihan's older sister. "In the 60's, Arabism was the umbrella. We had a cause. Now we lack an umbrella. We feel lost in space. We need to be affiliated to something. Usually in our part of the world, because of what religion means to us, we immediately resort to it."

The lesson learned by many Arabs from the war in Lebanon is that an Islamic movement, in this case Hezbollah, restored dignity and honor to a bruised and battered identity. People in Egypt still talk painfully about the loss to Israel in 1967, a loss that was the beginning of the end of pan-Arabism as an ideology to unite the region and define its people.

Hezbollah's perceived victory has highlighted, and to many people here validated, the rise of another unifying ideology, a kind of Arab-Islamic nationalism. On the street it has even seemed to erase divisions between Islamic sects, like Sunni and Shiite. At the moment, the Hezbollah leader, Sheik Hassan Nasrallah, is widely viewed as a pan-Arab Islamic hero.

"The losers are going to be the Arab regimes, U.S.A. and Israel," said Dr. Fares Braizat of the Center for Strategic Studies at the University of Jordan. "The secular resistance movements are gone. Now there are the Islamists coming in. So the new nationalism is going to be religious nationalism, and one of the main reasons is dignity. People want their dignity back."

The terms Islamic nationalism and pan-Islamism have a negative connotation in the West, where they are associated with fundamentalism and terrorism. But that is increasingly not the case in Egypt. Under the dual pressures of foreign military attacks in the region and a government widely viewed as corrupt and illegitimate, Islamic groups are seen by many people as incorruptible, disciplined, efficient and caring. A victory for Hezbollah in Lebanon is by extension a victory for the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt.

"People will say Hezbollah achieved a very good thing, so why should we mistrust the Muslim Brotherhood," said Hassan Naffa, a professor of political science at Cairo University.

There is a wide diversity of views and agendas under the pan-Islamic-Arab umbrella. But as is often the case in politically aligned movements, those differences are easily papered over when that movement is in the opposition.

"Hezbollah is a resistance movement that has given us a solution," said Yomana Samaha, a radio talk-show host in Cairo who identified herself as secular and a supporter of separating religion and government. But when asked if she would vote for a Muslim Brotherhood candidate in Egypt, she said "Yeah, why not?"

It was an answer she seemed reluctant -- but relieved -- to state.

"If they have a solution," she repeated, "why not?"

A solution to what?

"Loss of dignity," said Mona Mahmoud, who is her friend.

Concepts of individual and collective identity are fluid here. During the British occupation of Egypt, a rise in Egyptian nationalism helped lead to independence in the early 1900's. After the revolution of 1952, Gamal Abdel Nasser led the country and the region to seek unity under the banner of Arabism. That was a theme trumpeted by leaders from Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi in Libya to Hafez al-Assad in Syria to Saddam Hussein in Iraq.

But according to many political scientists and intellectuals, the glue of pan-Arabism began to weaken in Egypt after defeat in the Arab-Israel War of 1967, a decline that quickened through the 1970's and into the 1980's.

"People think that this defeat was a punishment from God because we drifted far from the teachings of Islam," said Gamal Badawi, an Egyptian historian.

Since then there has been a steady and visible change in many Egyptians' relationship to political Islam. It is not that Egyptians are suddenly more religious, political analysts said. This has always been a religious country. It is

And Now, Islamism Trumps Arabism

that they are more apt to define themselves by their faith. On the streets, that is most evident in the number of women -- an overwhelming majority -- who cover their heads with Islamic headscarves, a sign not just of individual conviction but also of peer pressure.

"The failure of pan-Arabism, the lack of democracy, and corruption -- this drives people to an extent of despair where they start to find the solution in religion," said Gamal el-Ghitany, editor of Akhbar al-Adab, a literary magazine distributed in Egypt.

Echoing that view, Diah Rashwan, an expert in Islamic movements and analyst with the government-financed Center for Political and Strategic Studies in Cairo, said, "People have come to identify themselves more as Muslims during the last five years in response to the U.S.-led 'war on terrorism' which Egyptians frequently feel is a discriminatory campaign targeting Muslims and Islam worldwide."

But it is not just outside pressures that have pressed so many people of this nation, and this region, toward that view. The events that helped shape Mr. Muhammad's world view from his Delta village illustrate the way the government of Egypt also plays a role.

Last December Mr. Muhammad's uncle, Mustafa Abdel Salam, 61, was shot in the head and killed by the Egyptian police as he was going to pray at a mosque, according to witnesses, including Mr. Muhammad and other villagers. The killing occurred on the last day of voting in Egypt's parliamentary elections, a months-long process that was marred by police officers who were ordered to block voters from getting to the polls in many districts. The government grew concerned after candidates affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood began winning in record numbers. While the brotherhood is banned, candidates affiliated with the organization ran as independents.

The government says that the police did not fire live ammunition at citizens, but many people were killed and doctors and witnesses -- including Western diplomats -- said that the police did fire live rounds into people trying to vote. After the election was over and Mr. Abdel Salam was buried, the brotherhood-affiliated candidate visited the family to offer his condolences and help. The winning candidate, from the governing National Democratic Party, did not visit.

Mr. Muhammad said that the whole experience strengthened his conviction that "Islam is the solution" -- a phrase that is the slogan of the Muslim Brotherhood. "Our voice is not heard," said Mr. Muhammad. "It is only the authorities who have a say. The smallest thing, like we go to vote, and we get beaten. So I will hold on to my religion, and that's it."

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Graphic

Photos: The New Faithful -- In Lebanon, above, Egypt and across the Arab world, support for the Hezbollah leader Sheik Hassan Nasrallah is growing more fervent. (Photo by Wael Hamzeh/European Pressphoto Agency)(pg. 1)

Emboldened -- Demonstrators chant anti-Israel slogans in Cairo and vowed support for Hezbollah. (Photo by Shawn Baldwin for The New York Times)(pg. 3)

Load-Date: August 20, 2006

And Now, Islamism Trumps Arabism

End of Document

Immigration Tiff in Israel Splits Justices; DATELINE JERUSALEM

The Forward

May 19, 2006

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Section: News; Pg. 1

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Byline: Gershom Gorenberg

Body

Israeli law contains no provision "by which constitutional human rights give way in a time of war," even in a time of fighting terror, Israeli Chief Justice Aharon Barak wrote this week - taking his stand on one of the critical legal issues in Israel today. Barak's statement was part of a Supreme Court decision on a law barring the naturalization of Palestinians who marry Israelis.

Forthright as Barak's declaration might seem, however, the court's overall ruling was far murkier. Six out of 11 justices agreed that the law was too sweeping, violating Israeli Arabs' rights to marry and to equality. And yet, because a swing justice carefully straddled the issues, the court also voted, 6 to 5, to leave the law in force for now.

What's more, by concentrating on the security question, the court arguably evaded dealing with an even more difficult problem raised by the law: whether protecting Israel's Jewish majority justifies infringing on the Arab minority's civil rights. In other words, what comes first, being a Jewish state or being a democratic one?

The Citizenship and Entry Into Israel Law was first passed by the Knesset as a one-year emergency measure in 2003, and has since been extended several times. The law applies only to West Bank and Gaza Palestinians, blocking the usual process by which a noncitizen who marries an Israeli becomes a temporary resident and, after five years, a citizen. The law's official explanation stated that after the second intifada broke out in 2000, terror groups recruited Palestinians who had gained Israeli identification cards to help carry out terror attacks.

With rare exceptions, the Israelis who wed Palestinians are Arab. Such marriages are natural: During the long years when official policy was to make the line between Israel and the territories invisible, to integrate the two economies and to let Palestinians work inside Israel, social ties between Israeli and Palestinian Arabs expanded. Mixed couples took up residence on both sides of the line. More recently, with the economy in the territories deteriorating and travel to Israel sharply restricted, such couples are much more likely to live on the Israeli side. Palestinian spouses who can't gain residency face the constant risk of expulsion.

Challenging the law, civil rights organizations argue that it violates the Israeli spouse's right to create a family and that it discriminates against Israeli Arabs as a group. Attorney Orna Kohn of Adalah, an Israeli Arab rights center that filed a suit, estimates that "several thousand" families have been put in limbo by the law, with some husbands and wives forced to live apart from their spouses and children. In response to the legal challenge, the law was softened last summer when it was renewed. It now gives the interior minister discretion to naturalize men over 35 and women over 25 - considered much lower terror risks.

Immigration Tiff in Israel Splits Justices DATELINE JERUSALEM

The Supreme Court's long-delayed decision, rendered May 14, pitted two legal titans against each other. Chief Justice Barak, due to retire later this year, is a controversial judicial activist who has sought to extend the court's reach - especially by giving wide meaning to the Basic Law: Human Dignity and Freedom, a Knesset-passed bill of rights that has constitutional status. In his lengthy opinion, Barak argued that "the additional security produced by the sweeping ban" on Palestinians "is not proportionate to the added damage to the family life and equality of the Israeli spouses." To balance security and rights, he said, the state needed to screen applicants for naturalization individually. The law, he said, should be overturned.

Against Barak stood Mishael Cheshin, deputy chief justice, rendering his final judgment before mandatory retirement. Cheshin rejected Barak's view that a citizen has the constitutional right to bring a noncitizen spouse into the country, stressing that a nation can bar immigration of enemy aliens. And, he stressed, "The state of Israel, as we all know, is at war - or at the least, near war - with the Palestinian Authority and the terror organizations operating from it." He wrote that since Hamas's electoral victory in January, "Hamas and the Palestinian Authority... have become one and the same." The law, therefore, could stand.

Since four justices agreed with Barak and four with Cheshin, the crucial vote was cast by Edmond Levy, an Orthodox justice known for his frequent dissents. Levy asserted that the law harms "not only couples wishing to marry, but also the democratic character of the State of Israel and the delicate fabric of relations with a not insignificant community living within it." The state, he wrote, must institute individual screening instead.

But Levy, preferring judicial restraint, gave the state nine months to change procedures. He let the law stand in the meantime.

In practical terms, that meant defeat for the rights groups and families that they represented, while tossing the issue back into the lap of the Knesset and the Cabinet.

