

Date and Time: Friday, May 3, 2024 3:48:00PM EEST

Job Number: 223443904

Documents (100)

1. Ryan strayed from union script

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

2. Defending a people

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

3. Blind hatred is at root of fanatical Islamism

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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Sep 30, 2006

4. Hezbollah's gamble may hurt Iranian ambitions

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

5. News Summary

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas



Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

6. Viokence, opposition and democracy

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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Sep 30, 2006

7. Osama bin Laden is no friend of the Palestinian cause

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

8. Israel was forged through assassination and kidnap . . . of the British IN THIS PERSONAL COMMENTARY, AN HISTORIAN DRAWS SOME UNCOMFORTABLE PARALLELS

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

9. Palestinian Prime Minister Calls for a Truce With Israel and New Talks

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

10. Millions of reasons why Iran is a threat

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

11. Why Gaza attacks are deadlier

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

12. Politics of Brotherhood

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

13. IJ WOMEN PROTEST AMENDS TO HUDOOD ORDINANCE

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

14. INSIDE

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

15. Furor Over Cartoons Pits Muslim Against Muslim

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

16. Israel should remember its own 'terrorist' origins

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

17. Something there is that doesn't love a wall

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

18. Moral support to Kashmiris pledged

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

19. Leader: Disarray over the 'rule of 85'

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

20. STORMING OF THE BRITISH MISSION Hostage fears as Palestinian militants rampage against the West

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

21. Israeli air strike kills four in Gaza Strip

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

22. News Summary

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

23. War may engulf region, warns envoy DIPLOMACY; MIDDLE EAST CRISIS

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

24. Two wrongs don't make a leftist

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

25. Longer sentences in the Sun

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

26. Israeli army in Lebanon raid

Client/Matter: -None-



Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

27. Olmert's gamble

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

28. As gold rush ends, meltdown begins

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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Sep 30, 2006

29. In Short

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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Sep 30, 2006

30. News Summary

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

31. Heart of Glass

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

32. EDITORIAL: Butcher of Beirut

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

33. News Summary

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

34. News Summary

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

35. LETTERS

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

36. Ten Israeli reservists killed SINGLE STRIKE MIDDLE EAST CRISIS

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

37. 'No one sees policy as credible'

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

38. Across the Middle East, Sermons Critical of the U.S.

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

39. Debate on the crisis in the Middle East

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

40. Israeli army raids Lebanon

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

41. Debate on crisis in the Middle East

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

42. Britain braced for bird flu

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

43. Boy George faces jail if he won't rake park World at a glance

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

44. SEVEN DAYS

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

45. Young defector who fitted mold of martyr - Abraham Rabinovich - Jerusalem

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

46. <u>Syria</u> 's secular regime attempts to ride a religious revival MIDDLE EAST: Bashar al-Assad is making unfamiliar displays of piety to defuse Islamist discontent with his rule

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

47. News Summary



Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

48. Saturday Comment: News Matrix: 18.02.06 - 24.02.06

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

49. News Summary

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

50. International Briefs

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

51. Politicians Court a Not-So-Silent Minority: Israeli Arabs

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

52. News Summary

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas



Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

53. Jobless and lawless: Armed militants in Gaza Intifada is ended, but not the violence

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

54. Prime minister's questions

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

55. Havana prays, while Little Havana parties

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

56. NO GENERAL TO BE ACCEPTED AFTER MUSHARRAF'S EXIT

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

57. Olaf Wiig in kidnap video

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

58. Stay in Touch

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

59. Israeli Visa Policy Traps Thousands of Palestinians in a Legal Quandary

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

60. Of racism, tyranny, and oppression

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

61. Comment & Debate: Only a negotiated ceasefire can bring a wider settlement: America 's embrace of UN diplomacy over Lebanon is a welcome return to pre-9/11 politics. If it fails, expect more Hizbullahs

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

62. Focus: Middle East Crisis: THE ROAD TO WAR?: It started with the seizure of one young Israeli soldier by
Palestinian militants. This weekend the Middle East teeters on the brink of a regional war as the world stands
by, apparently helpless to intervene. Jason Burke, Julie Flint in Beirut, Inigo Gilmore in Nahariya, Conal
Urquhart in Gaza and Patrick Wintour in St Petersburg report

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

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

63. Blair admits to cabinet splits over his support for Bush on Israel

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

64. One Last Thing | Democracy, of itself, not solution to all problems

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

65._democracy tide has turned

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

66. EGYPTIAN BLAST 23 killed, Aussies hurt in triple attack Bombing suspects held

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

67. Debate on the crisis in the Middle East

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

68. Keeping Memory Alive ON THE GO

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

69. Bush must abandon failed security policy, presidential hopeful says

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

70. Tale of Two Hostages

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

71. Denmark faces international boycott over Muslim cartoons

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

72. All eyes on the Middle East

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

73. Israeli onslaught continues

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

74. Hill protesters slam Harper for response to crisis: PM showed 'immaturity' by not denouncing

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

75. WHAT A WEEK

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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Sep 30, 2006

76. National Briefs

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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Sep 30, 2006

77._'Islamic fascism' is not a new term

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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78. *DIGEST*



Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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Sep 30, 2006

79. ISLAMIC CULTURE OF PAKISTAN WOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO BE CHANGED: QAZI

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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Sep 30, 2006

80. West Bank pull-out off the agenda as Olmert counts cost of failed war

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

81. 17/04/06

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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Sep 30, 2006

82. Should Canada seek talks with Hezbollah?

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

83. West Bank pull-out off the agenda as Olmert counts cost of failed war

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

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Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

84. West Bank pull-out off the agenda as Olmert counts cost of failed war

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

85. Canada praised for fighting Taliban: Clinton weighs in on Mideast troubles

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

86. Why won't Israel just exchange prisoners? THE CRISIS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

87. Cruel, corrupt and full of hatred - it's Iran 's mullahs who are to blame

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

88. 17/04/06

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

89. Israel strike kills dozens in Lebanon 20 children among dead Rice cancels Beirut trip

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

90. Comment & Debate: Tony Blair means only one thing when he talks about his values: He claims his aim is

to spread democracy and the rule of law, but his true commitment is to the global market

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

91. We can't bear pictures of the dead. Hezbollah want to see nothing else

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

92. Israeli missiles pound Gaza into new P Dark Age in 'collective punishment'

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

93. The price of saving Shalit

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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94. Work is worth the risk of arrest

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

95._17/04/06

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

96. The next threat: extreme dolphins

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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Sep 30, 2006

97. Envoys' fury as Straw approves secret talks with Arab terrorists

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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News Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Dec 02, 2005 to

Sep 30, 2006

98. RALLIES IN MUSLIM WORLD SLAM POPE'S REMARKS

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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Sep 30, 2006



99. News Summary

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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Sep 30, 2006

100. ISRAELIS HAVE NO MONOPOLY ON PAIN

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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Sep 30, 2006



Ryan strayed from union script

The Toronto Star

June 13, 2006 Tuesday

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Section: LETTER; Pg. A19

Length: 313 words

Body

CUPE has history of defending human rights

Opinion, June 8.

Curiously, Sid Ryan defends CUPE Ontario's anti-Israel resolution without any reference to its words and substance. He is silent on two of the resolution's more egregious elements - its support for a Palestinian "right of return," which would undo Israel's raison d'etre as a Jewish state and its levelling of the "apartheid" accusation, which both libels Israel and belittles the real suffering of South African apartheid's victims. With this approach, Ryan misleads the public and, even more disturbingly, does a great disservice to the good name of CUPE Ontario and the members he claims to represent.

In his piece, Ryan states that his union opposes suicide bombings and believes <u>Hamas</u> should renounce violence and recognize Israel's right to exist. It's a shame those words were nowhere to be found in the resolution. He talks about the difficulties faced by Palestinians at border crossings and because of the security barrier built by Israel, but fails to mention that these were responses to countless Palestinian terror attacks that took the lives of innocent men, **women** and children.

It's this kind of imbalance that demonstrates the major departure by CUPE Ontario leadership from the union's long tradition of even-handedness. In response, many union members have exercised their right to speak out against the one-sided nature of this resolution.

There is much that can be done to improve the lives of all people living through this conflict, both Palestinian and Israeli. Attacking one side, without recognizing the responsibility of the other, does nothing to further positive, productive efforts for change. Fair-minded Canadians see the resolution for what it is - dangerous propaganda. Perhaps that's why Ryan chose to stray from its script.

Joel Richler, Chair,

Canadian Jewish Congress, Ontario Region, Toronto

Load-Date: June 13, 2006



Defending a people

Hindustan Times

August 3, 2006 Thursday 1:28 PM EST

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Length: 788 words

Byline: Hindustan Times

Dateline: NEW DELHI, India

Body

NEW DELHI, India, Aug 3 -- The Hezbollah and <u>Hamas'</u> provocations against Israel once again demonstrate how terrorists exploit human rights and the media in their attacks on democracies. By hiding behind their own civilians, the Islamic radicals issue a challenge to democracies: either violate your own morality by coming after us and inevitably killing some innocent civilians, or maintain your morality and leave us with a free hand to target your innocent civilians.

This challenge presents democracies such as Israel with a lose-lose option, and the terrorists with a win-win option. There is one variable that could change this dynamic and present democracies with a viable option that could make terrorism less attractive as a tactic: the international community, the anti-Israel segment of the media and the so-called 'human rights' organisations could stop falling for this terrorist gambit and acknowledge that they are being used to promote the terrorist agenda.

Whenever a democracy is presented with the lose-lose option and chooses to defend its citizens by going after terrorists who are hiding among civilians, this trio of predictable condemners can be counted on by the terrorists to accuse the democracy of 'over-reaction', 'disproportionality' and 'violations of human rights'. In doing so they play right into the terrorists' hands, causing more terrorism and more civilian casualties on both sides. If this trio could instead, for once, be counted on to blame the terrorists for the civilian deaths on both sides, this tactic would no longer be a win-win situation for the terrorists.

It should be obvious by now that Hezbollah and <u>Hamas</u> actually want the Israeli military to kill as many Lebanese and Palestinian civilians as possible. That is why they store their rockets underneath innocent civilians' beds. That is why they launch their missiles from crowded civilian neighbourhoods and hide among civilians. They are seeking to induce Israel to defend its own civilians by going after them among their civilian 'shields'. They know that every civilian they induce Israel to kill hurts Israel in eyes of the media and the international and human rights communities.

They regard these human shields as shahids - martyrs - even if they did not volunteer for this lethal job. Under the law, criminals who use human shields are responsible for the deaths of the shields, even if the bullet that kills them came from the gun of a policeman. Israel has every self-interest in minimising civilian casualties, whereas the terrorists have every self-interest in maximising the same - on both sides. Israel should not be condemned for doing what every democracy would and should do: taking every reasonable military step to stop the terrorists from killing their innocent civilians.

Defending a people

Now that some of those who are launching rockets at Israeli cities have announced they have new surprises in store for Israel that may include chemical and biological weapons, the stakes have gotten even higher. What would Israeli critics regard as 'proportioned' to a chemical or biological attack? What would they say if Israel tried to preempt such an attack and in the process, killed some civilians? Must a democracy absorb a first strike from a WMD before it fights back? Would any other democracy be expected to do that?

The way in which terrorists first use <u>women</u> and children as suicide bombers against other <u>women</u> and children and then shed crocodile tears over the deaths of civilians they deliberately put in harm's way, gives a new meaning to the word 'hypocrisy'. We all know that hypocrisy is a tactic of the terrorist, but it is shocking that others fall for it and become complicit with them. Let the blame fall where it belongs: on the terrorists who deliberately seek to kill enemy civilians and give their democratic enemies little choice but to kill some civilians behind whom they are hiding.

Those who condemn Israel for killing civilians - who are used as human shields and swords for terrorists - actually cause more civilian deaths and make it harder for Israelto withdraw from the West Bank. How the world reacts to Israel's current military efforts to protect its citizens will have a considerable impact on future Israeli steps toward peace. Prior to the recent kidnappings and rocket attacks, the Israeli government had announced its intention to engage in further withdrawals from large portions of the West Bank. But how can Israel be expected to move forward with any withdrawal plan if all it can expect in return is more terrorism and more condemnation from the international community when it seeks to protect its civilians?

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Blind hatred is at root of fanatical Islamism

Ottawa Citizen

June 9, 2006 Friday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A13

Length: 327 words

Byline: Mahmood Elahi, The Ottawa Citizen

Body

Re: Stopping the next terror plot, June 5.

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and <u>Hamas</u> are both elected by the Palestinian people. Why then are their followers shooting at each other? Why are Sunni extremists systematically murdering the Shia Muslims in Iraq?

In July 2005, a group of young British Muslims bombed the London transit system, killing 52 people. They claimed they were merely retaliating against the killing of Iraqi Muslims by the coalition forces. "Until you stop bombing, gassing and torture of my people, we will not stop the fight," vowed one of the bombers in a video testament.

This perverted logic cannot hide the fact that it is extremist Sunnis who are bombing the Shiites in Iraq. Sunni extremists have bombed Shiite mosques filled with worshippers and schools and markets crowded with <u>women</u> and children. And the only person responsible for gassing Iraqis is Saddam Hussein, who used poison gas against Kurdish Muslims.