Reactions were swift. "This is really a racist decision. They've shown us we are second-class citizens, or third class," said Ranit Tabilah of the Galilee Arab town of Shfaram. Her husband, Hatem, is from Nablus in the West Bank. Hatem, an electrician, was legally working for an Israeli firm when he met Ranit in 1999. They married the following year and now have two daughters, ages 5 and 3. Hatem received temporary residency before the citizenship law was enacted, but his status expires in November and he will only turn 35. He won't be eligible to reapply until mid 2007. "He's not interested in politics," said Ranit, a vocational college teacher. "If they thought he was a security threat, they wouldn't have given him a [work] permit before we were married."

"This is one of the most disappointing decisions ever handed down by the court," said Dan Yakir, chief legal counsel for the Association for Civil Rights in Israel. ACRI also challenged the law. "It's clear," Yakir added, "that the security issue was only a thin veil over the demographic issue": the desire to maintain a Jewish majority by preventing more Arabs from becoming citizens.

In contrast, prominent legal scholar Amnon Rubinstein - a former Knesset member for the left-wing Meretz party - publicly defended the court's ruling. Rubinstein, now president of the Interdisciplinary Center in Herzliyah and chair of a government-appointed panel on immigration policy, said that a country has the right to prevent immigration from a hostile entity. The law, he said, should be amended to refer to a state of war rather than singling out residents of a particular territory. Indeed, in the wake of the ruling, Justice Minister Haim Ramon said he would submit a comprehensive immigration bill in the form of a Basic Law, giving it constitutional status and putting it outside of the court's reach.

The common denominator of those responses is that Israel faces an immigration issue, not just one of security. The last major Knesset debate on immigration was in 1970, when parliament defined the word "Jew" in the Law of Return and extended immigration rights to non-Jewish children and to grandchildren of Jews. Israel was a poor country then; the thought that it would one day draw economic migrants was unimaginable. Moreover, the problem of maintaining a Jewish majority was raised back then only by the most dovish opponents of keeping the occupied territories.

Immigration Tiff in Israel Splits Justices DATELINE JERUSALEM

Since the 1990s, though, emigration from the former Soviet Union has brought hundreds of thousands of non-Jews who are eligible for citizenship, by marriage or by Jewish ancestry, under the Law of Return. Israel's leap to a European-level economy also has attracted foreign workers - perhaps better termed "undocumented immigrants" - and some have been here for years and have raised children who know no other country but lack citizenship.

But while those groups are likely to speak Hebrew and to seek integration into Israel's Jewish majority, Palestinian immigrants nearly always join the Arab minority. Ironically, the same sudden concern with demography that has pushed many rightists to accept the idea of ceding territory has translated into desire to keep Palestinians from gaining citizenship.

In the Supreme Court ruling, only one justice, Ayala Procaccia, called attention to that obvious political reality. In the Knesset debate on the Citizenship Law, Procaccia wrote, "the demographic issue hovered over the entire legislative process." She noted that during the debate, two leading Likud figures, Reuven Rivlin, then Knesset speaker, and Gideon Ezra, now Kadima's minister of the environment, warned that Palestinians were using family unification as a means to implement a "right of return" to pre-1967 Israel. Other Knesset members said that the law would stop the "demographic danger."

While acknowledging genuine security concerns, Procaccia suggested that their force was lessened by the other issue looming in the background, namely demography. And demography, she implied, could not justify impinging on Arab citizens' rights.

Procaccia sided with Barak. Yet the chief justice himself accepted the state's argument that the law was designed solely for security reasons and not demographic ones. Barak thereby sidestepped the demographic question.

Judges "are afraid of questions like that," leading legal commentator Moshe Negbi said. "It's a frightening business, because all of us, as people who live here and believe in this country, want to hope that it's possible to sustain a Jewish democratic state. And these questions arouse the fear that maybe that's not true. People prefer to repress them. It's psychological."

Yet the court's own decision makes those questions impossible to push aside. Now the politicians must change the law or abandon it. Despite Ramon's declaration, a bill with constitutional status stands little chance. Regular legislation easily could spark new requests for the court to intervene. Barak and Cheshin will be gone, and other justices will have their turn to try to be forthright.

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Bravo to pro-war monks

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Byline: David Warren, The Ottawa Citizen

Body

My spirits were lifted this week, when a bunch of "pro-war Buddhist monks" (so described by the news agency) in Colombo, Sri Lanka, attacked a rostrum full of Hindu, Muslim, Christian and Buddhist clerical peaceniks.

The peaceniks were promoting various acts of appeasement toward the psychopaths in Sri Lanka's northern jungles who are called the Tamil Tigers.

But mostly, they were like peaceniks anywhere -- on the lookout for a photo opportunity.

I must admit, there is a certain thrill in sanctimony, even when, as in the West, it involves taking no risks -- and the harm you do, by undermining people who are risking their lives, can only come to others. That does not make it less evil, however. In my experience, the sanctimonious pose is the invariable indicator of a fraud, before God and his fellow man. You find that the moment his ideals are put to the test.

Whereas truly righteous indignation is not a pose, and will endure testing.

Naturally, the peaceniks fought back when attacked. Their prescriptions are only meant for others. It was a good scuffle, according to Reuters journalists, although "there were no reports of any serious injuries."

Hundreds of people have been slaughtered this year alone by the Tamil Tigers, who use -- who pioneered -- many of the techniques that fanatical Muslim terrorists now use around the world. They are the original "suicide bombers," according to one account, and pioneering recruiters of women and children. Their fanaticism is more ethnic than Hindu -- but anti-Muslim as well as anti-Sinhalese. Arguing with them is as pointless an activity as this planet offers. They are armed, organized, determined, ruthless and the thing to do is kill them. Capturing them is only a holding action, because they will return to slaughter when released.

As usual, the western media tend to romanticize the Tamil Tigers, and give easily distracted attention to any "war crimes" that could possibly be charged against the legitimate forces of the government of Sri Lanka. What can I say? It is hard to account for the behaviour of some western journalists without a theory of demonic possession. I'm sure the pro-war Buddhist monks would agree.

All I can say is, "Bravo, pro-war Buddhist monks!" You do honour to your saffron robes.

Bravo to pro-war monks

Am I a warmonger, as many of my correspondents, and some journalistic colleagues, suggest? I am glad they are able to get something right. When there is a war to fight, and no alternative to fighting it, you bet I am a warmonger. The sooner we have destroyed the enemy, the sooner we can get back to sucking our thumbs.

The rostrum I should particularly like to attack -- ideally with the help of a few battle-seasoned Buddhist monks -- is that upon which the West's diplomatic community arranged itself last week, after brokering a Lebanese ceasefire that leaves Hezbollah neither disarmed nor accommodating; waiting to have its missiles replenished by its masters in Tehran and Damascus. I felt particularly ill while reading Condoleezza Rice's defence of the infamy in Wednesday's Washington Post.

It contained the ridiculous lie that Hezbollah had earned "the blame of the world for causing the war." (Lying is another indication of poor character.)

The war wasn't over. Israel hadn't won it yet. They had no business signing a ceasefire agreement before Hezbollah had been destroyed. The rest of the world had no business making them sign a ceasefire that the whole Muslim world is reading as a "hudna" (a deceitful peace, allowing one's own side to regroup). I can only hope a few lessons are learned, and that the next round in this war will end differently.

In the meantime, do not ask peace from Israel. The sponsors of Hezbollah and Hamas, chiefly Iran and Syria, have been perfectly candid about their intentions: "Ceasefire now, annihilation later."

I am a Catholic. We have our own history with the Jews. But forget that: no time to discuss it. If the reader of this column is a Jew, I want him to go to the mirror right away, and say 1,000 times, "never again!" And I want every Catholic, every Christian, every decent person, Muslims included, to say the same on Israel's behalf.

This is a war -- a real, honest-to-goodness war between irreconcilables -- and it ends not in ceasefire, but in victory or defeat.

David Warren's column appears Sunday, Wednesday and Saturday.

Load-Date: August 20, 2006

Our vital role in Iraq's road to freedom

The Advertiser (Australia)

August 4, 2006 Friday

State Edition

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Section: OPINION; Pg. 18

Length: 759 words

Byline: WITH ANDREW SOUTHCOTT

Body

NIGHTLY TV images of car bombings or attacks on mosques in Iraq are no doubt confronting. They raise questions about how well the reconstruction of Iraq is going and whether Australia should be there.

Yet the insurgent attacks on civilians in Iraq are only part of the picture. The work that many young dedicated Australian servicemen and women are doing to rebuild this shattered country rarely hits the news and yet has been quietly effective in a typically understated Australian way. An Australian Anzac-class frigate, HMAS Ballarat, undertakes important work in the Persian Gulf monitoring Iraqi dhows for illegal activity and protecting Iraq's offshore oil platforms, their only significant source of export income.

Orions from RAAF base Edinburgh, in Adelaide's north, conduct maritime patrols to support the security of Iraq's shipping. In Al Muthanna province, ADF personnel have trained an Iraqi brigade and provided security for Japanese engineers to rebuild local infrastructure. Significantly, Al Muthanna is the first province where security has been handed to the Iraqi military and shows the way forward for the coalition in Iraq.

Australia's role has not gone unnoticed. Senior U.S. commanders have been impressed by the cultural sensitivity Australian troops have shown in working with local Iraqi people. They believe the Australian approach on the ground is one they could learn from. It should be a matter of pride that our families, schools and communities prepare these young Australians so well for such a challenging role.

The work in Al Muthanna province is part of a long tradition in the ADF of working in a counter-insurgency and nation-building role. East Timor is only the most recent example of this. In the 1940s and '50s, British and Australian special forces worked with their local counterparts in Malaya to defeat a communist insurgency. Their success was instrumental in achieving Malaysia's independence as a free and stable nation. Regardless of whether you supported the military action in Iraq in 2003, the important question is to deal with the situation in Iraq as it is now.

Looking at Iraq's neighbours, it is clear that a stable and democratic Iraq is far better than any alternative. Iran continues to defy world opinion in pursuit of a nuclear capability. Syria and Iran fund and support the terrorist organisations of Hamas and Hezbollah and their attacks on the people of Israel

Syria stands accused of the 2005 assassination of Lebanese prime minister Hariri. It is in no one's interests to have a weak Iraq surrounded by rogue states.

Our vital role in Iraq 's road to freedom

After World War II, rather than turn their back on Japan and Germany, the Allies recognised that it was in their interests to rebuild their defeated foes. The Marshall Plan helped reconstruct Western Europe and the U.S. and Commonwealth countries, including Australia, helped provide stability for Japan.

With the enormous revenue generated by oil, Iraq today should be an affluent country. The fact it is not is due to decades of neglect under Saddam Hussein. Rather than leave Iraq to fend for itself, Australia's role should be, together with other responsible countries, to see that the Iraqi military and Iraqi security forces are in a position to safeguard the security of the population of Iraq.

In March, 2004, Mark Latham announced that it would be the policy of the Australian Labor Party to have Australian troops in Iraq home by Christmas. What was never made clear was which troops he was referring to or even, according to one Labor candidate, which Christmas.

I do not see our role in Iraq as a commitment without end. But it would be wrong for Australia to turn its back on the people of Iraq before they can provide their own security. The Iraqi people and the Iraqi Government do not want us to withdraw. It is in all of our interests that Iraq emerges as a stable and democratic country rather than leave it as a failed state which will be a haven to Islamic terrorists.

*

Andrew Southcott is the federal member for Boothby and recently visited Australian service personnel deployed in the Middle East as part of the ADF Parliamentary Program.

SECOND THOUGHTS

AUSTRALIAN FORCES IN IRAQ

* About 1400 personnel are involved in Operation Catalyst, the Australian Defence Force contribution to the coalition in Iraq.

* The commitment includes 110 security and escort personnel in Baghdad; 440 in the southern province of Dhi Qar; a team of 34 helping to train the Iraqi army; 330 RAAF personnel flying Hercules and Orions; and HMAS Ballarat deployed in the Persian Gulf.

Load-Date: August 3, 2006

Thinking Right; Complacency won't subdue ruthless foe

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

August 1, 2006 Tuesday

Online Edition

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The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Section: EDITORIAL; Pg. 0

Length: 761 words

Byline: JIM WOOTEN

Staff

Body

Tuesday, August 1, 2006, 06:18 AM

Hezbollah and its Iranian and Syrian puppet-masters have won the moment. In provoking Israel to bomb a village, killing 37 children and at least 20 adults, terrorists willing to use civilians as human shields have found the leverage they need to win.

They can't win on the battlefield. Not al-Qaida, not the Baathists in Iraq, not Hezbollah, not Hamas, nor Syria, nor Iran nor any other assemblage of jihadists.

Civilian deaths, and especially the deaths of children, are useful to terrorists. They influence world opinion and arm the anti-war left in America with powerful images of the suffering war inflicts on innocents. Those compelling images can shift battlefield advantage, one example of which is Israel's 48-hour suspension of air attacks in southern Lebanon.

It's unfathomable cruelty to use civilians as shields, as Hezbollah does, but that is the nature of this enemy. Every death that weakens Israeli or U.S. resolve, and every death that tilts world opinion against the United States and Israel, is of military value.

And if Hezbollah fires rockets from civilian areas and draws retaliation killing civilians, it can hope, too, that the attack will encourage the Lebanese to identify with Hezbollah. The deaths of women and children are all-around victories for terrorists.

And yet, despite the risk, Israel can't sit back and do nothing --- and no matter the consequences, if any, for the November elections in this country, the Bush administration should not lean on Israel to stop pursuing Hezbollah until it's rendered militarily inert.

Thinking Right Complacency won't subdue ruthless foe

We are in a long war, both the United States and Israel, and if world and domestic opinion shapes the battlefield, we lose.

Europeans and Americans have lived for decades without having to commit, as the Israelis do daily, to the life-or-death question of which siege, which provocation, which round of suicide bombings is an immediate threat to their survival, and which can be suffered, lest retaliation evoke the disapproval of a "neutral" world quick to judge as "disproportionate" any response unintentionally harming anybody not certified as a credentialed, card-carrying terrorist.

Peace, or the illusion of it, combined in this country with a volunteer army that frees all citizens of the obligation that prior generations shared to put themselves at risk, has nurtured a detachment that carries consequences.

One disturbing consequence is that, just as members of the U.S. Supreme Court think it useful to look to international law for guidance when interpreting the U.S. Constitution, some Americans, and a sizable chunk of the left, now see themselves as arbiters of international disputes.

To the liberal mind, as it has evolved through decades of the tenured professors who took their anti-war, anti-Vietnam radicalism to campus, no nation or culture is inherently superior, except militarily and economically.

The United States does not enter any dispute with moral advantage or intent presumed to be noble. To the left, this country --- but for world opinion and international bodies positioned to temper democracy's predatory impulses, military and economic --- would abuse and exploit, conducting wars for oil simply to avoid the cost and inconvenience of energy independence.

Unlike the Israelis, Americans are now free, as referees in a sporting contest, to sit out conflicts that don't meet their test of worthiness, that happen not to fit in with their lifestyles, that fall on the watch of a president they dislike or that aren't predetermined to be essential to the survival of this country or to the free world.

We are a nation seriously complacent, far too susceptible to photos and to emotion to sustain a war on terrorism against an enemy given to butchery, to suicide as a weapon, and to treating civilian innocents, including women and children, as soldiers on the battlefield.

We are a compassionate people who simply cannot imagine any human inviting an enemy to kill women and children. But that is the face of the evil that we encounter and that Israel encounters in the war on terrorism.

We can recoil in horror. We can pretend that if the militants saw our compassionate side, knew us as we know ourselves, they'd see too, as our anti-war left does, that war is not the answer.

But when confronted with an enemy willing to serve up children, war is the answer. And until Hezbollah is defeated, we should not try to persuade Israel otherwise.

http://www.ajc.com/opinion/content/shared-blogs/ajc/thinkingright/entries/2006/08/01/complacency_wont_subdue_ruthle.html

Load-Date: March 25, 2008

DEATH AT QANA: The world reacts

The Irish Times
July 31, 2006 Monday

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Section: WORLD; Qana Bombing; Pg. 8

Length: 787 words

Body

The following are a selection of comments made yesterday in the aftermath of the Israeli attack on Qana:

Lebanese prime minister Fouad Siniora: "There is no place on this sad morning for any discussion other than an immediate and unconditional ceasefire as well as an international investigation into the Israeli massacres in Lebanon ... The persistence of Israel in its heinous crimes against our civilians will not break the will of the Lebanese people."

Israeli prime minister Ehud Olmert: "I would like to express my deep sorrow at the death of innocent civilians . . . [but] we will not blink in front of Hizbullah and we will not stop the offensive despite the difficult circumstances."

US secretary of state Condoleezza Rice: "I think it is time to get to a ceasefire . . . We actually have to try and put one in place . . . We have to try and do our work well so that there will not be more and more and more incidents over many, many more years."

French president Jacques Chirac: "France condemns this unjustified action, which demonstrates more than ever the need for an immediate ceasefire, without which there will only be other such incidents."

Hizbullah statement: "This horrific massacre [at Qana] will not go without a response."

Jordan's King Abdullah: "This criminal aggression is an ugly crime that has been committed by the Israeli forces in the city of Qana that is a gross violation of all international statutes."

British foreign secretary Margaret Beckett: "It is absolutely dreadful, it is quite appalling. Undoubtedly today's events will make things worse, at least in the short term . . . We have repeatedly urged Israel to act proportionately."

EU foreign policy chief Javier Solana: "I have talked to the prime minister of Lebanon . . . I have expressed to him my profound dismay and deep sorrow at the attack and the death of innocent civilians in Qana. Nothing can justify that."

Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak: "The Arab Republic of Egypt expresses its profound alarm and its condemnation of the irresponsible Israeli bombing of the Lebanese village of Qana, which resulted in innocent casualties, mostly women and children."

Syrian president Bashar al-Assad: "The massacre committed by Israel in Qana this morning shows the barbarity of this aggressive entity. It constitutes state terrorism committed in front of the eyes and the ears of the world."

DEATH AT QANA: The world reacts

Arab League secretary-general Amr Moussa: "The attacks that Israeli forces are launching, targeting civilians and the Lebanese infrastructure, are another confirmation of Israeli aggressive intentions."

Senior **Hamas** lawmaker Mushir al-Masri: "In the face of this open war against the Arab and Muslim nations, all options are open, including striking [at] the depth of the Zionist entity."

Iranian foreign ministry spokesman Hamid Reza Asefi: "The Qana bombing is the outcome of [US secretary of state Condoleezza] Rice's trip to the region. Some American officials should be put on trial for the crimes in Lebanon."

Pope Benedict: "In the name of God, I call on all those responsible for this spiral of violence so that weapons are immediately laid down on all sides."

International Crisis Group analyst Nicholas Pelham: "Major Israeli assaults on Lebanon have ended following a major killing of civilians. [The bombing] makes the pressure for an immediate ceasefire that much greater. But an immediate ceasefire would make it more difficult to negotiate the entry of international forces because the pressure will be on Israel rather than Hizbullah."

UN secretary-general Kofi Annan: "No one disputes Israel's right to defend itself, but by its manner of doing so it has caused, and is causing, death and suffering on a wholly unacceptable scale . . . The most urgent need is to bring the fighting to a halt without further delay . . ."

US ambassador to the UN, John Bolton (speaking outside the UN Security Council chamber): "It says something about the morality and respect for human life of Hizbullah that they would use innocent civilians as shields . . . But that is why as well, in Israel's exercise of its legitimate right to self-defence, they have to take into account this barbaric practice that Hizbullah has and exercise the utmost restraint so that Lebanese civilians are spared the brunt of this conflict."

British UN ambassador Emyr Jones Parry: "It reinforces the need for the violence to end now. That will be achievable through a Security Council resolution which should embody an immediate cessation of hostilities and set out the political basis for resolving this crisis on a longer-term basis . . . There is no reason why such a resolution should not be introduced into the council very quickly and adopted as a matter of urgency."

Load-Date: July 31, 2006

Complacency won't subdue ruthless foe

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

August 1, 2006 Tuesday

Main Edition

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The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Section: EDITORIAL; Pg. 11A

Length: 755 words

Byline: JIM WOOTEN

Staff

Body

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* Jim Wooten is associate editor of the editorial page. His column runs Tuesdays, Fridays and Sundays.