Fanatical Islamists are spreading their gospel of hatred around the world. Now they are using the Internet to poison young and impressionable minds. Hatred is a powerful tool to incite people to commit acts of extreme violence. Hitler managed to work up a considerable number of his compatriots to a homicidal fury against the Jews, even though the latter amounted to only one per cent of the German population. And the post-war Polish government did even better: that corrupt and paranoid Communist regime produced anti-Semitism with hardly any Jews at all. Most survivors of Poland's once-thriving Jewish community had emigrated after the war.

As blind hatred is the driving force behind fanatical Islamism, the war against terror must be fought at military, security and ideological levels. All immigrants to Canada must undergo a course about Canadian values. They must be told that Canadian society is based on tolerance and the rule of law, and hatred against anyone has no place in this society.

Mahmood Elahi,

Ottawa

Load-Date: June 9, 2006

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Hezbollah's gamble may hurt Iranian ambitions

Ottawa Citizen

July 26, 2006 Wednesday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A10; David Warren

Length: 827 words

Byline: David Warren, The Ottawa Citizen

Body

Before I get to the uplifting substance of today's column, let me briefly skirmish with the many correspondents who have filled my inbox with outrage against my justifications for Israel's attacks. They parrot what they have heard in the liberal media. The errors of fact I'm about to correct are beneath the elementary. But it is necessary to correct big lies as well as small.

Item: Israel has attacked Lebanon, which is too weak to defend itself.

This is a lie. The Israelis have made it abundantly clear they are not attacking Lebanon, but Hezbollah entrenched in Lebanese soil. Israelis, as anyone with any decency, feel sorry for innocent Lebanese caught in the crossfire. But as Israel's foreign minister, Tzipi Livni, put it to the German newsmagazine Der Spiegel: "Whether weak or strong, a government carries the responsibility for whatever happens within its country." She went on to hint the obvious: that Israel would prefer a Lebanon strong enough to disarm Hezbollah without Israeli help.

Item: The Israeli military operations are "excessive," and include unnecessary strikes against Lebanon's infrastructure and capital city.

This is a damned lie. Israel has been attacking Hezbollah in Lebanon, which necessarily includes infrastructure that Hezbollah uses. Even the attacks on the Beirut airport were for a purpose openly stated, and advertised in extensive leafletting and broadcasting before the airport's runways were cratered and fuel depots taken out. From hard past experience, the Israelis knew Hezbollah would be using that airport not only to whisk their prisoners to safekeeping in Iran, but as a conduit to bring Iranian and Syrian advisers, and crucial supplies, into and out of the country.

The strikes elsewhere in Beirut are overwhelmingly on the southern, Shia part of the city, where Hezbollah's masters have their command. Lebanese television and radio have themselves been broadcasting Israeli communiques, clearly warning what they will hit, when and why.

Item: There is a huge civilian toll.

Given the scale of the conflict, the number of deaths is not abnormally high. Our media have been giving running totals of civilian deaths in Lebanon that they should know are both wrong and misleading. They cannot know how many have been killed in Hezbollah's "hidey holes." They are unable to distinguish between real civilians and the Hezbollah fighters who blend among them. Even the United Nations' humanitarian point-man, Jan Egeland -- no

Hezbollah's gamble may hurt Iranian ambitions

friend of Israel -- has noted actual boasts from Hezbollah that their "human shield" strategy has got so many <u>women</u> and children killed, and so few of their own fighters. They cache their weapons in schools, hospitals, houses, apartment buildings. They hold civilians at gunpoint who are trying to flee. In light of all this, the stress on specific casualties -- for instance the poor little boy who was suffering hideously in a hospital in Tyre, whom CNN went to town on Monday night -- is a flagrant appeal to emotionalism, calculated to inflame misinformed audiences against Israel.

But now we come to the paradox. Despite some of the best efforts I've seen by our liberal media to spread poison, there is a growing understanding of what is taking place. Better yet, the response of the Arab world is increasingly directed against Hezbollah, Syria and Iran, and even against Iran's other client, <u>Hamas</u> in Gaza (now suing for peace). This is unprecedented.

In a partly incoherent, rambling and apocalyptic address on official Iranian TV Sunday, President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said, "Lebanon is the scene of a historic test, which will determine the future of humanity." Then, after condemning the unnamed leaders of various Arab regimes that had failed to align with Iran and Hezbollah, "This is the day that all things secret will be tested."

Iran unquestionably ordered the rocket and kidnapping attacks with which Hezbollah and <u>Hamas</u> provoked the current Israeli reaction (though that reaction may have been greater than it expected). The ayatollahs are probably also behind the current terror spike within Iraq. Their motive is quite obvious: to change the subject from the Western and growing Arab alarm about Iran's own emergence as a bellicose nuclear power. The ayatollahs are, further, trying to cement their claim to be the managing directors of the international jihad.

Ahmadinejad is right: this is "a historic test." But it does not follow that he is winning it. Instead, it appears, by pushing too hard and fast, that Iran has opened a civil breach across the Muslim world between Shia and Sunni. The ayatollahs have thus created a new opportunity for the West to form alliances with Sunni Muslim states against Iran's aspiring regional hegemony, which the Bush administration is now rightly trying to exploit. Ahmadinejad has, in short, given us a reason to hope -- as Hitler did, when he began to make too many enemies.

David Warren's column appears Sunday, Wednesday and Saturday.

Load-Date: July 26, 2006

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News Summary

The New York Times
May 12, 2006 Friday
Late Edition - Final

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

Length: 812 words

Body

INTERNATIONAL A3-22

London Bombing Report Cites Unheeded Threat

British counterterrorism agencies failed to understand the "development of the homegrown threat and the radicalization of British citizens" before the four bombings in London last July 7, according to a long-awaited parliamentary report. A21

Colombia Eases Abortion Ban

Colombia's highest court legalized abortion under extreme circumstances, a decision that is expected to embolden **women**'s rights groups across Latin America to use courts to roll back some of the world's most stringent abortion laws. A14

French Colleges Resist Change

A suburban campus of the University of Paris, with no student center, no bookstore and no freshman orientation, reflects the crisis of France's archaic state-owned university system: overcrowded, underfinanced and resistant to changes. A1

Fatwa Issued for Palestinian Aid

Religious leaders from a number of Muslim countries issued a joint edict requiring Muslims to donate money to the <u>Hamas</u>-led Palestinian Authority, currently boycotted as a terrorist group by the United States and the European Union. A8

Jordan's Islamists Eye Politics

Jordan's Islamists, emboldened by the Muslim Brotherhood's electoral gains in Egypt last year and by the rise to power of <u>Hamas</u> in the Palestinian elections, are preparing to take part in possible council and parliamentary elections in their own country. A10

NATIONAL A23-30

N.S.A. Report Prompts Uproar on Capitol Hill

News Summary

Congressional Republicans and Democrats demanded answers from the Bush administration about a report in USA Today that the National Security Agency has collected records of millions on domestic phone calls, even as President Bush told Americans that their privacy is "fiercely protected." A1

Senate Keeps Bush's Tax Cuts

The Senate passed almost \$70 billion in tax cuts, most of which will flow to the nation's wealthiest taxpayers. The action ensured that virtually all of President Bush's tax cuts will be locked in place until after the next presidential election. A1

Appropriations Panel Inquiry

Federal investigators are looking at the activities of members of the House Appropriations Committee, including Representative Jerry Lewis, the California Republican and chairman of the panel that wields broad influence over spending, government officials said. A30

Priest Guilty in Nun's Killing

The Rev. Gerald Robinson, a Roman Catholic priest, was found guilty of murdering a nun 26 years ago in what another priest testified was a ritual intended to defile the nun. A29

Army Changes Recruit Program

The Army has shaken up a program to heal recruits injured in basic training after soldiers and their parents said troops injured at Fort Sill were punished with physical abuse and medical neglect. A1

NEW YORK/REGION B1-8

Bizarre Details Emerge In Mob Murder Indictment

A racketeering indictment that was unsealed in a federal court in Brooklyn brought to light a slew of sensational details that depict a bizarre murder for hire plot as a grisly affair. Among the interesting aspects to the case is that the victim, Robert McKelvey, proved hard to kill. After an effort to strangle him failed, he was stabbed, then drowned. B1

Coping With War Deaths

When 10 U.S. soldiers died in a helicopter plane crash in Afghanistan, the military base at Fort Drum in upstate New York relied on its close-knit support structure for families that mirrors the military's organization and provides soldiers' relatives with the resources to cope with death. B1

Parents Protest Phone Ban

In the weeks since the Department of Education began surprise searches for contraband in the public schools, which includes cellular phones, many parents have organized to protest the ban on phones, which they say are lifelines to their children. While other parents see the scanning as an issue of civil liberties. B1

OBITUARIES A31

Floyd Patterson

The gentleman boxer who emerged from a troubled boyhood to have a 20-year career and become the world heavy weight champion twice, knocking out Archie Moore and Ingemar Johansson, he was 71. A31

BUSINESS DAY C1-10

Wal-Mart and Organic Food

Starting this summer, there will be a lot more organic food on supermarket shelves, and it should cost a lot less. The reason is that Wal-Mart wants to sell more organic food -- and because of its size and clout, Wal-Mart usually gets what it wants. A1

News Summary

After starting an advocacy group that trumpets the company's contributions to America, Wal-Mart is now quietly helping to recruit its suppliers to join the public relations offensive -- a move that some vendors say puts improper pressure on them. C1

Business Digest C2

EDITORIAL A32-33

Editorials: An ever-expanding secret; Abe Rosenthal of The Times; Mr. Putin's state of the union; "the future -- what's that?"

Column: Thomas L. Friedman.

Crossword E35 TV Listings E25 Weather D8

http://www.nytimes.com

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Viokence, opposition and democracy

The Guardian - Final Edition February 17, 2006 Friday

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Section: GUARDIAN INTERNATIONAL PAGES; Pg. 16

Length: 333 words **Byline:** Brian Whitaker

Body

Muslim Brotherhood (Egypt)

Founded in 1928, it has at various times been outlawed or grudgingly tolerated. It is the most popular opposition group in Egypt and its candidates (officially standing as independents) won 20% of the seats in last year's parliamentary election.

Muslim Brotherhood (Syria)

An offshoot of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, it waged an armed struggle against the Ba'athist regime until it was defeated in 1982. It has since renounced violence and called for a democratic system in Syria.

Hizbullah (Lebanon)

A Shia organisation backed by Iran and Syria, which retained its weapons after the Lebanese civil war. A UN security resolution calls for it to be disarmed. A military wing engages in sporadic conflict with Israel. Politically, it is an increasingly important player in Lebanon, winning 23 seats (out of 128) in last year's parliamentary election.

<u>Hamas</u> (Palestinian territories)

Highly controversial because of its suicide attacks and its non-recognition of Israel. Its victory in the Palestinian elections last month has posed a major dilemma for western countries.

Islamic Salvation Front (Algeria)

In 1991 the front won the first round of parliamentary elections which were then cancelled by the government, triggering a long and bloody conflict.

Justice and Development party (Turkey)

A nominally Islamist but primarily conservative party which won an election in 2002. Fears that it would try to Islamise Turkey, one of the most secular of Muslim states, proved generally unfounded.

Justice and Development party (Morocco)

Legalised last summer and allowed into mainstream politics after changing its name and moderating its Islamist stance. It is represented in parliament and has six **women** MPs.

Viokence, opposition and democracy

Islamic party of Malaysia

An Islamist party engaged in mainstream politics. It won 27 seats in Malaysia's 1999 election but dropped back to seven seats in 2004.

Jamaat-e-Islami (Pakistan)

Founded in 1941, it professing to be a legitimate political party, but has links with terrorism.

Load-Date: February 17, 2006

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Osama bin Laden is no friend of the Palestinian cause

The Australian (Australia)
April 26, 2006 Wednesday
All-round Country Edition

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Section: FEATURES; Opinion / Op Ed; Pg. 14

Length: 756 words **Byline:** Richard King

Body

MATP

The Islamic fundamentalism purveyed by al-Qa'ida is the enemy of moderate Muslims and secular Palestinians, argues Richard King

OSAMA bin Laden's latest pronouncement, aired on al-Jazeera on Sunday, is an attempt to influence public opinion in the West and in the Muslim world. As well as a direct appeal to his followers to spread their murderous jihad to the Sudan, it declares that moves to isolate *Hamas* are proof that the West is at war with Islam. So far, it is the second of these two statements that has attracted the greater media attention.

That sympathy for the Palestinian cause is widespread in the Islamic world is so obvious that it hardly needs to be said. But bin Laden is also very aware that Palestine is a hot-button issue in the West, where many liberal and left-wing commentators seem willing and even eager to believe that the rise of Islamic fundamentalism is attributable to American support for Israel. His pronouncements from the mid-1990s on are peppered with references to the Palestinians, but in recent years they have become more frequent. In my view, the reason for this is simple: these references have fallen on fallow ground.

Take, for example, Messages to the World: The Statements of Osama bin Laden, published by the left-leaning Verso Books. This book is a collection of bin Laden's pronouncements from 1994 to 2004, required reading for anyone interested in the real objectives of al-Qa'ida. And yet certain editorial decisions would appear to betray a hidden agenda.