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Load-Date: August 1, 2006

Statue attack fuels fears of an Islamist Egypt

The Sunday Telegraph (LONDON)

June 18, 2006 Sunday

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Section: NEWS; International; Pg. 30

Length: 698 words

Byline: HARRY DE QUETTEVILLE in Cairo

Body

A RELIGIOUSLY motivated attack on statues at a museum in Cairo has sparked outcry in Egypt and fuelled fears that the country is veering towards an Islamic state.

The attack on three artworks, by a black-clad and veiled woman screaming, "Infidels, infidels!" followed a fatwa issued by the Grand Mufti of Cairo, Ali Gomaa, which banned all decorative statues of living beings.

It led to furious criticism of the mufti from Egyptian liberals. In a televised debate with the mufti after the attack, one poet raged that "the prevalent religious discourse in the country encourages terror".

Although the ancient treasures of Egypt have been protected under Islam so far, an increasing extremism in the country could make statues such as the quartzite head of Nefertiti, the colossus of Amenhotep, and the golden death mask of Tutankhamen possible targets in future.

At the scene of the attack, in the villa and museum of the Egyptian sculptor, Hassan Heshmat, guards said they had been woken in the middle of the night by the woman's shouts and the sounds of destruction.

"It was a fully covered, religious woman," said Raisa Intesar, who looks after both the museum and Mr Heshmat, who is now 86. "She had jumped over the wall. We rushed out to stop her but by the time we had overpowered her, she had destroyed three statues."

The damaged works included Motherhood, a piece featuring three delicately carved heads, all of which had been snapped off. Also damaged was a smaller piece, The Victory Leap, Heshmat's tribute to Egyptian troops in the 1973 Yom Kippur war.

But the patriotic sentiment of the work was lost on the attacker, who was intent on following a religious imperative. "She had been listening to the mufti, and was following his orders," Ms Intesar said.

In Islam, representations of the human form and potential idolatry are particularly sensitive topics and helped to fuel the riots over the depiction of the Prophet earlier this year. So, in Egypt, which has become markedly more conservative in recent years, artists such as Mr Heshmat now find that national pride is losing out to religious fervour.

The attack exemplifies the clash of secular and religious societies in Egypt where, on the streets of Cairo, beauties in low-cut tops mingle with veiled women who walk behind their husbands.

Statue attack fuels fears of an Islamist Egypt

"We are seeing an increase of conservative, Islamist feeling," said Nabil Abdel Fatah, from the Al Ahram centre for Political and Strategic studies in Cairo.

"The Islamisation of Egyptian society is happening from the bottom up, and now it has reached the middle classes - the doctors, the lawyers.

"Over the next few years political Islam will grow and grow," he added. "The duality between secular and religious is very dangerous and will lead to a very serious conflict in Egyptian society. We are already seeing terror attacks. And we will see new radical groups who will want to change the state in the most basic way - by suicide bombs and assassination."

Comfortably installed in the cafe at the top of Egypt's parliament building, 72-year-old Sheikh Said Askar smiled benignly at such ideas.

Sheikh Askar is one of 88 members of parliament for the Muslim Brotherhood, whose offshoots include **Hamas**, now in power in the Palestinian territories, and which seeks to impose Sharia law throughout Egypt. Although he is also a long-serving scholar at Cairo's al Azhar mosque, from where the mufti issued his fatwa on statues, he said the Brotherhood will use its growing voice in parliament - not bombs - to effect change. "I want to see Egypt become an Islamic state," he said. "We are near to that."

As little as a year ago, such an idea would have been fanciful. Sheikh Askar was locked up ahead of last autumn's parliamentary elections, from which the Brotherhood was banned. Running as independents, and despite widespread government interference, its members markedly exceeded expectations by winning enough seats to become the main opposition. Had it not been so restricted, some say, it could have won.

"I understand that an Islamic Egypt scares the West," said Sheikh Askar. "But the secular government has failed the people. Now our group will spread the glory of Islam."

Load-Date: June 18, 2006

'Nobody here is a terrorist ... But we are all ready to fight'

South China Morning Post

June 15, 2006 Thursday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 10

Length: 713 words

Byline: Nick Meo in Jakarta

Body

The hard-eyed young men in **Hamas**-style headbands, mujahedeen T-shirts, and woollen Afghan caps formed a small, silent army for the television cameras outside Cipinang Prison as they waited for their hero.

The discipline was impressive until the alleged spiritual head of Southeast Asia's most dangerous terrorist organisation, Jemaah Islamiah, emerged from jail, 45 minutes earlier than expected.

The young men mobbed him, drowned out his carefully prepared speech with cries of Allahu akbar! (God is great), punched the air, and jostled with photographers and camera crews who threatened to outnumber them. Cameramen fought each other and the fanatics to snatch pictures of the elderly, stick-thin religious teacher who has become, to many, the face of terror in Indonesia.

Abu Bakar Bashir's release yesterday from prison, where he had been jailed for giving his blessing to the plotters of the 2002 Bali bombings was supposed to be a triumph for Indonesia's religious hardliners.

It was carefully staged and coincided with the launch of a book, written in prison, declaring his innocence - its title translates as *I Was Slandered*.

The whole event was a bit of a flop. The crowd of 150 fanatics only seemed to underline the lack of mainstream support for religious extremists who are regarded by most Indonesians as mad and dangerous - although many moderate Muslims do revere Bashir as a teacher and believe his claims of innocence.

"I will continue to fight to uphold the Islamic sharia," he said in a brief speech before being whisked off. It was all over in a couple of minutes, leaving a bizarre array of oddballs milling around in search of more excitement.

To a man and woman they all insisted that the preacher was innocent of involvement in the Bali bomb blasts which killed 202, including 11 Hong Kong residents.

Gampung Suharto, 42, claimed to have been an accountant for a US company and said his support for Jemaah Islamiah, had cost him his job.

"I didn't mind," Mr Suharto said. "That company was damned by God."

The jobless accountant insisted that the Bali bombs had been planted by the CIA to discredit Bashir, and claimed that the 150 supporters had actually been 3,000.

'Nobody here is a terrorist ... But we are all ready to fight'

Other supporters wore an array of skull-caps, homemade uniforms and badges from radical mosques and disbanded Islamic militias which have fought bloody battles all over Indonesia. Some wore Afghan woollen caps, a mark of honour in jihadi circles where they are worn by veterans of al-Qaeda training camps. The boys wearing them sniffed disdainfully when asked where the caps had come from, but barely looked old enough to have trained overseas as grown-up terrorists.

A man who wore a Lashkar Mujahideen badge on his black paramilitary-style waistcoat, praised Mr Bashir and condemned the Indonesian leaders who he said were his "oppressors".

"Nobody here today is a terrorist," the man said. "But we are all ready to fight jihad. I would, at a moment's notice."

Women were present too. They stood at the back. One grandmotherly figure with tears pouring down her face said Mr Bashir was loved by the people.

"He fights for Islam and he wasn't responsible for the Bali bombs," she said. The woman, Nur Diniyah Binti Hasan Saad, said she was a professor of chemistry and had sent two sons to Mr Bashir's Al-Mukim religious school, which security experts say is notorious for producing terrorists.

However eccentric his supporters, yesterday's release marked the beginning of a new phase for the radical preacher who had been heard of by few Indonesians before his arrest.

Mr Bashir is expected to become a media celebrity, touring radical mosques with his trademark firebrand rhetoric and attempting to energise a hardline fringe that has seen its fortunes wane since his jailing.

The bombing campaign blamed on Jemaah Islamiyah failed to ignite jihad in Indonesia and the carnage even repelled many hardliners. It also led to effective police crackdowns in which most leaders were jailed.

Mr Bashir also has a tailor-made political weapon, a campaign for anti-pornography legislation which has already galvanised Islamic radicals. Despite the poor display outside the prison yesterday for the radical fringe it was a day to remember. Their star performer is back in business.

Graphic

Credit: EPA; Supporters of radical Muslim cleric Abu Bakar Bashir cheer as he is released from prison in Jakarta yesterday. ; Abu Bakar Bashir

Load-Date: June 15, 2006

Irresistible force, immovable object

Weekend Australian

July 8, 2006 Saturday

SA Review Edition

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Section: REVIEW; Books Review; Pg. 8

Length: 800 words

Byline: Peter Rodgers

Body

MATP

A front-row seat to the Israel conflict isn't exactly safe but it brings invaluable insight,

writes Peter Rodgers

It's Easier to Reach Heaven Than the End of the Street: A Jerusalem Memoir

By Emma Williams

Bloomsbury, 448pp, \$45

THIS is a clever book, in the best sense of the word. Emma Williams deftly weaves two stories into one, using a personal journey through the grinding Israeli-Palestinian conflict to explore its larger dynamics and personalities. But it is mostly a depressing read, and so it should be.

Williams is an unusual professional mix of doctor and journalist. In August 2000 she arrived in Jerusalem with her three young children to join her husband. There she worked as a doctor, also writing for The Spectator and several other newspapers about Israeli-Palestinian affairs.

A month after her arrival, the second Palestinian uprising was triggered by Ariel Sharon's provocative tour of the Temple Mount complex in Jerusalem's Old City, which includes the third holiest site in Islam.

The violence over the next five years would leave thousands dead and injured. Most may have been Palestinian but Israelis -- including civilians, women and children -- suffered grievously at the hands of Palestinian suicide bombers. The head of one bomber, who had disguised himself as an Orthodox Jew, landed in the schoolyard where Williams's children played daily.

Terrorism, she writes, is both a weapon of the weak against an enemy of superior military strength and a weapon of the strong to force the weak to submit: "Either way it is repellent."

In a chilling comment, one Palestinian boasted to Williams that a suicide bomb was far more advanced than any weapon yet designed: "It walks, it talks, it thinks. It can decide when and where to detonate. It can withdraw, unexploded, if it thinks it best. It can hesitate, change its mind, go back again and then explode." To this, Williams's

Irresistible force, immovable object

husband, working with the UN, retorted that some Palestinians just didn't understand how disastrous the suicide bombings were for them. Their sheer awfulness brought down "universal condemnation" and silenced any debate.

The book's strength lies in its many conversations, which capture the relentless determination of what Williams rightly describes as "two extraordinary peoples" to remain blind to the plight of the other. Perhaps she is right in arguing that only a few are bent on killing. But this mentality permanently stains a relationship in which both sides have "manipulated their suffering" and put a premium on victimhood.

Israelis occasionally like to remind us that even paranoiacs have enemies, and there are good grounds for wariness and suspicion on the part of the Jewish state. Williams explores both the Israelis' "underlying, omnipotent fear of annihilation" and the terrible cost that occupation of the Palestinians inflicts on Israel, physically and mentally. Fear shackles "every Israeli, hanging around their future".

On the Palestinian side, there is bitterness, resentment, rebellion and a clinging to a full "right of return" for Palestinian refugees from the war of 1948, which created modern Israel. That's a non-starter for Israelis, as it would destroy their country more effectively than any amount of terrorist bombings.

In countless conversations, Williams writes, Arafat's figure "lurked like a djinn in the background: terrorist, scapegoat, leader, figurehead, proxy, betrayer". Almost everyone called him a betrayer at some point: "Israelis because he had not brought them security, Palestinians because he had not brought them freedom, and internationals because they weren't sure where their donated money was going or whether, if ever, he was telling the truth."

The book gives little cause for optimism. Take the question of the forcible transfer of Palestinians from the West Bank to Jordan and possibly elsewhere in the Arab world, which former Israeli tourism minister Benny Elon tried to put back on the mainstream agenda with such persuasively phrased car stickers as "No Arabs, No Problem" and "Deport the Fers".

According to Williams, prime minister Sharon's spokesman Ra'anan Gissin said: "Sharon would like to expel the Palestinians but did

not believe this could be carried out under present conditions."

With this mentality lurking in Israel's political Right, with Palestinian politics now dominated by Hamas -- which remains nominally committed to Israel's destruction and called off its truce after the recent Gaza beach killings, allegedly by the Israeli military -- the notion of a negotiated two-state solution to the conflict is a myth. A Jerusalem Memoir makes a valuable, highly readable contribution in showing why.

Peter Rodgers has been Australia's ambassador to Israel; his latest book is Herzl's Nightmare: One Land, Two Peoples.

Load-Date: July 7, 2006

Syria: lift the veil and discover an enigma

The Sunday Telegraph (LONDON)

June 18, 2006 Sunday

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Section: FEATURES; Comment; Pg. 22

Length: 686 words

Byline: Mary Wakefield

Body

As the midday call to prayer spread out into Damascus last week, I felt a burst of anxiety. There were bullet holes in the roof of the El Hamidiyeh souq - a legacy of the troubled French mandate - and the floor was dotted with circles of sunlight. Women in black burqas drifted past, the tiny spotlights sliding over the folds of their nylon skirts, then men in white dresses, looking too young for their serious beards.

Day one in Syria and I felt jumpy, and judged. By the north gate of the Great Umayyad mosque, I put on a vast, grey, polyester burqa (mandatory for girl tourists), took off my shoes and stepped inside.

What was I expecting? Obvious fanatics? Wall-eyed mullahs and cowed women? Instead, Syria's most sacred Islamic space looked like a crèche. The vast courtyard was wriggling with children; boys knelt over remote-control cars, girls held hands, skipped, dragged toddlers backwards across the slippery marble. Beneath the 8th-century mosaics of Islamic paradise - trees and citadels in green and gold - young mothers and their husbands gossiped, glanced at me and laughed.

With each new day in Syria, the idea I had arrived with - of an aggressive country, repressive, hungry for jihad - diverged more sharply from the Syria in front of me: young, peaceful, hungry mostly just for kebabs. Not that one refuted the other exactly, more that both pictures, though contradictory, seemed to be equally true.

It is a fact, for instance, that Syria is only a mock democracy. Bashar al-Assad, like his father before him, is in effect a dictator who owes his authority to the army and the dreaded Mukhabarat, the secret police. Last Sunday, Abdel Halim Khaddam, the exiled leader of the opposition, claimed that Assad had ordered his assassination; in a week or so, the UN will probably conclude that Syria's military intelligence (headed by Bashar's brother-in-law) was behind the assassination of the liberal Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri. Many "dissidents" - a lawyer, a writer, a human rights activist - have been arrested by the regime.

Even so, Assad's Ba'ath party is a long way from Saddam's. It has lifted the ban on internet access and mobile phones, and ordinary Syrians seem free not just from fear, but from regular Western misanthropy as well. Throughout Syria, passers-by paused to say "welcome" and invite me in for mint tea - no furtive looks, no soviet-style reluctance to be singled out.

For most of us, Syria is the sugar daddy of Islamic terror, riddled with al-Qaeda training camps, funding Hamas and the Hezbollah, goading deranged Iraqi insurgents into battle with the Christian West. But within its borders, there's the sort of mutual respect between the different faiths that Bradford can only dream of. Syria is a refuge for Armenian Christians driven out of Turkey and for Nestorians who have fled Iraq.

Syria : lift the veil and discover an enigma

In the Christian town of Maaloula, some of the last remaining speakers of Aramaic dedicate themselves to keeping the language of Christ alive. At the heart of the Umayyad mosque in old Damascus, octogenarian Muslim men whisper prayers at the tomb of John the Baptist's head. "I love Christians," said a Sunni man as the crusader castle, Krak des Chevaliers, appeared through the windows of our bus. He kissed the tips of his fingers and closed his eyes. "Christians are people of the Book. We are all sons of God."

On my last day in Aleppo, half-lost somewhere in the 18 miles of covered souq, I stopped beside a juice bar to wonder whether a glass of squashed strawberries would be nice. "What nationality are you?" said the juice-man. "English," I said. "Tony Blair? George Bush?" he asked. "Yes," I said firmly, though a curious crowd had begun to gather and to my right, a fat, blind man selling piles of crushed cumin was ignoring customers so as to listen in.

Then the juice-man put his hands in the air and began to smile. "Crazy!" he said. "They're crazy!" Then in Arabic: "Majnoon!" Soon everybody was shouting, "Tony Blair! George Bush! Majnoon!" and laughing, and patting me sympathetically on the back.

Mary Wakefield is assistant editor of The Spectator

Load-Date: June 18, 2006

End of Document

International Briefs

Telegraph Herald (Dubuque, IA)

July 12, 2006 Wednesday

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Section: IOWA; Pg. b6

Length: 757 words

Byline: ASSOCIATED PRESS

Body

Iran rules out reply to offer this week

BRUSSELS, Belgium - Iran ruled out responding this week to international incentives to suspend its nuclear program, saying Tuesday that the offer contains too many "ambiguities."

Ali Larijani, Tehran's top nuclear negotiator, said after meeting with European Union foreign policy chief Javier Solana that the "ambiguities must be removed first in order to have serious talks."

His comments dashed any hope that that Iran would meet today's deadline on a six-nation offer of incentives aimed at dissuading Tehran from uranium enrichment.

Central American leaders agree on plan

PANAMA CITY, Panama - Central American presidents agreed on a plan Tuesday to ease border controls and install a common customs system on the way to negotiating an eventual free-trade agreement with the European Union.

The agreement, signed by the leaders of Panama, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Honduras and Belize, would allow residents to cross borders without passports or visas.

"This accord will open huge opportunities to boost the development and well-being of the Central American people," Panamanian President Martin Torrijos said of the deal that still must be ratified in each country.

30 militants killed in southern Afghanistan

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan - Coalition and Afghan forces hunting a Taliban commander killed an estimated 30 extremists Tuesday in a raid on a hide-out in southern Afghanistan, the military said.

The firefight came a day after a U.S. warplane bombed another militant hide-out in southern Afghanistan, killing more than 40 Taliban fighters, the military said. Wounded Afghans from the raid said Tuesday that children and women were killed.

The renewed violence came as Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld made an unannounced visit to the Afghan capital, Kabul, for talks with President Hamid Karzai on the escalating violence.

International Briefs

At a joint news conference with Karzai, Rumsfeld said militants "don't want to see a country like Afghanistan have a successful democracy."

"They won't succeed," he added.

Hundreds of fighters surrender in Somalia

MOGADISHU, Somalia - Somalia's hard-line Muslim militia forced hundreds of fighters who had been resisting strict Islamic rule to surrender Tuesday after some of the most ferocious fighting in the capital in months.

Fighting since Sunday has killed more than 70 people and wounded 150, and the death toll was expected to rise as the wounded streamed into hospitals. The bloodshed was the latest sign the radical militia won't tolerate opposition.

The fighters "were holed up inside buildings and we were pounding them with heavy artillery and mortars from every corner," said Abdi Shakur, a member of the Islamic militia that controls nearly all of southern Somalia. "They had no option but to surrender."

As in past fighting, many victims were noncombatants caught by stray shells. Hawa Mohamed said a mortar shell killed her 85-year-old grandmother, and the roadblocks erected during the battles prevented the family from burying her.

Mexican politicians planning next moves

MEXICO CITY - Mexico's presumptive president-elect began forming his transition team Tuesday and announced plans for a victory lap through Mexico, while his opponent finished filing a legal challenge alleging election fraud.

With both ruling-party candidate Felipe Calderon and his leftist rival Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador claiming they won the closest presidential race in Mexican history, the struggle for the hearts and minds of the country stretched from foreign embassies to dueling news conferences.

Calderon asked his campaign director Josefina Vazquez Mota to reach out to other political parties and help build a coalition government.

"We have begun working toward the transition between the administration headed by President Vicente Fox and the administration I will have the honor of leading starting Dec. 1," Calderon said.

Israeli president dogged by allegations

JERUSALEM - Israel's president is being dogged by allegations of sexual harassment in a spiraling scandal that has pushed the country's violent standoff with Hamas off the front pages.

The swirl of accusations against President Moshe Katsav has not led to charges or even a police investigation. But it is threatening to tarnish the image of a Mr. Clean politician and has invited comparisons to another presidential sex scandal.

"Who does he think he is? Clinton?" a pair of comedians wrote in a newspaper column this week.