For example, bin Laden's first major pronouncement (December 1994) is headed "The betrayal of Palestine". But the statement has less to do with Palestine than it does with the hated House of Saud and its tendency to put big business before Islam. The volume's editor, Bruce Lawrence, has chosen to give the issue of Palestine a prominence that the text does not warrant.

Probably Lawrence takes it for granted that bin Laden is motivated by the Palestinian cause. If so, he is certainly not alone. Recently, I had a conversation with a friend who said that she had a soft spot for bin Laden. I pointed out that bin Laden probably didn't have a soft spot for her -- a <u>female</u> liberal and a lover of music -- and that the kind of society he'd like to create would be a pretty grim place for her and her daughters.

Osama bin Laden is no friend of the Palestinian cause

Then the conversation-stopper: there would, she said, be no end to the bloodshed wrought by bin Laden and his band of brothers until there was justice for the Palestinians.

When it comes to discussion of Islamic politics, all roads lead to Palestine. Its invocation allows some liberals not only to contextualise Islamic fundamentalism, but also to compare Islamic fundamentalism to something they find even more objectionable: US support for Israel. It is, in the end, for the US, and not Islamic fundamentalism, that the Left reserves its most vociferous criticism. And when it comes to criticising the US, Israel and Palestine are money in the bank.

Of course, there is an awful lot to criticise, and it is certainly true that Israel and Palestine are high on bin Laden's list of grievances.

But to say that Islamic fundamentalism can be traced to US support for Israel, or that al-Qa'ida would disappear if only the Palestinians were free, is to play directly into bin Laden's hands. Bin Laden does not want a free Palestine but a Palestine under sharia law.

In my view, this goes to the heart of the matter. There is a war within the Muslim world. As yesterday's terror attacks on the Sinai peninsula remind us, the principal enemy of fundamentalist Islam is moderate Islam, not the West. Al-Qai'da's ultimate aim is to re-establish the Islamic caliphate and bring the entire Muslim world under the kind of repressive rule imposed by the Taliban in the late '90s. Those who desire to live in freedom from the boring clerics deserve our support. Instead, all they get is moral equivalence, at least from some of my friends on the Left.

<u>Hamas</u> has loudly distanced itself from bin Laden's latest proclamation. But the fact is they have certain aims in common: the abolition of Israel, for example, and the creation of a great Islamic state. Add to this the recent reports that al-Qai'da is increasing its presence in the Palestinian territories and the situation begins to look desperate. Now more than ever we need to declare solidarity with secular Palestinians. We need to realise that Islamic fundamentalism is the enemy, not the friend, of the Palestinian cause.

Richard King is a Fremantle-based journalist and reviewer.

Load-Date: April 25, 2006

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Israel was forged through assassination and kidnap . . . of the British; IN THIS PERSONAL COMMENTARY, AN HISTORIAN DRAWS SOME UNCOMFORTABLE PARALLELS

Daily Mail (London)
July 21, 2006 Friday

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Section: ED 1ST; Pg. 17

Length: 1338 words

Byline: CORRELLI BARNETT

Body

SEVERAL of my good friends are American, but this does not inhibit me from criticising George W. Bush's catastrophically misguided invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq.

Similarly, I have good friends who are Jewish, but this will not inhibit me from criticising the current 'total war' being waged on Lebanon by the Israeli state.

The fact that some of my Jewish friends will read this article only makes me the more sad that I have to say, as a military historian, that this war is grotesquely out of proportion to the level of casualties and damage previously inflicted on Israel by Hezbollah.

It is likewise grotesquely out of proportion to the taking hostage of two Israeli soldiers - as are the ferocious Israeli attacks inside the Gaza strip in response to the taking hostage of just one soldier.

Certainly, Israel has the right to defend herself today as she has done successfully in the past. But surely her response to <u>Hamas</u> and Hezbollah should have been limited and precisely targeted rather than a version of the 'shock and awe' bombing which opened the American invasion of Iraq in 2003.

The Israeli government should have learned that 'shock and awe' may only be a prelude to a protracted guerilla war.

During the long and bitter struggle against the IRA in Northern Ireland, it never occurred to any British government that the IRA bases and arms dumps within the Irish Republic should be bombed by the Royal Air Force, let alone that whole districts of Irish cities like Drogheda known to harbour IRA terrorists should be destroyed.

Equally, it has never occurred to a Spanish government that it would be right and proper to respond to the lethal, indiscriminate attacks by ETA (the Basque terrorist organisation) by savagely bombing and rocketing San Sebastian and other Basque cities.

WHY SHOULD Israel regard herself as a p r i v i l e g e d exception?

Israel was forged through assassination and kidnap . . . of the British IN THIS PERSONAL COMMENTARY, AN HISTORIAN DRAWS SOME UNCOMFORTABLE PARALLELS

Why should 'the West' in general - and Bush and Blair in particular - also regard her as a privileged exception, rightfully entitled to conduct a savage total war in response to Hezbollah attacks no worse than those of the IRA and ETA?

These questions are the more pertinent because Israel herself was born out of a terrorist struggle in 1945-48 against Britain, which then ruled Palestine under a United Nations mandate. The so-called Stern Gang (after its founder, Abraham Stern) specialised in assassination, its most famous victim being Lord Moyne, the Colonial Secretary, shot in Cairo in 1944.

But by far the most dangerous Jewish terrorist group was the Irgun Zvei Leumi (National Military Organisation) led by Menachem Begin, who after the creation of the state of Israel founded the Likud political party, and even finished up as prime minister.

The group's propaganda stated its political aims with brutal clarity. First, what it called 'the Nazo-British occupation forces' must be driven out of Palestine.

Then a Jewish state would be established embracing the whole of Palestine and Transjordan (as Jordan was then known). Too bad about the native population of Arabs, of course.

The group's logo, displayed on the fly-posters which I myself saw as a soldier in Palestine in 1946-47, showed a crude map of Palestine and Transjordan with an arm holding a rifle splayed across it.

The Irgun's successful attacks included the demolition in August 1946 of the wing of the King David Hotel in Jerusalem housing the secretariat of the British mandatory government and also the HQ of British troops in Palestine - at a cost of 91 lives, Jewish, Arab and British, most of them civilians.

Another 'success' was the blowing-up of the Officers' Club in Jerusalem in March 1947. I saw the corpses lying on slabs in the morgue, spittle still bubbling out of their mouths.

In combat with a terrorist group perhaps some 3,000 strong, a maximum of 100,000 British troops was deployed in a country about the size of Wales.

There was a lesson here for George W. Bush and Tony Blair before their invasion of Iraq - but of course a lesson unheeded by men with no interest in history.

In July 1947, the Irgun Zvei Leumi kidnapped two British Intelligence Corps sergeants as hostages to trade against the lives of three Irgun terrorists under sentence of death for an attack on Acre jail.

Here is an exact parallel to the kidnapping of two Israeli soldiers by Hezbollah. But unlike the savage reaction of Ehud Olmert's government today, the British government in 1947 did not seek to apply pressure to the kidnappers by ordering the RAF to destroy large parts of Tel Aviv, and the Royal Artillery to bombard selected Jewish settlements suspected of being bases for the Irgun.

In the event, the three Jewish terrorists were hanged - and the Irgun in turn strung up the two British sergeants from a tree in an orange grove and booby-trapped their bodies.

Yet even then it did not occur to the British authorities to impose the kind of savage collective punishment that Olmert's government is now visiting on the Arabs of Gaza and southern Lebanon.

A notice posted by the Irgun proclaimed that the two sergeants had been hanged because they were 'members of the British criminal-terrorist organisation known as the British Army of Occupation in Palestine', responsible for the murder of men, <u>women</u>, children and prisoners of war.

The so- called 'murdered prisoners of war' were in fact terrorists hanged after due trial.

Israel was forged through assassination and kidnap . . . of the British IN THIS PERSONAL COMMENTARY, AN HISTORIAN DRAWS SOME UNCOMFORTABLE PARALLELS

THIS IRGUN proclamation signed off with the warning: 'We shall revenge the blood of the prisoners of war who have been murdered, by actions of war against the enemy, by blows which we shall inflict on his head.' So blood-thirstily selfrighteous is the language of this long proclamation that it could just as easily have been written today by Hezbollah or *Hamas* or Al-Qaeda. The sacred cause may be different, but the language and the type of mind behind it remain the same.

In the event, Jewish terrorism against the British finally succeeded. All attempts to negotiate a future for Palestine which balanced Jewish interests against those of the majority Arab population came to nothing.

A project for a single state with Jewish and Arab cantons was rejected by the Arabs. An Arab proposal for a single state based on the existing Arab majority and a limit on future Jewish immigration was rejected by Jewish leaders.

A two- state solution, proposed by a UN commission and favoured by Washington, was in turn rejected by the Labour Government, who rightly feared that it would be British troops who would have to impose the settlement on one side or the other - or perhaps on both.

This, the chiefs of staff warned, would require two extra divisions on top of the two already in Palestine.

With the Irgun campaign of bombing still going on, and the tally of British casualties mounting, Clement Attlee's Cabinet had quite simply had enough.

They refused to impose the UN plan, and instead opted for unconditional withdrawal, even at the cost of (in the words of Ernest Bevin, the Foreign Secretary) 'a period of bloodshed and chaos'.

Another lesson here for Tony Blair in regard to Iraq?

So Britain handed the mandate back to the UN and announced that British rule in Palestine would end in spring 1948. As it duly did.

In the last months of the mandate, the security situation dissolved into three-cornered violence - Jew versus British and Arab; Arab versus Jew and British; British versus both.

By the time the last British force had left, this violence had degenerated into anarchic civil war between Jew and Arab.

It was just the prelude to the full-scale war between the new state of Israel and neighbouring Arab regimes wanting to extinguish it.

The war ended in the successful conquest by Israel of the larger part of Palestine, and a tidal wave of Arab refugees into Lebanon and Jordan.

Here is the origin of today's bitter Arab resentment of Israeli hegemony - a resentment which powers <u>Hamas</u> and Hezbollah as they follow the path of terrorism first mapped out by the Stern Gang and the Irgun Zvei Leumi in the 1940s.

CORRELLI BARNETT is a Fellow of Churchill College, Cambridge.

Load-Date: July 21, 2006



Palestinian Prime Minister Calls for a Truce With Israel and New Talks

The New York Times
July 9, 2006 Sunday
Late Edition - Final

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Section: Section 1; Column 1; Foreign Desk; Pg. 4

Length: 1238 words

Byline: By STEVEN ERLANGER

Dateline: GAZA, July 8

Body

The Palestinian prime minister from <u>Hamas</u>, Ismail Haniya, on Saturday called for a mutual cease-fire with Israel after Israeli forces pulled out of most of the northern Gaza Strip, perhaps responding to Israeli hints that a package deal might be possible to end a military and political crisis.

Eleven days after Israeli forces entered Gaza to free an abducted Israeli soldier and stop rocket fire by militants, they continued to hold territory in northern Gaza, east of Beit Hanun and the Erez crossing, and in the south, near Rafah. Early Saturday, the military also moved into eastern Gaza near the Karni crossing with Israel, where there were fierce clashes with militants on the eastern edge of Gaza City.

An Israeli official said in response to Mr. Haniya that there would be no cease-fire until the release of the Israeli soldier, Cpl. Gilad Shalit.

The violence continued Saturday evening, when an Israeli airstrike near Karni killed four Palestinians, including three members of the Hajaj family, who were sitting in their garden. Among the dead were Rawan Hajaj, 6, her brother Muhammad, 20, and their mother, Um Ayman Hajaj. The Israeli Army said it had been aiming at "a cell of armed gunmen" walking in the area and was checking to see whether a missile fired at them might have been responsible.

In fighting earlier in the day, another four Palestinians died, bringing the death toll to at least 44 Palestinians and one Israeli since Thursday. Nearly 20 Palestinians were wounded Saturday, including a 1-year-old, bringing the total of wounded to more than 130, according to Dr. Jumaa al-Saqqa of Al Shifa hospital, Gaza's largest.

In Israel, a cabinet minister, Ophir Pines-Paz of the Labor Party, suggested that the crisis could end through a package deal of the kind that Egypt had been trying to promote -- the release of Corporal Shalit, coupled with a more formal cease-fire and an Israeli promise to release a number of Palestinian prisoners as the cease-fire is shown to have taken hold.

"We have a great interest in changing the rules of the game," said Mr. Pines-Paz, who is also a member of Israel's inner security cabinet. "If we reach a situation in which there are no kidnappings, no rockets, no tunnels, no raids into our territory, certainly Israel will have to reciprocate," he told Israel Radio.

Palestinian Prime Minister Calls for a Truce With Israel and New Talks

On Friday, Avi Dichter, the minister of internal security, said that once the soldier was released, "if Israel will be obliged to in the framework of this agreement, within the calm that will be imposed on the ground by the Palestinian Authority, to release Palestinian prisoners as a gesture to this calm, Israel knows how to do that."

"In fact," he said, "Israel has done it before in the past."

Prime Minister Ehud Olmert has ruled out a prisoner trade, and Israel is eager to try to deter kidnappings by showing that it will not bargain for the corporal with his militant captors. But Mr. Olmert had promised to release prisoners to the Palestinian president, Mahmoud Abbas, at their first formal summit meeting, Mr. Abbas said Friday. Former Prime Minister Ariel Sharon did something similar when the two leaders met in February 2005.