Katsav, who has held the largely ceremonial office since 2000, denies wrongdoing.

Load-Date: July 12, 2006

Impeded by blinkers and blindfolds

Weekend Australian

June 24, 2006 Saturday

All-round Review Edition

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Section: REVIEW; Books; Pg. 13

Length: 706 words

Byline: Alan Gold

Body

MATP

Freedom Next Time

By John Pilger

Bantam Press, 356pp, \$35

IN the movie *Casablanca*, Captain Renault responds to the murder of Major Strasser by ordering his men to "round up the usual subjects". John Pilger's latest book deals with imperialism in much the same way.

The author of many books promoting his view of the indelible evil of the US and its allies, Pilger seems to know only one tune, and he sings the same song about the iniquity of Western imperialism as Noam Chomsky, Edward Said, Harold Pinter and other vocalists in the left-wing choir. Although *Freedom Next Time's* condemnation of Western imperialism and its aftermath is a worthy topic, the book is hopelessly flawed because it concerns itself with the West alone: imperialistic and religious genocides conducted by murderous thugs of developing countries barely get a mention.

Like the comic-book hero Pogo, Pilger has seen the enemy, and it is us. And so he devotes most of his book to proving that Western imperialists and their lackeys are the terrorists, the guilty and the criminals who continue to oppress the poor, voiceless and underprivileged, who are uniformly the victims of aggression, greed and expansionism.

Patently, the US, Britain and other Western nations are guilty of imperialism and human rights abuses; equally patently, the record of most of the Third World is writ large with acts of basest inhumanity.

The neo-cons have committed egregious acts of global folly and have caused untold misery with their agenda, but where in Pilger's book can we read of the genocide in Rwanda? Or the ethnic cleansing of Sunnis by Shi'ites and vice versa? Or the Indonesian army's slaughter of East Timorese, the Bosnian Serbs' building of concentration camps for Muslims and Croats, China's ethnic cleansing in Tibet or Zimbabwe's murderous elite? Why, when dealing with Israel's so-called apartheid wall, does Pilger fail to mention the massive fortified fence built by India along its border with Pakistan? Or the barrier the US is building against Mexico's illegal immigrants? Or the many other hi-tech security fences protecting nations from belligerent neighbours?

Impeded by blinkers and blindfolds

His blinkers become blindfolds when he considers the Middle East. "For 35 years," he writes, "the Israelis had successfully manoeuvred Washington into ensuring that the only UN agency allowed into the West Bank and Gaza was the impoverished UNRWA, whose remit was strictly humanitarian aid."

Really? The UN Relief and Works Agency has more than 24,000 staff, 99 per cent of them Palestinian refugees. In the past, its food storage facilities have been used to stow bombs and weapons, while its ambulances have been used to transport terrorists. Its former chief Peter Hansen recently admitted on Canadian television that his staff included members of the terrorist organisation Hamas, although he didn't see it as a problem. Where in Freedom Next Time does the journalistic Pilger do his job by investigating these details?

After a fly-by over "Shining India" and its dichotomy between the fabulously rich information technology professionals in Mumbai and the slum-dwellers everywhere else, he writes about the present apartheid in South Africa and the continuing destruction of Afghanistan. There's barely a mention of the hideous treatment of women by the Taliban in that benighted nation: what of the closure of education to women, the beatings of those who didn't wear a full burka, the lack of female medical facilities? Pilger writes only about the conditions Afghan women have to suffer because of the anarchy created by the warlords since US intervention.

Freedom Next Time can best be defined as a gigantic kvetch by a man who rails against a world that isn't run the way he wants. Only a blind neo-con would argue that all's well with the world; only a fool would argue that the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have brought universal benefits; but only a rabid Savonarola such as Pilger would argue that the world's ills are the responsibility of the US and its allies.

Pilger would reach a much wider and more influential congregation if he returned to his former profession, journalism, and left the preaching to others.

Alan Gold has written 14 books; his latest novel is The Pirate Queen.

Load-Date: June 23, 2006

Creative Chaos Checkmated

New York Sun (Archive)

June 16, 2006 Friday

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Section: FOREIGN; Pg. 6

Length: 722 words

Byline: Youssef Ibrahim

Body

America's neoconservative initiative for the Greater Middle East, "creative chaos," has been checkmated by a Muslim fundamentalist counterstrategy, "bloody chaos."

Back in 2000, when various neocons from both the Republican and Democratic parties advanced it, the strategy of creative chaos in the Middle East was designed to shake loose secular and theocratic tyrannies. The idea then, as it is today, was that autocracies encroach on freedoms, produce corruption, and breed poverty, anger, and religious fanaticism with their corollary, terror.

Using this theory, secular dictators like Muammar Gadhafi of Libya or Bashar Al-Assad of Syria are as ready for regime change as the Wahhabi fundamentalist royal rulers of Saudi Arabia or the mullahs of Iran.

But sometime in the past two years, America and the West changed course, cuddling up to Colonel Gadhafi and, most recently, proposing a dialogue with the Iranian regime. In their quest for democratic reforms, they have taken a step backward, fearful of yielding greater ground to radical Islam.

The enemy has not flinched, however. The Muslim fundamentalist response, while less ambitious, has been sharply focused, sending a clear message that life outside medieval Islam is not an option for Arabs and Muslims. In this, they have lacked neither will nor resolve in the face of their Western foes, who have faltered.

As always, the consequences have been grave.

In Iraq, where the mission was to replace Saddam Hussein with a democratic, multiethnic Iraqi government driven by an oil economy, we got bloody mayhem by pursuing Shiite ayatollahs and Sunni sheiks for their favors. Warring Sunni and Shiite tribes backed by regimes in the region are slaughtering each other as Iran's mullahs swoop in to take control of much of the country. A large secular Iraqi segment of the population is being driven out of the country or forced to veil its women and live under the growing shadow of Sunni or Shiite fundamentalism.

Instead of refocusing their goals, the politicians in Washington who enthusiastically sent their troops to war are now debating various plans, all aimed at withdrawing those who took Iraq and held it.

Even those of us who counseled against the invasion are adamant that abandoning such a strategic asset to Iran, Syria, Muslim fundamentalists, and absolute chaos would be catastrophic.

Elsewhere in the Middle East, the results of the West's lack of convictions are coming back to haunt it.

Creative Chaos Checkmated

The optimism generated two years ago by the spread of democratic reforms in the region - a feeling that America, France, and Britain promoted - has devolved into an obscene reassertion of power by all the region's despots.

Syria has widened its reign of terror over Lebanon, getting away not only with the murder of a former prime minister, Rafik Hariri, but also with a renewed alliance with Iran, Hezbollah's Shiite army, and Lebanon's 400,000 Palestinian Arabs, whom Damascus is arming to form yet another militia for the Syrian-Iranian proxy wars in the region.

Saudi Arabia, which has the world's largest oil reserves, has largely shelved its alliance with America in favor of new ties with China, America's primary rival for world power. China, the Saudis know, does not demand democratic reforms, just oil.

Over in the Palestinian Arab territories, total chaos now reigns as Palestinian factions war among themselves. The Israelis will take care of themselves, to be sure, but the Palestinian Arab collapse will make the coming years pretty ugly.

Creative chaos is the right strategy when played unflinchingly by the rules, one of which is never to promise a people democratic reform if you do not plan on standing behind it every step of the way. A second is that in today's Middle East, values that include democracy, civil society, and separation of mosque and state must prevail if the region is to become peaceful.

The West must unite behind a policy of imposing more sanctions on Syria for meddling in Lebanon and Iraq. Iran should be ignored, not embraced. The country has a long way to go before it acquires any weapons of mass destruction, but a shorter way toward more economic sanctions and international isolation. Israel should go back into Gaza and topple the **Hamas** regime.

Above all, Iraq needs to be won.

The alternatives are so dark they cannot be contemplated.

Load-Date: June 16, 2006

regional news Around the North ...

Townsville Bulletin (Australia)

July 15, 2006 Saturday

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Section: WEEKEND EXTRA; Pg. 98

Length: 711 words

Body

INNISFAIL

A man who survived on witchetty grubs for more than three days has been found on Mt Bartle Frere.

The off-duty police officer became disoriented while dodging cyclone debris scattered along the walking track.

INNISFAIL

This year's Innisfail Show will be a celebration of resilience against Cyclone Larry. Entry will be free so residents have a chance to escape their worries for a day.

INGHAM

Hinchinbrook Shire Council is close to signing off on an ethanol technology pilot plant at the former Foxwood veneer milling site. Ethanol Technologies Limited said the site was favourable because of its existing infrastructure.

INGHAM

Eagle Boys could be open in Ingham by October, if the franchise gets the go-ahead from Hinchinbrook Shire Council. It will be the first major takeaway food chain to come to town since McDonalds eight years ago.

THE BURDEKIN

A Scottish backpacker was fighting for his life after being bashed with a piece of wood during a fight in Home Hill on Saturday. The 20-year-old suffered serious head injuries. A man has been charged with grievous bodily harm.

THE BURDEKIN

The Burdekin could be producing its own ethanol and electricity by 2007 if a planned energy park comes to fruition. Growers have been urged to get behind the proposal for at least four new energy production sites in the area.

BOWEN

Bowen would be the clear winner for the Chalco alumina refinery if the decision was based solely on community support, Premier Peter Beattie has said.

CHARTERS TOWERS

Charters Towers' historic stories were captured on film when a television crew arrived for three days. It will feature among 24 other towns in the Australian Icon Towns series, being filmed for the History Channel on Austar and Foxtel. The series will be aired later this year.

CHARTERS TOWERS

Political and community support will be needed if a coal-fired, base-load power station is to become a reality for Pentland. Kennedy MP Bob Katter spoke on the proposal at a Charters Towers meeting.

Around the State

* THE Winton grazier famous for finding remains of 'Elliot' the dinosaur on his property has hit paydirt again.

After searching for two years, David Elliott has discovered two rare meteorites weighing almost 30kg.

His search began after residents reported seeing lights in the sky in 2004.

In a further bizarre twist, Mr Elliott said he later had a dream which told him where the bones were.

One of the meteorites will go on display at the Waltzing Matilda Centre in Winton.

* SPEED cameras will be dropped from Queensland road zones which are no longer dangerous.

It will be the first time camera zones are dumped since the program started in 1998.

The move came after a long-awaited review into the speed camera program.

But motorists must not become complacent.

Transport Minister Paul Lucas said he would try to limit the number of camera zones that were decommissioned.

* BREASTSCREEN Queensland is being sued by two women who say they were given a clean bill of health then later diagnosed with breast cancer.

Phillipa Naismith, 52, is dying of cancer while Sandra Harley, 48, has had her left breast removed due to cancer.

The women have hired a top lawyer's firm to mount a medical negligence case against BreastScreen Queensland.

Queensland Health's Cancer Screening Services Unit would not comment on the case pending legal action.

TOP 10 NEWS ITEMS OF THE WEEK

1 LIBERAL LEADERSHIP -- John Howard and Peter Costello fall out over whether the PM agreed to step aside after two terms.

2 WORLD CUP -- Zinedine Zidane was sent off 10 minutes before Italy won the final over France.

3 WIMBLEDON -- Roger Federer maintained his impeccable tennis record.

4 INDIAN TERROR ATTACK -- Seven separate bombs went off on peak-hour trains in Mumbai.

5 TOUR DE FRANCE -- Robbie McEwen won another stage of the cycling tour.

6 ISRAEL-HAMAS STAND-OFF -- Violence in the Middle East continued to escalate.

7 NEW PM FOR EAST TIMOR -- Jose Ramos Horta was sworn in.

8 WALLABIES MATCH-- the All Blacks comprehensively thumped the Wallabies 32-12.

regional news Around the North ...

9 INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS POLICY -- the Opposition claimed the Liberal leadership battle was a diversion from the IR laws.

10 PETROL PRICES -- Another leap was expected as anger turned to the lack of tax relief offered by the government.

Source: Media Monitors Index

Load-Date: July 15, 2006

End of Document

East Carolina U. graduate studies in the Middle East

University Wire

June 14, 2006 Wednesday

Copyright 2006 East Carolinian via U-Wire

Length: 728 words

Byline: By Christopher Stevenson, East Carolinian; SOURCE: East Carolina U.

Dateline: GREENVILLE, N.C.

Body

The Middle East is a place of history and conflict filled with a richness of religion that has impacted nearly the entire planet. Heather Crisco, who graduated from East Carolina University in 2004 with a double BA in anthropology and religious studies, is currently a MA student at the American University in Cairo, Egypt in the sociology-anthropology department.

Crisco went on a student abroad trip with ECU to the Middle East area. Crisco was so impacted by her student abroad trip to the Middle East that she decided to stay. Crisco spent a great deal of time on her trip in the Palestinian and Israeli areas.

Americans are not completely alien to the Middle East environment. Americans hear mainly negative things about the Middle East through filtered news stations like CNN. Americans hear about other Americans being taken hostage by extremists and terrorist. Americans hear about the suicide bomb attacks on a weekly basis. It is not a warm, fuzzy feeling that comes to mind.

Crisco wrote by e-mail about this very situation but shared a stark contrast to what the media mainly filters to Americans concerning the Middle East. "Before coming to Egypt, I was faced with many concerns (especially from family and friends) about being the target of hatred and violence because I am an American and a ***female***. I've found that this is a huge stereotype among many Americans that is just that...a stereotype. I've not once during any of my travels throughout the Middle East, experienced negativity, hostility or threats of danger because of my nationality. If anything, I have been welcomed to the point that it almost becomes irritating," wrote Crisco.

Crisco conversed to both Israeli and Palestine soldiers and to a variety of people in each region. During her trip, Crisco did spend a great deal of time with Palestinians. Crisco emphasized that the Palestinian people are in favor of promoting peace and democracy. Crisco wrote that though the political group ***Hamas***, who is thought of as a terrorist organization by much of the world, officially has not committed any acts of violence since being elected and are actually calling for the violence to stop.

Crisco has been impacted greatly by her trip abroad, "because of my Palestine/Israel trip specifically, I have definitely changed. I have changed in that, after meeting with government officials, university officials and peacekeepers from both sides; it has become clear to me that something has to be done. Voices need to be heard and not only the voice of Israel," Crisco wrote.

It's no secret that the U.S. Government favors Israel over Palestine. Our government gives Israel millions of dollars and military equipment on a continual basis, which is one reason why Israel has the third most powerful air force in

East Carolina U. graduate studies in the Middle East

the world. Even American residents, for the most part, seem to favor Israel over Palestine. The U.S. has a huge Christian population, and the Christian belief is that the people of Israel are God's chosen people. The question is, does this religious connection with Israel blind Americans from seeing the conflict situation between Israel and Palestine clearly and in a non-biased manner?

Crisco does think that there is a huge misconception some Americans tend to share about the Israeli and Palestinian conflict.

"Americans are unfortunately only exposed to a censored media which does not always portray the conflict in a fair manner, thus many Americans tend to think that the Palestinians are nothing but a group of militant, fundamentalist Muslims who are attacking Israel non-stop. This is absolutely not true, and if anything, it is Israel doing most of the attacking," Crisco wrote.

After finishing school, Crisco hopes to eventually have a job that at least keeps her coming back to the Middle East. Many students like Crisco go on student abroad trips every year for the feeling of adventure and for the educational aspects that contribute to an unforgettable experience. Calvin Mercer, who is the co-director of the religious study program at ECU, is the one who got Crisco interested in taking the trip abroad to the Middle East. "I know students often sign up for study abroad because of the sights and adventure, but most students find out that the physical travel is really about expanding the internal journey of the mind and heart," wrote Mercer.

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Load-Date: June 14, 2006

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A Democratic Catch-22

University Wire

May 4, 2006 Thursday

Copyright 2006 The Dartmouth via U-Wire

Section: COLUMN

Length: 724 words

Byline: By Zak Moore, The Dartmouth; **SOURCE:** Dartmouth

Dateline: HANOVER, N.H.

Body

If the events precipitated by the election of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad as president of Iran teach us anything, it is that democracy in the Arab Middle East is a catch-22. Unlike many of the other Arab countries in that part of the world, Iran has a substantiated semblance of democracy in a tiny part of its society. Sure, the unelected Supreme Leader lays down and supervises all laws, commands the armed forces, has the sole power to declare war, can appoint and dismiss members of the judiciary and controls state television and radio networks, but Iran still showcases the consequences of popular control in the area of presidential election.

Only a few months ago President Ahmadinejad was elected under the more democratic instant runoff system with a combined total of nearly 70 percent of the vote. In the months since then, this man has proved to be a raving, if not outright, psychopath, or at least something very close. In the "death to America" vein, comments like "God willing, with the force of God behind it, we shall soon experience a world without the United States..." have been particularly troubling. In the global community you do not wish or threaten annihilation and extermination. That some entertain debate about whether we should let this man have his finger on the nuclear trigger is another question altogether.

But this democratically-elected deviant raises larger questions about the efficacy and desirability of democracy in the non-Israeli (and possibly Lebanese) Middle East. If this man, in the context of an ostensibly democratically elected office, is indicative of the outcome of potential popular control in similar countries, then we may need to rethink our strategy. The more Middle Eastern countries have opened up their governments to the people, the more we have seen discouraging results. From the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt to *Hamas* in the Palestinian-occupied territories, we have seen the election of forces more than a little hostile to *women*, the West, Christianity and liberty. That Iraq will necessarily follow the same unfortunate path is unclear, but the degree of influence exercised recently by forces in Iran does not bode well.

Unfortunately, the opposite strategy does not seem to be working much better. In the majority of other countries where the government is sufficiently insulated from the people, authoritarian rule is the name of the game. In countries like Egypt and Saudi Arabia, authoritarian rulers are far more liberal and far less genocidal than the governments that might spring up in their place, to judge from the Iranian example. These governments are hated, tyrannical and above all seen as stooges of the American government, which is in turn blamed for all the economic and social ills of the country.

A Democratic Catch-22

So, as Americans we are caught in a difficult catch-22. Promoting democracy may well lead to the election of borderline-insane fanatics, while backing tyrannical regimes is probably better for the people there and around the world but is very much undemocratic. We can allow zealots and demagogues to whip people up into a terroristic frenzy themselves or we can continue to stand behind tyrannies that repress their people into an even more all-consuming hatred but at least do not give it government sanction.

For my part, I hope that we can increasingly avoid being forced towards one or the other of these choices and opt for a third: energy independence. With this option we can extricate ourselves from what is, at present, the lose-lose situation that is the oil-corrupted, Arab Middle East.

I am not going to pretend that this has not become a disgustingly politic remark to make especially among hapless lawmakers and I am similarly not going to pretend that I know how to do this. But if Brazil can power their cars on sugarcane, with the promise of being able to do the same thing with corn, soybeans, and more, we have to do this and do it now.

Allowing the economy the freedom to expand is generally the best course of action, but when vital national security interests are at stake, we must put our foot down. If, as Thomas Friedman wrote, green is the new red, white and blue we had better start wrapping ourselves in conservation and renewable sources today to avoid even worse involvement in the unstable Middle East tomorrow.

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Load-Date: May 4, 2006

End of Document

Palestine Awareness Week needs to advocate peace

University Wire

May 4, 2006 Thursday

Copyright 2006 Mustang Daily via U-Wire

Section: COLUMN

Length: 689 words

Byline: By Ben Goodman, Mustang Daily; **SOURCE:** Cal Poly

Dateline: SAN LUIS OBISPO, Calif.

Body

Since the assassination of Anwar Sadat in Egypt in 1981 by the Moslem Brotherhood for making peace with Israel, Egypt has been in a state of emergency, allowing it to arrest suspects without charging them and to restrict public freedom. Last week, their "parliament" extended this state for another two years. Israel has lived with terrorism, under threat of annihilation, assassinations, suicide bombings and economic boycotts all her life, with no such state of emergency against any of her citizens.

Arabs living in Israel enjoy the same rights as all Israelis and have 16 members in the Knesset. They are free to do as they wish, even if they advocate destruction of Israel. There are hardly any Jews left in any Arab country.