In his statement, Mr. Haniya said, "In order to get out of the current crisis, it is necessary that all parties restore calm on the basis of mutually stopping all military operations," and he called for the renewal of talks.

His spokesman, Ghazi Hamad, said: "We asked for a mutual cease-fire and a return to the place of calmness. Israeli forces should pull out of the Gaza Strip and stop their aggression."

An Israeli military spokesman said the army's objectives in northern Gaza had been met, even though the number of Qassam rockets hitting Israel had increased, with 14 launched Friday. Capt. Noa Meir said the Israelis "are in an ongoing operation, and we're not ruling out going back into the north again." She said Israel had damaged "the terrorist infrastructure, the rocket-launching infrastructure and put general pressure on the *Hamas* government to release Corporal Shalit."

The Israelis say they also destroyed Qassam rocket manufacturing sites and storehouses.

Israeli troops moved in through the Karni crossing to look for tunnels and explosives, the army said, with engineering troops supported by armor. Early Saturday morning, the Israelis blew up a tunnel near Karni from the air, Captain Meir said. Later on Saturday, there were some serious clashes with Palestinian militiamen, with exchanges of machine-gun fire and some helicopter-fired missiles.

Palestinian militants in the area, a <u>Hamas</u> stronghold known as Shijaia, were seen planting explosives along streets and guarding street corners.

Overhead was the steady buzzing of a missile-armed Israeli drone aircraft, which the Palestinians here call the zananah, a made-up word for the aircraft's buzzing sound. Late Saturday, the Israelis pulled back through the crossing.

In Beit Lahiya, the scene of the worst fighting so far, residents cleaned up their houses on Saturday after the Israeli troops departed. The troops began moved out at about 1 a.m. and were mostly back into Israel by 9 a.m. They left behind them broken walls, smashed houses and angry Palestinians.

In the Atatrah neighborhood, Muhammad Erheem, shaken, showed a reporter through his large house on a hill, which 25 Israeli soldiers commandeered on Thursday night before leaving Saturday morning. They locked the 13 members of the Erheem family in a single storeroom, letting them in small groups, under guard, only to use the toilet. Mr. Erheem said.

The troops moved into the compound behind an armored bulldozer that crushed two smaller buildings -- a stable and a water pump house -- and also killed a number of prize goats, who were buried alive in the sand as the bulldozer passed over.

"I could hear my goats screaming above the noise," Mr. Erheem said. "Then they banged on the door and I opened it, and 10 soldiers came in, very agitated, and ordered me to strip, and one cocked his pistol at me and shouted, 'Where is the weapon?' I speak fluent Hebrew, thank God, and I said I had no weapon and there was no weapon in the house."

Palestinian Prime Minister Calls for a Truce With Israel and New Talks

The soldiers made holes in the walls to establish sniper positions, he said, and dismantled furniture, propping beds up against walls to help protect them from any incoming fire and "using my house like a hotel."

But Mr. Erheem was shocked that the soldiers brought wine into his house, and that one of them stripped down to his underwear in the heat and walked around that way in front of the <u>women</u>. Mr. Erheem also pointed out a Koran that had been ripped apart and scattered.

His son, Bakr Erheem, 25, had been married five days before, and there was a big party, the house still full of wedding bouquets and unopened gifts. Their wedding bed was dismantled and broken, holes tore through the concrete walls. Outside, his two water-tanker trucks -- he had a business selling filtered water -- were smashed, their engines pushed into the driver's cab.

Mr. Erheem said one soldier took a gold necklace, and he showed a purse he said had had gold jewelry in it. The soldiers had replaced the gold, he charged, with a gold-colored piece of metal that looked to be part of an antenna.

The Israeli Army said that troops had regulations about requisitioning houses and that it would investigate all allegations of wrongdoing.

http://www.nytimes.com

Graphic

Photo: Reema al-Ajori, right, and her aunt Sohyla Radi were ordered into the basement when Israeli soldiers commandeered their home in Gaza. (Photo by Shawn Baldwin for The New York Times)

Load-Date: July 9, 2006



Millions of reasons why Iran is a threat

THE AUSTRALIAN
February 17, 2006 Friday
All-round Country Edition

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Section: FEATURES; Opinion / Op Ed; Pg. 14

Length: 769 words **Byline:** Barry Cohen

Body

MATP

At least the commies could be contained. Not so the fanatical Iranians, warns Barry Cohen

IN a recent article on this page about the possibility of peace between the <u>Hamas</u> Government and Israel, I concluded: "There is only one way Israel can be destroyed, and that is by a nuclear bomb. Which brings us to the real problem -- Iran."

A letter to the editor responded that while the article was generally a fair assessment of the situation, could I please explain: "How can Iran destroy Israel without destroying Palestine as well and without being destroyed in return by Israel and the US?"

It is of course the key question and the one that needs to be asked by those seeking to avoid World War III.

"Ban the bombers" have been around since Hiroshima but gained momentum only when the Soviet Union got theirs. "Peace" organisations, funded by the Soviet Union, restricted their mass demonstrations to Western societies.

Although a political activist throughout a major portion of the Cold War, at no stage did I fear a nuclear holocaust. This was not prescience, inside information or bravado but merely a gut feeling the Soviet leadership, all of whom were atheists, would prefer staying alive than sacrificing themselves to maintain the workers' paradise. All were aware that in a nuclear war tens of millions of people would perish and they had a good chance of being among them.

Similarly, while most Americans claimed to be devout Christians, one sensed they had some doubts about the hereafter. It is difficult to imagine any of their recent presidents, particularly Richard Nixon, envisaging themselves strumming a harp from here to eternity. And that is why "Mutually Assured Destruction" (M.A.D.) worked, and it is why I have a soft spot for devout atheists.

It is also why everything changed on 9/11. When 19 relatively affluent, well-educated young men blow themselves up because of real or imagined grievances against the West then, to coin a phrase, "we have a problem".

Millions of reasons why Iran is a threat

Few who now prattle on about treating the "root causes" of Islamic fundamentalism and the willingness of jihadists to die to make a point seem to have considered the difficulty of convincing any of their own friends to sacrifice their lives for a cause -- any cause. It's one thing to be prepared to lay down one's life to defend freedom, but it is quite another to want to die a martyr for 72 virgins. This is when the average Westerner realises he is dealing with fanatics who are at best barking mad.

September 11, 2001, was only the beginning. Bali, Jakarta, Spain, Israel, Afghanistan, Chechnya and Iraq have produced hundreds of young men and a few <u>women</u> willing, nay enthusiastic, to blow themselves up. Thousands, we are told, are ready to follow. This mindset is best illustrated by the newly elected <u>Hamas</u> MP who "boasted" that three of her sons had been suicide bombers and she hoped the other three would follow. She gives a new twist to the phrase "family planning". No one seems to ask: "If suicide is such fun, why are the leaders not showing the way?"

Which brings us back to the original question. A nuclear bomb dropped on Tel Aviv would undoubtedly destroy a very large part of Israel, the West Bank and Gaza. It would also do irreparable damage to Jerusalem, the third most important site for the world's Muslims. About four to five million Israelis and Palestinians would die.

With the best intelligence service in the world, Israel would be well aware of what was about to happen and, while it may be able to interdict Iranian missiles, it wouldn't be waiting to see if it was successful. I wouldn't want to be an Iranian when it responded.

One of Iran's leadership's most endearing qualities is their honesty when talking about Israel. President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad leaves no one in doubt about his views.

"The Holocaust is a myth; Israel should be moved to Europe and/or wiped off the face of the earth," are just a few of them.

Former president Ayatollah Rafsanjani -- described for years as a moderate -- claimed recently: "The Muslim world would win a nuclear exchange with Israel", and "an atomic bomb would not leave anything in Israel -- but the same thing would just produce damage in the Muslim world".

Put simply, he considers the death of millions of Iranians and Palestinians a small price to pay for the obliteration of Israel. And Rafsanjani is considered a moderate.

The fanatics don't care if they die. On the contrary, many will welcome it. At the risk of being repetitive -- we have a problem.

Barry Cohen was a federal Labor MP from 1969 to 1990 and a minister in the Hawke government.

Load-Date: February 16, 2006



Why Gaza attacks are deadlier

Christian Science Monitor June 23, 2006, Friday

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 6

Length: 1374 words

Byline: Ilene R. PrusherStaff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

Dateline: JERUSALEM

Highlight: The Israeli army is facing an internal investigation into why recent missile strikes have gone so badly.

Body

After three botched military strikes in Gaza in just over a week, in which 13 Palestinian civilians were killed, the Israeli army is facing an internal investigation into why guided missile strikes that in the past have been called "targeted," "efficient," and even "surgical" have gone so badly, fueling the fires of resentment and sparking international calls for restraint.

Among the reasons the attacks are growing more deadly is that the tactics and technology of the conflict on both sides have been evolving in ways that may be increasing the risk of civilian casualties.

Since Israel pulled out of the Gaza Strip last August, Palestinian militants have moved closer to the border with Israel. But also, the Israeli army says, Palestinian groups are now gaining access to longer-range rockets, allowing militants to fire from crowded urban areas.

In addition, in the past 10 days, Israel has placed a military balloon over the northern end of Gaza, providing pictures of ground activity that is being used to call in military strikes, according to witnesses and Israeli media reports.

"The change is this," says Capt. Noa Meir, in explaining one Israel Defense Forces (IDF) theory as to why more civilians are being injured and killed in the course of what had been a relatively quiet weapons volley until a few months ago. Palestinian militants have usually launched Kassam rockets, which have a range of about five miles and are not terribly accurate.

But recently, Palestinian cells have begun to lob Katyusha rockets - the first one was launched in late March - which have a range of about 14 miles, and are much more likely to hit their target. Katyusha rockets were commonly used by the Iranian-backed Hizbullah in Lebanon in its war of attrition with Israel.

"For the terrorists, they prefer to go farther away, so they can hide among the civilians," says Captain Meir. "The areas that we evacuated last August are now being used for launching grounds for Kassams."

When Israel launched a missile strike one week ago Tuesday, she says, the target was a car that was carrying a Katyusha rocket about to be launched, which Israel sees as a more serious threat than the Kassam rockets.

Why Gaza attacks are deadlier

"Katyusha rockets not only have a longer range, they're more accurate and more deadly," Meir says. Fifteen Israelis have been killed in rocket attacks from Gaza in the past five years, according to army figures, and more than 175 rockets of different kinds have been launched by Palestinians into Israel in the past month.

"The question is can we pinpoint it, and we use the best resources and technology you can in order to do so," she says. "Lately, this has been a bad sequence of events. The IDF really does everything in its power to avoid these results. But if you look at these events over the past year, we are usually able to surgically remove, if you will, the militants."

But relative "accuracy" of some missile strikes does not mitigate the bitterness in Gaza over the errant ones. Thursday, thousands marched in the funeral of two Palestinian siblings - a pregnant woman and her brother - killed in a missile strike a day earlier.

The two were struck while the Israeli air force was trying to target members of the Popular Resistance Committee, a militant group made up of members from different factions. On Tuesday night, three Palestinian children, aged 5, 7, and 16, were killed during an Israeli missile strike that missed its target. Israel was aiming for three militants from the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, who emerged unscathed. The Israeli air force had aimed its missile at their car, driving through the densely populated Jabalya refugee camp. On Tuesday a week earlier, eight Palestinian civilians were killed alongside three militants from Islamic Jihad.

The bloodshed has brought international criticism and calls for a cease-fire. United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan called on Israel to stop the missile strikes, and for Palestinians to stop firing rockets at Israel. After the missile strike Tuesday that killed the three children, the secretary-general's spokesman said Israel should "respect international law to ensure that its actions are proportionate and do not put civilians at grave risk."

Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas, who met with Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert in Jordan Thursday, has also called on Palestinian factions to halt rocket fire against Israel and prevent Israel from having "an excuse" to launch further attacks or send ground forces back into Gaza, a possibility that has been floated in the press several times in recent weeks.

In a statement earlier this week, Mr. Abbas also criticized Israel's strikes, raising questions about their accuracy. "The increased frequency of <u>women</u> and children falling victim to Israeli missiles," he said, "in an age of very precise electronic warfare, indicates a deliberate action on the Israeli side to target every Palestinian and to cause maximum human, physical, and psychological damage."

A cabinet minister for the <u>Hamas</u>-led government Thursday condemned the US and the international community for not speaking more forcefully about the missile strikes. "We feel the absence of international conscience, especially the United States, which didn't say a single word in condemnation to the Israeli massacres in Gaza Strip," Yousef Rezga, the Palestinian Authority's Information Minister, told reporters in Gaza.

Even inside Israel, there has been increased criticism of the policy. Defense Minister Amir Peretz said that in the wake of recent botched assassination attempts, the IDF should prefer cancelling a mission over taking innocent lives, if and when it becomes clear that civilians will likely die in the process of an assassination. Amos Harel, a writer for the leading progressive newspaper, Haaretz, wrote a pointed article Thursday under the headline, "Nothing surgical about IAF [Israeli air force] Attacks."

He posed: "If the air attacks are considered to be the cutting edge of technology, why are there so many civilian casualties?"

Israel's policy of using targeted assassinations has come under fire in the past, particularly when innocent bystanders have been killed. In 2004, Israel assassinated two of the top figures in *Hamas*, which is listed by the US State Department as a terrorist organization: Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, the group's spiritual leader, and Abdel Aziz Rantisi, who was a senior political figure.

Why Gaza attacks are deadlier

In 2002, the Israeli air force dropped a one-ton bomb on an entire building in Gaza City, completely destroying it and killing 14 civilians, according to the Jerusalem Post. They also got the target they were after - <u>Hamas</u> leader Salah Shehada.

Israeli military has moved away from artillery shelling and focused on missile strikes in recent weeks in particular because of the theory that the military can be much more "precise" about getting at particular militants or the source of fire. The technology that allows Israeli forces in the air to track Palestinians militants on the ground is one that the IDF will not comment on extensively. IDF officials say, however, that when they see civilians getting in the way of a missile intended for militants, they are able to divert the rocket before it lands. Sometimes, however, it is diverted into a place where it does even more damage.

"There have been a number of instances where there has been info and we were in the air, and we have information that civilians would be hurt, so we refrain from striking," says Meir. "There have been times when we launched the missile, and the civilians enter the area, and we try to divert the missile, but sometimes if we divert it, it will do even more damage. Unfortunately, we don't see anything like this on the other side. They are trying to kill civilians."

In a related issue, seven members of the same family were killed in a blast on a Gaza beach on June 9. Israeli shelling initially was believed to have caused the deaths. But Israeli officials and newspaper reports have suggested that there was either a bomb on the beach, planted by militants to prevent an Israeli invasion by sea and accidentally triggered by the family, or the family happened open old, unexploded ammunition.

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Load-Date: June 22, 2006



Politics of Brotherhood

The Toronto Star February 4, 2006 Saturday

Copyright 2006 Toronto Star Newspapers, Ltd.

Section: RELIGION; Pg. M06

Length: 1360 words

Body

<u>Hamas</u>'s stunning landslide victory in last month's Palestinian election was yet another manifestation of the growing political clout of Islamism in the Arab world and elsewhere.

The Islamist party's dramatic breakthrough came less than two months after the Muslim Brotherhood, out of which <u>Hamas</u> was born, emerged as by far the largest opposition group in Egypt's parliament. Although less dramatic than <u>Hamas</u>'s victory, the Islamist political surge in the Arab world's most populous country left liberal, secular and leftist parties in disarray and prompted widespread speculation on what the future holds.

Founded by a schoolteacher in 1928 to link tradition with modernity, to promote social reform based on an Islamic ethos, and to oppose political and social injustice and British imperialism, the Muslim Brotherhood has evolved into what is considered to be the world's largest and most influential Islamist movement with one of the most formidable grassroots organizations in the Middle East.

Officially banned since 1954, the Brotherhood, campaigning on the slogan "Islam is the Solution," ran 150 candidates as independents and managed to garner 88 seats in the 454-seat People's Assembly in an election marred by violence, wide-scale arrests of Brotherhood supporters and allegations of vote-buying, intimidation. The turnout was less than 25 per cent of eligible voters.

The parliamentary election followed Egypt's first contested presidential election in September when voters gave Hosni Mubarak, leader of the ruling National Democratic Party, a fifth six-year term in office. Earlier last year, nudged by the U.S., Mubarak gingerly eased the door open to allow multi-candidate presidential elections as part of a reform package.

Although militant Islamist groups in Egypt have perpetrated bloody terrorist attacks over the years, including the assassination of President Anwar Sadat in 1981, the Muslim Brotherhood renounced violence in 1970. It now presents itself as the moderate face of Islam, denies any links with militant groups and says it aims to create an Islamic state through peaceful means.

The establishment of what Islamists call a true Islamic society would be one in which all institutions, including the government, would follow strict Islamic principals based on Islamic (Sharia) law primarily rooted in the Qur'an, Islam's sacred text, and the Hadith, the narrative account of the prophet Muhammad's sayings and actions.

While Egypt's current constitution cites Islamic law as the main source of legislation, many devout Muslims complain that the government often ignores or bypasses that provision and that Egypt's governments have been secularist and even anti-religious since the early 1920s.

Politics of Brotherhood

Egypt's population is more than 70 million. Most Egyptians are Sunni Muslims - estimates range from 90 to 94 per cent - with a small Shia Muslim population. Coptic Christians, most of whom are members of the Coptic Orthodox Church, form the largest Christian minority; estimates range from 6 to 10 per cent.

Other Christian groups include Greek Orthodox, Eastern and Latin Rite Catholics, Protestant denominations and other smaller Christian communities. The number of Jews is estimated to be less than 1,000. Most left Egypt after the Suez crisis of 1956 when the combined forces of Israel, France and Britain attacked Egypt.

How would <u>women</u>, Christians and other minorities fare under an Islamist government dedicated to a strict interpretation of Sharia law?

Even before last year's month-long election ended, prophets of doom were predicting an Iranian-style or Taliban-style regime should the Muslim Brotherhood ever form the government.

A prominent Copt writer and thinker was widely quoted after suggesting that if the Muslim Brotherhood ever assumed power, most Copts would leave Egypt because they would not want to live under Sharia law.

Some Copts have complained that they have been neglected by the government to appease Islamists. A major complaint is that Copts are forced to get government permission to build new churches or to repair existing ones.

Copt-Muslim tensions have led to violent sectarian clashes. The most recent incident of sectarian violence took place in Alexandria shortly before the parliamentary elections following the distribution of a DVD of a two-year-old play that Muslims say is insulting to Islam. Accusations of forced or solicited conversions from Christianity to Islam, or vice versa, have often been a flashpoint for sectarian clashes

In an attempt to allay fears, several Muslim Brotherhood leaders took to the international media with conciliatory messages.

"The success of the Muslim Brotherhood should not frighten anyone," the Brotherhood's vice-president said in a Guardian newspaper article. "We respect the rights of all religious and political groups. Free and democratic elections are the first stage along the path of reform towards a better future for Egypt and the entire region. We simply have no choice today but to reform.

"The provocation of a corrupt, oppressive government - backed by the most powerful countries in the world - will not intimidate either our organization, which has survived for 77 years, or the Egyptian people, who have increasingly come to trust us.

"We aim to trigger a renaissance in Egypt rooted in the religious values upon which Egyptian culture and society is built: for we believe these values can effectively deal with obstacles that have hindered reform."

John Walsh, senior editor at the Harvard International Review, says Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood provides an example of the goals and methods of centrist Islamism with a long-term goal of implementing Sharia law as the basis of national law. It has committed itself to working with the current Egyptian system to achieve this objective, he says, and renounces, at least in official statements, the violent tactics of militant splinter groups.

The Brotherhood's experiences in the past 20 years, says Walsh, have suggested "that it may be more capable of providing social services to the Egyptian population, more reliable in keeping promises it has made, and even more democratic than the secular regime that has enjoyed consistent U.S. support."

Paul Kingston, a University of Toronto professor of political science and international development studies, calls it a "positive sign" that Islamist parties want to enter the political arena.

He sees the Muslim Brotherhood as an organization with a significant degree of integrity, interested in participating in the political process and maybe even accommodating itself to the process with all the various compromises it might entail. And this, he adds, is to be encouraged rather than to be seen as a danger.

Politics of Brotherhood

The Brotherhood would probably be an effective political party, Kingston says, but he doubts whether its norms and all its platforms would correspond to what the West would think would be appropriate liberal-democratic policies.

As a political scientist, what he's interested seeing emerge in much of the Middle East is a "more powerful institutionalized system of government where rules are obeyed." He believes the Brotherhood would be a positive source in that respect.

As for Sharia law, Kingston says its proposed application would open debate within the Brotherhood on what Sharia is.

"It's a very flexible thing," he says. "You have both very conservative Sharia interpretation and very liberal interpretation. Egypt has one of the most liberal Sharia court judges who openly talks about the rights of <u>women</u> and such things."

Some analysts argue that the assumption of power by an Islamist party would mean it would be forced to be more pragmatic and more open to compromise. Kingston suggests it's too early to reach that conclusion - or any conclusion - on how things would play out.

What he does say is that it's necessary to get away from the notion that there is a "clear religious ideological norm at play" in the Muslim world about what an Islamist party wants.

"It is clearly something that is subject to enormous debate religiously, let alone politically."

Michael McAteer was in Egypt during the earlier stages of the parliamentary election.

Graphic

HICHAM SAFIEDDINE PHOTO Egyptian supporters of the Muslim Brotherhood pray behind a barricade outside a polling station that was closed throughout election day in Al Mansoura, north of Cairo.

Load-Date: February 4, 2006



IJ WOMEN PROTEST AMENDS TO HUDOOD ORDINANCE

The Nation (AsiaNet)

August 16, 2006 Wednesday

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Length: 349 words

Body

KARACHI-A large number of activists of <u>women</u> wing, Jamaat-i-Islami converged at Shamzai Chowk to Noorani Chowk on Wednesday to protest against Israeli atrocities in Lebanon and Palestine and proposed amendment in Hudood Ordinance. Led by the Central Naib Qaima of Jamaat-i-Islami <u>Women</u> Wing Talat Zaheer and MPA Kulsoom Nizamani and others, the protesting <u>women</u> carrying banners and placards inscribed with slogans of, 'We all are <u>Hamas</u>, we all are Hizbullah', 'death to America, death to Israel'.

They also yelled slogans against US, Israel and the rulers of Pakistan. On this occasion, it was unanimously agreed that Jihad culture should also be implemented in Pakistan and that every child of the State would sacrifice its life for the sake of Islam and the country.

Addressing the rally, Central Secretary General Jamaat-i-Islami Syed Munawwar Hassan said that people are filled with the sentiments of Jihad and we would continue our struggle for the implementation of Jihad culture in the country. He said it was the great victory of Hizbullah and defeat of Israel, adding, that Hizbullah showed unprecedented resistance, which proved that nation filled with sentiments of Jihad could not be defeated through weapons and modern technology.

He said that due to international pressure Lebanon accepted ceasefire and termed it vindictive step and said that Israel must be pulled out from the region. Syed Munawwar Hassan said that Israel brutalities were not condemned in UN resolution as it had invaded an independent and sovereign State.

Criticising President General Pervez Musharraf, he said he was patronising Israel and supporting US, instead of helping Kashmiris, rulers were talking of CBMs. Speaking on the occasion, Ayesha Munawwar MNA criticised Condoleeza Rice for her views against Jihadis. She further said that Rice must know that <u>women</u> of Islam are with their Muslim brethren and would support the people of Lebanon. Dr Meraj-ul-Huda Siddiqui said that Musharraf was pleading the case of Israel and was defending its view. He said UN has lost its credibility and must be dissolved.

Load-Date: December 6, 2006



<u>INSIDE</u>

The New York Times
July 6, 2006 Thursday
Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2006 The New York Times Company

Section: Section A; Column 1; Metropolitan Desk; Pg. 1

Length: 328 words

Body

Oil Up and Stocks Down After Missile Tests

Oil prices closed at a record high as political tensions over the missile tests by North Korea shook equity and commodities markets around the world. Investors who sold stocks turned to safer alternatives, sending the price of gold and silver sharply higher.

United States markets were also affected by a report showing that nonfarm employment surged in June, causing concern that the Federal Reserve would continue to raise interest rates. BUSINESS DAY, PAGE C1

Israeli Troops Press Into Gaza

Large numbers of tanks and troops moved deeper into northern Gaza hours after the government ordered the military to expand its operations against <u>Hamas</u> to free a captured Israeli soldier and halt Palestinian rocket fire. PAGE A8

New AIDS Pill Is Approved

The Food and Drug Administration approved a 3-in-1 antiretroviral pill for use by the American-sponsored plan for AIDS treatment. The White House's acting global AIDS coordinator said it should improve treatment in poor countries. PAGE A7

Mexico Begins Final Count

A packet of votes in Guadalajara, above, was recounted after a mistake was found on the tally sheet accompanying them. Across Mexico, election officials began a final official tabulation of the results of Sunday's disputed presidential election, in which preliminary results separated the candidates by the narrowest of margins. PAGE A8

In the Bosom of Dada

"Daughters of New York Dada," at Francis M. Naumann Fine Art, highlights convention-puncturing *female* artists at that movement's vanguard. A review by Holland Cotter. THE ARTS, PAGE E1

France Knocks Out Portugal to Reach World Cup Final

INSIDE

Zinedine Zidane, right, being congratulated by Thierry Henry after putting a penalty kick past goalkeeper Ricardo in the 33rd minute of a 1-0 victory in Munich. Henry set the stage for Zidane by drawing a foul in the penalty area. France will face Italy in Berlin for the championship on Sunday. PAGES D1 AND D5

http://www.nytimes.com

Graphic

Photos (Photo by Mark J. Terrill/Associated Press)

(Photo by Adriana Zehbrauskas for The New York Times)

Load-Date: July 6, 2006



The New York Times
February 22, 2006 Wednesday
Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2006 The New York Times Company

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

Length: 1753 words

Byline: By MICHAEL SLACKMAN and HASSAN M. FATTAH; Michael Slackman reported from Amman for this

article, and Hassan M. Fattah from Sana, Yemen. Mona el-Naggar contributed reporting from Cairo.

Dateline: AMMAN, Jordan, Feb. 21

Body

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?"

In Yemen, an editorial by Muhammad al-Assadi condemned the cartoons but also lamented 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," Mr. Assadi wrote. He added, "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 prison.