India built a separation wall to combat terrorism from Pakistan in Kashmir. In fact, just a few days ago, another 35 Indians were killed by Kashmiri separatists. Chinese emperors built a 5,000-mile-long wall to protect themselves against their enemies. All other countries build fences along their borders too. Israel too, after years of suicide murders against her civilians, built a fence/wall combination to combat terrorism.

Yet, during the Palestine Awareness Week, Amir Abdel Malik Ali, Imam of the Oakland's Masjid Al-Islam talks about Israel as an apartheid country, calls her a Nazi regime, and vocally advocates a one-state solution: Palestine. No Israel. The title of another speech by Jeff Halper refers to it as the Apartheid Wall.

What part of Israel is apartheid or racist? Arabs, Christians, and Jews live together under the same laws, they practice their religion freely, they live together, and you cannot even tell what background a person has as you walk on the street, as most of them look alike. There are no places where Moslems, Arabs or non-Jews cannot enter. There are no laws against any one particular group. And although you would not be able to even travel to Saudi Arabia as a Jew, let alone live or vote there, the speaker has the audacity to call Israel apartheid and Nazi. This is nothing but to accuse Israel of all the atrocities that were perpetrated against the Jews in the past, and to say it enough times, and it will be believed as truth.

But at the same time, he has no words about the atrocities of Arabs in Darfur, where Moslem Arabs have killed at least 180,000 black Africans, have raped their women, and have displaced millions. Not one word from him or the professors at Cal Poly.

These speakers are advocating a one-state solution not peace and justice between the two people. They expect Jews to live under a government such as Hamas, the Baathist government of Syria or a government like Saudi Arabia. Would you? Would they? They are living in Oakland and San Luis Obispo!

Palestine Awareness Week needs to advocate peace

Israel captured the West Bank from Jordan and the Gaza Strip from Egypt in 1967 after years of terrorist attacks, and when Jordan, Syria and Egypt had amassed their armies at her border to annihilate her once and for all. In fact, she returned the Sinai to the Egyptians when Saddat made peace with her. Last summer, Israel withdrew from the Gaza Strip as well and is planning on withdrawing from the West Bank too. At that time, a group of philanthropists bought \$14 million worth of greenhouses from the Israelis and gave them to the Palestinians to grow vegetables and make money. Three days after the Israelis left, the Palestinians destroyed all the greenhouses. Now they complain against the Israelis for their shambled economy because Israel has closed the border to Gaza, although they have been firing Kassam rockets into Israel every day.

Yes, you should be aware of the Palestinian leaders and the terrorists. They are their own people's worst enemies, not Israel. Israel built seven universities in the West Bank since 1967. How many were there before?

Instead of bringing speakers here for propaganda, for inciting hate and for advocating the annihilation of Israel as the president of Iran does, would it not be better to advocate for peace and against terrorism and hate?

Yes, Israelis are Jews, but even Jews have the right to live in peace.

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Israel 101

University Wire

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Body

Two elections took place recently in the Middle East. In one, Palestinians chose to be led by a terrorist group whose official charter calls for a genocide of Jews. Voting was marred by violence as different factions fought openly in the streets. In the other, Israelis elected a moderate party, and the only violence of the day came in the form of a Palestinian rocket attack against Israeli farms.

Israel is a modern country with liberal laws and a booming economy that is stuck amid medieval theocracies. Yet, on college campuses across America, few other countries are subject to the vitriolic attacks that Israel is. From divestment proposals to the respect given to professors like Noam Chomsky, who authored the preface to a book that denied the existence of the Holocaust, and Edward Said, who took time off from teaching at Columbia to throw rocks at Israeli border guards; many students are presented with a one-sided account of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Few are ever made aware of the reality.

In truth, the preference of Palestinians for anti-Semitic leaders is nothing new. In the 1920s and 30s, the official leader of the Muslims in Palestine was the grand mufti of Jerusalem, Haj Amin al-Husseini. Using his position of power, Hussein fermented riots and pogroms against the local Jewish population. When Hitler became Chancellor of Germany in 1933, he quickly established an alliance with Hussein in Palestine. As Hussein wrote in his memoirs, "Our fundamental condition for cooperating with Germany was a free hand to eradicate every last Jew from Palestine and the Arab world."

Hussein frequently visited Hitler in Berlin and was taken on a personal tour of Auschwitz by Heinrich Himmler. If Germany won World War II, Hussein planned to construct concentration camps of his own for the Jews of Palestine.

Surely any modern country with historical ties to a Nazi like Hussein ought to be ashamed of it. Yet, Hussein is still so highly regarded in the Arab world that in a 2002 interview Yasser Arafat referred to him as the Palestinians' hero.

Hussein escaped war criminal prosecution by going into hiding in Egypt after 1945. His successors in Palestine and others in the Middle East who idolized him, however, worked to further his genocidal goal. In 1948, Arab armies invaded Israel and attacked its civilian population centers in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem with the expressed intent to "drive the Jews into the sea." They were repulsed in 1948 and again in 1967 and 1973. Each time, the Arab armies

Israel 101

specifically targeted Jewish population centers while the Israeli Defense Force fought back, knowing that defeat could result in a second Holocaust.

Continually threatened with extermination, Israel captured additional territory to buffer its population against future attack. Moreover, immediately after fighting ceased, Israel expressed its willingness to comply with Resolution 242 of the U.N. Security Council, which called for the return of captured land upon the Arab states' recognition of Israel's right to "live in security." In response, Arab leaders issued their infamous "three no's statement: No peace with Israel, no negotiations with Israel, no recognition of Israel." As the Arab nations were unwilling to cooperate with Israel and were also uneager to assume responsibility for the 600,000 Palestinians living in the West Bank, Israel "occupied" Palestine until 1995, when power was handed over to the Palestinian Authority.

Against this ever-present possibility of annihilation, Israel has remained a tolerant, democratic country that functions within the rule of law. Though Israeli leaders have made their share of mistakes, they remain accountable both to the people and to the courts. Under Israeli law, all citizens may vote, hold property or run for office, which makes Israel one of the only countries in the Middle East where Arab women have those rights. Compare this to Palestine, where, tellingly, Yasser Arafat was the first leader to congratulate Jiang Zemin on violently suppressing the democratic demonstrations in Tiananmen Square.

Today, Israel deserves not scorn but praise. Even the United States has much to learn from Israel, as questions about the extent of government and military power to combat terrorism have been debated in the Knesset and the Israeli Supreme Court for years. While the Hamas thugs that have been handed control of Palestine pose a threat to Israel, it has dealt successfully with such dangers in the past, and I believe it can continue to do so in the future.

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TO SERVE THE NATIONAL CITY AND THROUGH IT THE NATION; Solomons mission going nowhere

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Body

THE DUTY of Australian troops and police, and of their regional assistants, to help restore law and order in the Solomon Islands, particularly after this week's riots in its capital, Honiara, are fairly clear. But just what is the status quo that everyone is trying to restore? And how comfortably can anything sit with the view that the opinion of the population, as expressed through its representatives, resolves all questions?

The neighbours and friends of the Solomons Islands intervened in its affairs three years ago after a complete breakdown in its politics, in law and order, and in its delivery of goods and services to the population of more than 500,000 people. The intervention, led by Australia, is titled RAMSI - the regional assistance mission to the Solomon Islands - and has restored some basic services, incarcerated some villains, provided some basic level of personal security and provided the stability from which an election could, recently, be held. By all accounts, it was a fair and free Solomon Islands election: about half of the sitting members were thrown out, populists of various types were elected and many candidates made much of their mileage by blaming all ills of the world on everyone else, including RAMSI.

Despite a substantial turnover of personnel, the chosen of the people of the Solomons were much the same rum lot as before - of much the same ilk who had brought this nation to its collapse. The former prime minister, Allan Kemakeza, long discredited internationally for his management, retained effective power, but not enough personal credibility even in that debilitated polity; his nominee, Snyder Rini, was instead narrowly selected. His election, by secret ballot, was greeted by riots and looting which stretched RAMSI resources; as ever in these matters, the chief sufferers were the Chinese mercantile population, the natural fall guys whenever anything inconvenient happens to a population all too used to blaming everyone but themselves for everything which goes wrong. Both Australia and New Zealand have reinforced RAMSI with troops and police. These may have some effect in keeping at bay various parties of rioters - some working directly at the instigation of politicians, others simply taking opportunist advantage of the disorder. Outsiders, even those with strong sympathies for the nation and its people, will not be holding their breath waiting for a general sanity to occur. They would be wise to suspend hope that all of this is but a temporary setback in a logical development towards a free, self-sustaining, and equitable community which is going places, because they will know that little on the horizon which suggests anything will be much different in the near future. The Solomon Islands, like some of its brother and sister Melanesian nations, is going backwards, not forwards, faces more disorder and more disrupted basic services to its population than since colonial times, and may need a complete reinvention before anyone can speak of political or economic viability, or the hope that its **women**, and its

TO SERVE THE NATIONAL CITY AND THROUGH IT THE NATION Solomons mission going nowhere

children can confidently expect peace, order, justice, and basic educational and health services regardless of how tribal and regional ambitions overwhelm common sense or proportion.

This poses a particular problem for Australia and New Zealand, moral successors to the British post-colonial obligation, and natural believers in the will of the people as expressed through the ballot box. The assumption that the people are always right is, for us, fairly fundamental; the notion of **Hamas** winning a free and fair Palestinian election (or an anti-US coalition an Iraqi election) is a deep challenge, as is a refusal of the people of an essentially bankrupt and disintegrated nation such as the Solomons to understand that a completely new approach is needed. Australians, or New Zealanders for that matter, have no desire whatever to recolonise or to govern the Solomons - let alone to manage, without much power to change things, the consequences of their disastrous misjudgments. But it is, it seems, a necessity forced upon us by the unacceptability of the disorder and breakdown of services caused by local incompetence, corruption and mismanagement. No doubt some of this is a consequence of imperialism, colonialism and cultural oppression - one reason why nations such as Australia stand ready to help.

Increasingly, however, it is clear that nothing much will happen until the people of the Solomons recognise that most of the problems, and most of the solutions, lie within themselves. And, perhaps, until even concerned Australians accept that our actions, in attempting to stave off instant catastrophe, may be helping to create an even bigger one later on.

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