Mr. Momani and Mr. Assadi are among 11 journalists in five countries facing prosecution for printing 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, 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 movements, like <u>Hamas</u> in Gaza 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 <u>Women</u> Journalists Without Constraints 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."

The heated emotions, the violence surrounding protests and the arrests 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 religious credentials.

"I keep hearing, 'Why are liberals silent?' " said Said al-Ashmawy, an Egyptian judge and author of 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 about politics or *women*. Then what is left?"

While the cartoons have infuriated Muslims, the regional dynamics underlying the conflict have been evolving for 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 helped the rise of Islamic political forces in the first place. They have placated the more extreme voices while arresting and silencing more moderate ones.

Jihad Khazen, a 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 newspaper Mr. Momani edited, that even some of his allies were taken aback.

The newspaper printed three cartoons without obscuring them, including one depicting 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 <u>Hamas</u>, which won parliamentary elections in Gaza, and 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.

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 protests over the cartoons seemed a safe bet for the authorities -- until protesters began criticizing the government. At least 11 people were killed in clashes with the police.

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 Mr. Momani and Mr. Assadi face charges because of the region's broader political dynamics -- and not because of the nature of the cartoons -- can be found in Egypt.

After all, Ahmed Abdel Maksoud and Youssra Zahran are free. They are journalists with the Egyptian weekly Al Fajr, one of the first Arab newspapers to publish the cartoons. They wrote a story about the caricatures and reprinted them in October -- 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 cell, escorted to court by machine-gun toting police. It is echoed in Jordan as well, where two journalists await trial.

Mr. Momani appears in court on Wednesday, while two of the Yemeni journalists were released Tuesday pending their trial. The third begins 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.

"If freedom of the press affects national unity in a tribal system with high levels of illiteracy, one has to consider how far it can go," said Yemen's foreign minister, Dr. Abu Bakr al-Qirbi. "All societies have red lines."

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 Mr. Assadi in an interview in his jail cell. "The Yemeni government has many reasons to arrest Yemeni journalists. They want to keep people busy as long as they can, so that they can cover over issues like corruption."

Mr. 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. Mr. 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 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 obscured the image with a black X. A fourth man, Kamal al-Aalafi, editor-in-chief of the weekly Al Rai al Aam, became a fugitive after escaping arrest for similar charges.

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

The Yemen Observer had called for Muslims to accept the apology of Jyllands-Posten, the Danish newspaper that first printed the caricatures, and urged Muslims to avoid violence. Mr. Assadi said that call was especially unpopular with the government and the Islamists. The Observer recalled its print run and republished a new issue just two days after the initial publication, but to no avail.

"Anyone who insults the prophet must face the sword," said one imam in a recent Friday sermon in Yemen. Another announced, "The government must execute them."

In Jordan, Mr. Momani is free from jail, but a prisoner in his home. He has no work, no immediate prospects, a criminal case against him and a lifetime of friends who privately support his message but say they dare not support him publicly.

Mr. Momani was not the first to print the cartoons in Jordan. Hisham Khalidi, whose newspaper, Al Mehwar, printed the cartoons a week earlier with a story condemning them, is awaiting trial.

But Mr. Momani's timing was particularly bad, just one week after the <u>Hamas</u> victory in Gaza, political analysts said. Jordanian officials expelled <u>Hamas</u> leaders years ago and saw their recent victory as a potential threat to national stability.

From the beginning, Mr. Momani felt the cartoon issue was being manipulated by Islamic groups eager to flex their muscles, and he asked his readers to consider why the protests began so many months after publication. He says he did not expect such a backlash, but that in hindsight, he understands why the authorities acted as they did.

"They wanted to show the Islamic movement that they are the defenders of the prophet" Mr. Momani said in an interview. "They used me."

Mr. Momani expressed exasperation when asked why he printed the cartoons. He insisted that it was the work of journalists to inform, and that he did so after speaking to many people who were outraged without ever seeing the cartoons.

"I am telling my people, 'Be rational, think before you go into the streets,' " he said. "Who harms Islam more? This European guy who paints Muhammad or the real Muslim guy who cuts a hostage's head off and says, 'Allah-u akbar?' Who insults our religion, this guy or the European guy?"

http://www.nytimes.com

Graphic

Photos: Jihad Momani, a Jordanian, is one of 11 journalists in five countries facing prosecution for reprinting cartoons lampooning the Prophet Muhammad, reflecting a battle among Muslims on how to respond to them. (Photo by Shawn Baldwin for The New York Times)

Yehiya al-Abed, an Al Hurriya reporter in Yemen, pointing, with Abdulkarim Sabra, its managing editor. They were accused of insulting Islam. (Photo by Khaled al-Hammadi for The New York Times)(pg. A8)

Load-Date: February 22, 2006



Israel should remember its own 'terrorist' origins

The Independent (London)
July 24, 2006 Monday
First Edition

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Section: FEATURES; Pg. 27

Length: 837 words

Byline: JOHANN HARI

Body

As Israeli forces killed more than 300 civilians and drove half a million people from their homes in the name of stamping out "terrorism", a small, sour historical irony passed unnoticed last week in Jerusalem.

The veterans of another "terrorist" organisation gathered, right under the nose of the Israeli forces, to celebrate the slaughter of 91 people, including 28 Brits, in a hotel. It fondly recalled planting bombs that blew up civilians on buses, in marketplaces and cafZs, introducing these tactics to the Middle East tango. It looked back on rounding up the population of an entire village - 251 men, <u>women</u> and children - and shooting them all. It even marked the memory of kidnapping the other side's soldiers and holding them for weeks - before hanging them by the neck until they were dead.

So has this "terrorist" organisation been punished with aerial bombardment from the Israeli Defence Force? Not quite.

The group was called the Irgun, and it was made up of Jewish nationalists whose children now comprise the Israeli establishment. Through the 1930s and 1940s, it planted bombs across Palestine, targeting both British soldiers and Palestinian civilians. It had two goals: to drive the British imperialists out, and to terrorise the Palestinian population into unconditionally accepting the creation of Israel.

Ehud Olmert, Israel's "war on terror" Prime Minister, can scarcely condemn them. He spent the first three years of his life living in one of their terror training camps while his parents worked as their gun-runners. Tzipi Livni, the foreign minister widely tipped as a future PM, is the daughter of the Irgun's director of military operations, a mastermind of civilian slaughter.

While the war in Lebanon went supernova last week, the remaining Irgun fighters unveiled a plaque marking the 60th anniversary of their decision to blow up the King David Hotel. If only Olmert, Livni and the wider Israeli public could remember their own family's history of "terrorism", they would be able to see how futile are their own current military campaigns against "terrorists" in Gaza and Lebanon.

Israel should remember its own 'terrorist' origins

When Jewish people were deprived of a state, a section of their population took up arms and fought for one - often with terrible tactics. Some of them even dreamed lunatic dreams of ethnic cleansing. The Palestinian people are in exactly the same position today, stoked and supported by <u>Hamas</u> and Hizbollah.

Three summers ago, I sat in a cool, bare flat in Gaza City and met a string of young men who were trainingto become suicide-murderers. As I spoke to these young men who were marinated in rage, I was struck by how familiar their words sounded.

I had just been reading The Revolt, the memoirs of Menachem Begin, the Irgun commander who went on to become the first Likud Prime Minister of Israel. "Blood brought our revolt to life," he wrote. "Only when you are prepared to stand up to Zeus himself in order to bring fire to humanity can you achieve the fire-revolution." The suicide-murderers said, "We will create Palestine in blood and fire. The Jews only understand blood and fire."

Olmert and Livni need to ask themselves, how would their parents, determined terror-fighters, have responded to the aerial bombardment Israel is inflicting this week? The Irgun did not stop blowing up Arab civilians because they were crushed by British gunships and Apache helicopters. They stopped because the world gave them a slab of what they wanted. Not everything - the Irgun wanted all the land between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea, but they settled for a state of their own within more limited borders.

<u>Hamas</u> and Hizbollah cannot be silenced by military means. Their stash of rockets might be blown up this year, but the renewed ferocity of their hate will guarantee they are rebuilt next year. They will not watch passively as their children are reduced to near-African levels of malnutrition, as has happened in Gaza, or while the kill rate is 10-to-one against them, as in Lebanon.

They will only ever be silenced by giving them something - not everything - of what they want. Both have agreed that if there is a real two-state solution along the 1967 border, they will not fire at Israel proper again. They want all of the land, ethnically cleansed of their enemies, just as Olmert and Livni's parents did 60 years ago. But they will settle for less.

Yet the Israeli government has not chosen this route - of de-escalation and negotiation, towards two states for two peoples on the one slim patch of land they are condemned to share. Instead it has chosen war.

That's why, 60 years from now, Lebanese and Palestinian fighters will be proudly gathering in Gaza City and Beirut to unveil plaques honouring the "terrorists" who killed and died fighting Israel this week. At this rate, with the Middle East veering ever further from the only sane solution, the historical irony will still be missed.

Deprived of a state, Jews took up arms. Palestinians are in the same position today

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Load-Date: July 24, 2006



Something there is that doesn't love a wall

Ottawa Citizen

April 4, 2006 Tuesday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A13; Lisa van Dusen

Length: 836 words

Byline: Lisa van Dusen, Citizen Special

Body

Before he took ill, Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon liked to quote the Robert Frost line, as he did to U.S. President George W. Bush while defending his wall during a White House visit in July, 2003, that "Good fences make good neighbours."

In the past week -- a week that saw the election of Sharon's successor and anointed heir Ehud Olmert on the Israeli side of the "fence" on Tuesday and the swearing-in of a <u>Hamas</u>-led government on the Palestinian side on Wednesday -- the neighbourhood has been about as bad as ever.

In a poll released during the recent Israeli election campaign, only one in eight Israelis said they would want Kadima leader Olmert as a dinner partner -- which, as anyone who's ever had dinner in Israel can attest, could really be a protest vote against Olmert's relatively low-key delivery.

It didn't stop him from winning last week's election, albeit with fewer Knesset seats than the polls had predicted. If a Kadima-led coalition holds long enough for Olmert to deliver on his election platform, the neighbourhood will look very different.

In Abu Dis, where Arab East Jerusalem meets the fringes of the Palestinian West Bank, the Israeli government's separation barrier goes right through the middle of town. In that place, the barrier is 30 feet high and made of tapered concrete slabs, like hulking Jersey dividers from a mutant turnpike.

When I was there two years ago, there was a gap in the wall that elderly <u>women</u> in burkas would scuttle through with their groceries. That day, it took less than five minutes after we pulled up for a Jeep full of Israel Defense Forces soldiers to crunch to a stop and ask our Arab-Israeli cab driver for his Palestinian/East Jerusalem ID papers -- a valuable commodity among both Palestinians living on the Israel side of the wall in general and cab drivers in particular, and which can be confiscated on the spot.

The soldiers looked barely old enough to drive much less old enough to be running around with automatic weapons slung over their shoulders, and it made you want to put your hand on a forearm and softly say, "Now, just give me the gun and no-one will get hurt;" one of those occasional flashes of maternal instinct that have no respect for wrong places and wrong times.

"Barrier" is the neutral, Esperanto-of-peace word for what the Israelis call a fence because it protects them and what the Palestinians call a wall because it keeps them in the territories, out of Israel and, in some cases, away

Something there is that doesn't love a wall

from parts of their lives. Israel credits the security fence for the fact that the last suicide bombing in Jerusalem was more than two years ago (my last day there, as it happened).

In larger geopolitical terms, the fence/wall has come to represent what many people feared was its true raison d'etre: the unilaterally declared permanent border of a closed, disengaged Israel.

In a place where land is defended in the name of God and disputed in square feet, Olmert's plan to withdraw from the West Bank and set Israel's border beyond its remaining Jewish settlements is so fraught with political hazards that his map maker, newly elected MK Otniel Schneller, swears that the revered Sharon's final act before he was felled by a stroke Jan. 4 was to agree to Kadima's map.

This means the fence/wall is now the most powerful symbol of the newly centrist Israeli government: it represents the security problem by discouraging suicide bombers, the border problem by being a unilateral line in the sand and the demographic problem of how to keep Israel a Jewish state by neutralizing the issue of the right of return of Palestinian refugees in a peace process that no longer exists.

This last consideration, reiterated by former Labour leader, Nobel Peace Prize laureate and newly elected Kadima MK Shimon Peres in an interview with the CBC's Peter Mansbridge last week, is the most understandably compelling but crucially non-negotiable long-term factor informing the Israeli government's position.

Meanwhile, over the fence/wall, <u>Hamas</u> is now condoning what would be state-sponsored terrorism if the Palestinians had a state, calling the killing of four Israeli settlers by a suicide bomber Thursday "a natural response to Israeli crimes."

In a neighbourhood where borders are not borders, a state is not a state, democracy is demanded and then punished, one man's terrorist is another man's hero, and war isn't war when it is waged between parties that don't recognize each other, can one man's wall and another man's fence really make good neighbours? Or do good fences really only end up being an admission of failure visible from space that make it a whole lot harder for little old ladies to get their groceries?

Did Sharon, I wonder, ever read the rest of Frost's The Mending Wall? Olmert should, especially this line: "Before I built a wall I'd ask to know. What I was walling in or walling out."

Lisa Van Dusen, a former international news editor in Washington D.C. and international news writer at ABC News in New York, now lives in Montreal.

Load-Date: April 4, 2006



Moral support to Kashmiris pledged

The Nation (AsiaNet)
February 5, 2006 Sunday

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Section: NATIONWIDE INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 348 words

Dateline: KARACHI FEB 05

Body

Politico-religious parties staged rallies in the City on Sunday to express solidarity with Kashmiris and pledged to continue moral support to the people of the valley. A big rally was also organised by the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA) to mark the day.

Addressing the rally, Jamaat-e-Islami Naib Ameer Senator Professor Ghafoor Ahmed said that Pakistanis would not let the Kashmiris alone in their hours of trial, no matter the government of Pakistan shows flexibility on the issue.

Amidst thunderous slogans of Kashmir Bana-e-Gha Pakistan, Prof Ghafoor said that despite the reign of tyranny let loose by the 700,000 Indian forces, the India has failed to suppress the freedom movement of Kashmiri people.

He said that more than 100,000 Kashmiris had been martyred, thousands have been maimed and large number of <u>women</u> lost their honours at the hands of occupied Indian forces but the Kashmiris refused to surrender before the repression. He said that the struggle of Kashmiris had proved that the freedom movement could not be suppressed through use of force. Speaking on the occasion, Ameer Jamaat-e-Islami Karachi Dr Meraj ul Huda Siddiqui, Allama Hassan Turrabi, Hafiz Mohammad Taqi, Hashim Siddiqui, Mufti Usman Yar Khan and others said that the victory of <u>Hamas</u> in Palestine had proved that Muslims could not be rein in by force. They pledged to continue their support to the Kashmiris people until the Kashmir issue was resolved in accordance with the UNO's resolutions.

The rally adopted a resolution, condemning the publication of highly blasphemous cartoon in the newspapers of Denmark, France and other European countries and warned that the protest would continue till the concerned European countries were not tendered apology to the Muslim Umma. Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf staged a Kashmir Day rally to express solidarity to the Kashmiri people.

Addressing the rally, PIT leaders Sikandar Hayat Mughal, Riaz Afandi, Dr. Kabir Khan and others condemned the tyranny of occupied Indian forces and demanded that the Kashmir issue should be resolved according to the UNO's resolutions.

Load-Date: February 6, 2006



Leader: Disarray over the 'rule of 85'

The Scotsman

March 30, 2006, Thursday

1 Edition

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Section: Pg. 27

Length: 873 words

Body

TUESDAY'S public-sector strike over pensions had very different implications north and south of the Border.

In England, the unions took strike action in anticipation of government plans to abolish the "rule of 85", under which many public-sector workers can retire on full pay after 60 provided their age and years of service add up to 85. The industrial action was intended to mobilise opinion against the government's impending legislation, and as an act of deterrence. The Westminster government wants to abolish the 85 provision because it believes rising numbers of public-sector retirees claiming a full pension at 60 will cost the Treasury an extra GBP 5-GBP 6 billion over the next 20 years.

The 85 rule was going to be abolished early last year, but the government backed down when the local-authority unions threatened a strike just before the 2005 general election. Now, however, Mr Blair seems determined to tough it out.

But in Scotland, the Executive's finance minister, Tom McCabe, has already abolished the rule. Mr McCabe claims he has legal advice which says it is outlawed by a European prohibition against discrimination on grounds of age. This claim has been contradicted by officials inside the European Commission. On the face of it, the 85 rule applies to any worker, male or *female*, who meets fairly simple criteria. It is hard to see any discriminatory intent. This indicates that Mr McCabe's insistence that he is obliged by law to abolish the rule is merely a ruse to defect blame on to the EU and thereby persuade the unions not to strike. If so, it hasn't worked. We have not avoided the strikes, while at the same time the Executive has failed to defend its case for raising the pension age for public employees. This smacks of political cowardice and opportunism.

If that was not bad enough, it now appears that, after Tuesday's strike, Mr McCabe is backing down and seeking an assurance from Brussels that he does not need to abolish the 85 rule on grounds of discrimination. What will the Executive do if the EU Commission says the rule is lawful? That assurance has absolutely nothing to do with whether the rule is too costly. And what will Mr McCabe do if the rule is abolished in England but not in Scotland? Where will the money come from to keep it - especially as Audit Scotland has just revealed a GBP 4.5 billion black hole in council pension provisions?

Britain needs a new pension system that is adequate, fair and affordable. Public-sector workers should consider trading early retirement for such an improved system. But we will not reach a consensus of that kind if the Executive hides from the difficult choices ahead.

Israelis have voted for peace

Leader: Disarray over the 'rule of 85'

THE outcome of the Israel elections is cause for cautious optimism. Turnout was low, but that reflected a public view that the new centre party, Kadima, was likely to win. Kadima did not gain as many seats as polls predicted during the heady days of its formation, but that is par for the course in politics, especially after a stroke felled the party's founder, Ariel Sharon. The point is that mainstream Israel has voted for peace.

Kadima is committed to a unilateral withdrawal from the West Bank. Doubtless it will be criticised by the Palestinians for "abandoning" negotiations, and by the rump of the Likud Party in Israel for giving up land before a final settlement. But it takes two to negotiate, and the fundamentalist <u>Hamas</u> government on the West Bank is hardly willing to sit down at the peace table. Together with the Israeli Labour Party, its likely coalition partner, Kadima now has a mandate to dismantle the major settlements deep inside the Palestinian territories. Of course, Arab East Jerusalem and the exact line of the new border will remain an issue, but a unilateral Israeli vacation of the West Bank is better than the status quo and might conceivably nudge the warring Palestinian factions, particularly <u>Hamas</u>, to think more about nation-building and less about suicide bombs.

Holyrood's pub with no press

THE smoking ban has had one unintended consequence. Brewers are investing large amounts of money in renovating pubs in order to counter any potential loss of trade. Top-notch designers are being brought in to make bars in Glasgow and Edinburgh as attractive as possible, so that customers are not tempted to stay at home, where they can drink and smoke in front of the television.

Alas, there is a unique bar in Scotland that just refuses to attract customers, even after a recent refit. It is the bar in the new Scottish Parliament. Despite the assurance that the GBP 431 million building would be a monument to open and accessible government, shy MSPs decided to ban working journalists from their Holyrood watering hole on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays when parliament was in session. In retaliation, many scribes decided to boycott the bar altogether. Curiously, without their modest custom, takings languished.

In an attempt to attract more paying customers, another GBP 25,000 of taxpayers' money was spent on a refit. It has now been reported that this has resulted in an increase in takings amounting to a princely GBP 1. Possibly the journalists are waiting to see if the bar roof is stable before venturing in.

Load-Date: March 30, 2006



STORMING OF THE BRITISH MISSION; Hostage fears as Palestinian militants rampage against the West

Daily Mail (London)

March 15, 2006 Wednesday

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Section: ED 3RD 04; Pg. 12

Length: 833 words

Byline: DAVID WILLIAMS

Body

BRITONS were in hiding in Gaza and the West Bank last night as rampaging gunmen sought revenge for what they claim was western collusion in Israel's storming of a prison holding a top Palestinian militant.

The headquarters of the British Council was besieged and torched, kidnap gangs stalked hotels and buildings hunting for westerners, and the Foreign Office warned Britons to get out of the region.

At least nine hostages were seized by gunmen. Three were still being held early today.

Demonstrators strutted through the streets of Gaza shouting 'death to the Americans, death to the Britons'.

The UN and the Red Cross, whose local director was one of the kidnap victims, pulled their staff out of Gaza, and Palestinian militants from the al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades warned Britons and Americans to leave the Palestinian territories.

That in itself posed lethal risks. Militants set up roadblocks near Gaza's northern exit, stopping cars in a search for fleeing foreigners who they threatened with death.

The attack on the British Council began when gunmen burst into the offices.

After a brief shootout with Palestinian police, they torched the building, then shot at Palestinian fire engines which were trying to put out the flames. One man clambered on to a flagpole and tore down the Union flag. The Council operates in 110 countries and is separate from diplomatic missions.

Funded by the taxpayer, it promotes cultural relations and is involved in teaching English and helping people attain UK-recognised qualifications.

The flashpoint for the anti-western rampage was a dramatic operation by the Israelis to seize Ahmed Saadat, leader of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

He is blamed for masterminding the murder of an Israeli minister in 2001 and was being held by the Palestinian authorities with western supervision at a prison in Jericho on the West Bank.

Israel apparently suspected he was about to be freed and blazed in with helicopters, tanks, a bulldozer and hundreds of troops.

STORMING OF THE BRITISH MISSION Hostage fears as Palestinian militants rampage against the West

Tel Aviv said last night that 182 people had been taken from the prison, including inmates dressed in their underwear, and after a stand-off lasting several hours, Saadat and his supporters were said to have surrendered.

The suspicions of collusion were based on the fact that, under a 2002 deal with Israel, Saadat was guarded by British and U.S. prison monitors as well as Palestinian jailers.

Britain and the U.S. withdrew their guards shortly before the raid for what were described as 'security reasons'.

The Palestinians claimed the British, Americans and Israelis had planned the operation together.

The backlash plunged the region into a maelstrom of lawlessness which forced British, French, German and South Korean citizens to take refuge in the offices of the Palestinian security forces.

Gunmen broke into the offices of German TV network ARD in Gaza, which also houses the BBC.

Kidnap victims included an American professor, two Australian teachers, two French members of the Medecins du Monde charity, two other French nationals and a Swiss national. The Australians, the American, two French women, and the Swiss were later released but two French nationals and a Korean were still being held.

The violence stoked tension two weeks ahead of the Israeli general election and as <u>Hamas</u> Islamists continued talks on forming a new Palestinian government following their victory in a January parliamentary vote.

Sir David Green, director general of the British Council, said the building had been 'very badly damaged' with the ground and second floors completely burnt out. No staff had been hurt or taken hostage.

In Gaza City, a crowd stormed EU offices, smashing windows and replacing the EU flag with a PFLP banner.

Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas said the British and U.S.

monitors were responsible for the Jericho prisoners' safety and their withdrawal was a violation of agreements.

But Foreign Secretary Jack Straw said that Palestinians had been repeatedly warned British monitors at the jail would be withdrawn if security was not improved.

A letter had been sent to Mr Abbas a week ago outlining security concerns but there had been no improvement.

Mr Straw did not comment on the allegations of collusion with the Israelis but condemned the 'appalling acts of violence'.

Foreign Office sources said the UK had contacted the office of the Palestinian president four times since Friday to ask him to 'allay our security concerns for the welfare of our monitors'. When the President's office failed to respond, the decision to withdraw the monitors was taken.

Shadow Foreign Secretary William Hague questioned whether the Government had considered the consequences of withdrawal and said it must say whether it knew Israel planned to storm the jail.

A PFLP statement warned of retaliation if Saadat came to any harm, a threat echoed by *Hamas*.

Tel Aviv strongly defended the military operation. A senior official said the Palestinians had been preparing to free Saadat and colleagues.

Graphic

STORMING OF THE BRITISH MISSION Hostage fears as Palestinian militants rampage against the West

1.EXPLOSION OF HATE: FLAMES TEAR THROUGH A VEHICLE AND SMOKE CONSUMES THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE BRITISH COUNCIL. INSET: A GUARD IS OVERPOWERED AS THE BUILDING IS STORMED2. UNDER A SHROUD: A PALL OF SMOKE RISES FROM THE JERICHO JAIL BLITZED BY THE ISRAELIS 3.NAKED MARCH: INMATES OF THE JAIL, STRIPPED TO ENSURE THEY ARE UNARMED, ARE LED AWAY

Load-Date: March 15, 2006



Israeli air strike kills four in Gaza Strip

Daily Post (North Wales)

December 15, 2005, Thursday

NW Merseyside Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 16

Length: 350 words

Body

ISRAELI missiles fired from the air ripped apart a car in the northern Gaza Strip yesterday in the third Israeli air strike within a week, killing four Palestinian militants and wounding four people.

The Israeli military said it targeted operatives from the small Popular Resistance Committees who were on their way to carry out an attack against Israel. The vehicle was loaded with explosives, it added.

The military would not say where it thought the car was headed, but it was struck near Karni, Gaza's main cargo passage with Israel, a site of past attacks. Dozens, including Popular Resistance gunmen, gathered in an angry crowd outside the hospital morgue and emergency room, chanting, "God is Great" and "Destroy Israel."

A Popular Resistance spokesman who goes by the name of Abu Saed vowed revenge.

"The blood shed by the Zionists will not be shed in vain," Abu Saed said. "We will retaliate and send them the message that the Palestinian sacrifice does not come cheap."

The air strike disrupted a <u>Hamas</u> news conference where the militant group was going to announce its first-ever list of candidates for the Palestinian parliament.

The list of 62 contenders - submitted to Palestinian elections officials just before the official deadline for all parties to announce their candidates - was led by Ismail Haniyeh, a moderate, and included 10 **women**.

Earlier in the day, gunmen burst into the headquarters of the ruling Fatah Party in Gaza, and later exchanged fire with the bodyguards of a party leader, heightening tensions within Fatah over its candidate selection for the January 25 parliament elections.

The Gaza firefight, which left three people wounded, began when a group of armed Fatah activists took over party headquarters in Gaza City to demand government jobs. They exchanged fire with bodyguards of a local Fatah leader. who ran up and down a street, shooting wildly in the air, then drove the protesters away.

Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas has the final say in putting together Fatah's parliament list, trying to balance the young guard's demands against the interests of Fatah veterans

Load-Date: December 15, 2005



News Summary

The New York Times
February 3, 2006 Friday
Late Edition - Final

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

Length: 878 words

Body

INTERNATIONAL A3-14

Women Win New Role With Hamas Victory

<u>Women</u> played a large part in <u>Hamas</u>'s parliamentary election triumph in Gaza, going from door to door in last-minute campaign efforts, and now hold 6 of the 74 seats in parliament, giving them a new and unaccustomed public role. A1

Iraq Corruption Case Guilty Plea

A former American government official in Iraq who is at the center of a corruption investigation pleaded guilty, but not before asserting that an American businessman who has also been arrested had set the scandal in motion. A14

Two car bombs detonated near a crowded market in eastern Baghdad, killing at least 16 people and wounding 90 in one of the worst attacks in the capital in weeks. A14

Australia Hit by U.N. Scandal

The Australian leader of an inquiry into the United Nations oil-for-food program said testimony that the country's monopoly wheat exporter poured \$220 million in kickbacks and bribes into Iraq's treasury before the war warranted an examination of the Australian government's role in the program. A14

Guns Raised Over Cartoons

Muslim gunmen threatened the European Union offices in the Gaza Strip over cartoons published in European newspapers. At the same time, more papers published the drawings, which many Muslims call blasphemous, as an affirmation of their freedom of speech. A3

Iran Says It May Ban Inspectors

Iran notified the International Atomic Energy Agency that it would end all "voluntary" nuclear cooperation with the agency if it referred Iran's nuclear activity case to the United Nations Security Council. A4

NATIONAL A16-21

News Summary

In an Upset, Republicans In House Choose a Leader

Representative John A. Boehner of Ohio in an upset became the new House majority leader as Republicans -- worried about a corruption scandal and their own tarnished image -- tried to distance themselves from the former leader, Representative Tom DeLay. A1

An Unexpected Mayoral Race

In great confusion and peculiar circumstances, New Orleans has suddenly found itself in the midst of an unexpected mayoral election campaign that may ultimately change the city's racial order. A18

Arizona Education Fight

Arizona's Democratic governor and its Republican-controlled Legislature are locked in an election-year stalemate over the teaching of English to public-school children whose native language is other than English and how much to pay for it. A16

Spy Debate Erupts in Senate

Senate Democrats angrily accused the Bush administration of mounting a public relations campaign to defend the National Security Agency's domestic surveillance program while withholding details of the secret eavesdropping from Congressional oversight committees. A16

In Energy Work, Goals Clash

President Bush and Congress support the development of renewable energy. So does Congress. But their goals differ in ways that compete for research dollars and are costing some government researchers their jobs. A17

Patients Pick Lower Premiums

Federal spending on the new Medicare drug benefit will be 20 percent lower than expected because patients are choosing prescription drug plans with lower premiums. A20

NEW YORK/REGION B1-6

Police Officers Sue the City Over Monitoring of Rallies

The Patrolmen's Benevolent Association is suing New York City, charging that the police procedures used at the union's rallies, held to protest the pace of contract talks, were so heavy-handed and intimidating that their First Amendment rights were violated. A1

Officers' III-Fated Collision

Officer Eric Hernandez, a rookie just beginning his police career, and Officer Alfredo Toro, a 20-year veteran planning his retirement, worked less than two miles apart, but a flash of violence in a Bronx fast-food restaurant, and a 911 call for help brought the men together. B1

Tax Code Fuels Oil Habit

President Bush, in his address to the nation, said the United States must move to wean itself from foreign oil, but New York's energy policies show how hard that may be, with a tax code that offers more than \$1 billion in breaks for gasoline and diesel. B1

Neediest Cases B5

ESCAPES F1-12

SPORTSFRIDAY D1-6

OBITUARIES B7

News Summary

WEEKEND E1-32; E33-40

Met to Return Ancient Vase

The Metropolitan Museum of Art said it would relinquish ownership of a 2,500-year-old Greek vase to Italy. The Italians have long contended that the vase was stolen from an Etruscan tomb near Rome. A1

BUSINESS DAY C1-14

A Mansion for Pensions

The Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, a federal agency that insures pensions, is poised to lay claim to the 29-bedroom \$185 million oceanfront mansion of Ira L. Rennert to make sure he delivers on hundreds of millions of dollars worth of pensions promised to a group of steelworkers in Ohio. A1

Auto Redesign Saves Lives

Design changes that automakers initially resisted and then reluctantly adopted have sharply reduced the number of deaths among drivers of cars struck by a sport utility vehicle or pickup, according to a study done by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety. C1

Business Digest C2

EDITORIAL A22-23

Editorials: The lopsided Bush health plan; no help to democracy in Haiti; the House search for leadership; another child, beaten to death.

Columns: Paul Krugman, Thomas L. Friedman.

Crossword E39 TV Listings E31 Weather D8

http://www.nytimes.com

Graphic

Photo

Load-Date: February 3, 2006



War may engulf region, warns envoy; DIPLOMACY; MIDDLE EAST CRISIS

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

July 18, 2006 Tuesday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; International News; Pg. 7

Length: 355 words

Byline: Craig Skehan

Body

SYRIA'S ambassador to Canberra has warned of a danger of a massive war engulfing the entire Middle East as a result of the worsening conflict in Lebanon.

Tammam Sulaiman said Syria had resisted provocation but it would be "fairly normal" for Israel to try to expand the conflict.

"Then, of course, they could involve not just Syria and Iran but the whole region in a mess - a massive, total war," he said yesterday.

Mr Sulaiman pointed to graphic images on satellite television of Lebanese children wounded by Israeli air strikes.

However, Israel's ambassador, Naftali Tamir, a few hours earlier told the Herald Syria had provided military and other assistance to Hezbollah "terrorists", who were using missiles to kill Israeli civilians.

Mr Tamir said that for the past six years Hezbollah had been a proxy for Syria and Iran "with terrorism as an outlet for an ideology calling for the destruction of Israel".

Both Mr Sulaiman and Mr Tamir said they believed a majority of Australians sympathised with the respective viewpoints of their governments.

While Mr Sulaiman accused Canberra of bias towards Israel, Mr Tamir said he welcomed what he described as supportive statements from Australian Government and Opposition leaders.

The Syrian diplomat said countries such as his own and Iran were right to support groups such as Hezbollah and *Hamas*, which were fighting to regain land "stolen by Israel".

The Israeli Ambassador said: "We are not looking for an all-out war." However, the Israeli military continued to "consider all options" for action against Syria and Iran over the alleged sponsoring of terrorism.

Mr Tamir said he hoped there would be no ceasefire before the Israeli military was able to destroy "terrorist infrastructure" in Lebanon. He insisted that Israel tried to avoid civilian casualties.

"When we hit with air power - guided missiles, targeted missiles - we warn the civilian population beforehand that we are doing so, then letting them leave," he said. "And then we bombard empty houses."

War may engulf region, warns envoy DIPLOMACY; MIDDLE EAST CRISIS

But Mr Sulaiman said of more than 200 people killed in Lebanon by Israeli shelling and air strikes, many were **women** and children.

Graphic

TWO PHOTOS: Tammam Sulaiman ... total war3. Naftali Tamir ... civilians avoided.

Load-Date: July 17, 2007



Two wrongs don't make a leftist

University Wire September 29, 2006 Friday

Copyright 2006 Columbia Daily Spectator via U-Wire

Section: COLUMN Length: 957 words

Byline: By Ethan Pack, Columbia Daily Spectator; SOURCE: Columbia U.

Dateline: NEW YORK

Body

The presence of anti-U.S. leaders like Mahmoud Ahmadinejad of Iran has put both the campus and the country up in arms. Pro-Israel groups spread flyers with menacing quotes by Ahmadinejad, demanding his invitation to campus be rescinded. Many insisted he be allowed to speak in the interests of free speech (including myself). In some of the debates concerning Ahmadinejad's visit, hard-core liberals even championed him and his ilk as righteous rivals of Bush. But most Americans have a difficult time seeing how leaders like him find an audience anywhere -- such as at the Non-Aligned Nations conference in Havana, where he received rave reviews.

It's assumed that anyone who plugs into their message must also hate America, baseball, freedom, etc. These leaders may be reprehensible, but they understand something that most fail to appreciate: opposing a uni-polar world order is an appealing idea. "By causing war and conflict, some are fast expanding their domination, accumulating greater wealth, while others endure poverty," Ahmadinejad pontificated to the United Nations.

In his letter to President Bush, Ahmadinejad addressed the U.S. with solid arguments: the faulty setup and reckless carnage of our Iraq invasion; our shady interventions in Latin America; our apathetic, if not abetting, posture toward Africa's stagnation; Guantanamo Bay, and other extra-legal detention (torture) centers. Up to this point, he has accurately listed incidents of America's global sins.

Why should such a country -- and its cohorts -- run the United Nations. with no one able to challenge their prerogatives? The irony, of course, is that Ahmadinejad himself proves why such a corrupt and cruel system will remain in place. After all, for all his populist rhetoric, he is neither Robin Hood nor Karl Marx.

"Those with insight can already hear the sounds of the shattering and fall of the ideology and thoughts of the liberal democratic systems," he went on to say in his letter. "We increasingly see that people around the world are flocking towards a main focal point that is the Almighty God. Undoubtedly through faith in God and the teaching of the prophets, the people will conquer their problems. My question to you is: 'Do you want to join them?"

In 1989, Ahmadinejad's mentor, Ayatollah Khomeini, sent a similar letter to Mikhail Gorbachev declaring that communism had failed and recommending he study Islam as a fitting replacement for the USSR.

Ultra-leftist sympathizers of Ahmadinejad and proponents of violent Islamic expansion miss the above idea entirely. The left's secular bent makes them incapable of giving proper respect or fear to the religious zeal of those unlike themselves. In their dated Cold War ideology, anyone who opposes American capitalism must be an underdog, a liberal revolutionary. The fundamentalist Islamic cause is revolutionary, but it is neither liberal nor anti-colonial. The

Two wrongs don't make a leftist

extreme Islamic ideologies of Hezbollah, <u>Hamas</u>, al Qaeda, and their materialization in a political state -- Iran -- are antithetical to the pluralist, secular-humanist world envisioned by liberals. Iran perpetrates murderous homophobia. It oppresses its Jewish and Arab minorities, promotes Holocaust denial, and puts on fascist military parades for missiles designed to carry nuclear weapons -- perhaps to the "Zionist entity" that must be wiped off the map. Dissident students and <u>women</u> have been jailed and reformist parties and their press organs outlawed. But one of the most illiberal elements of the Iranian vision is its expansionism, which is spreading east to Afghanistan and west through Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon.

The war Iran ordered up in Lebanon used that country as a battleground to deflect attention from its nuclear ambitions and the role of its ally, Syria, in continuing to oppose Lebanese independence. Before the war, Iran's proxy, Hezbollah, tried to freeze the government's call for a tribunal to investigate the assassination of Prime Minister Rafik Hariri.

Hezbollah had been a minority party in opposition to the ruling March 14 Movement-named for the rallies against Syrian occupation that followed Hariri's murder. Hezbollah's war has increased its popularity enough to seize power. Not coincidentally, posters of Ahmadinejad now hang in many Shi'a villages.

Walid Jumblat, a leader of the Druze ethnic minority and the March 14 Movement, told The New York Times, "There is an Iranian empire slowly but surely being erected." Before the war, with Syria and Israel gone, Hezbollah remained the only military force preventing the Lebanese Army from finally taking sovereignty over its own territory. By crossing the border into Israel with kidnappings and rockets and dragging that country back into the Lebanese quagmire, Hezbollah is now able to claim that it is the only one capable of defending Lebanon from "Zionist aggression."

In a similarly clever ploy, Iran did exactly what Ahmadinejad castigates America for: invested big bucks on arms. Once those weapons landed in northern Israel and the response salvo hit southern Lebanon, Iran could emerge again as the rescuer, offering millions of dollars through Hezbollah, and on its own, for reconstruction efforts -- reconstruction for a devastation they initiated.

Yet somehow, uber-leftists think that because these forces oppose Western superpowers, they share a progressive view of liberation. Actually, Iran's policy is a different version of the same Islamic extremism offered by al Qaeda and *Hamas*, with its visions of a reinstalled caliphate empire.

Condemning these groups is not an endorsement of Bush's flawed strategy. But critics of Western policy should be equally skeptical of Ahmadinejad's alternative.

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Load-Date: September 29, 2006



Longer sentences in the Sun

Guardian.com June 13, 2006

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theguardian

Length: 1396 words

Highlight: Welcome to the Wrap, Guardian Unlimited's digest of the best of the day's papers.

Body

FURY OVER PAEDOPHILE'S SENTENCE

"It's no good just blaming the judges," says the Daily Mail. But the Sun rather enjoys it. Today is Day Two of the paper's campaign to shake up the judiciary and make it answerable to public criticism.

The first scalp belongs to Judge John Griffith Williams, who gave a life sentence to a paedophile who kidnapped and abused a three-year-old girl. He added, however, that Craig Sweeney would be eligible for parole after five years because he had pleaded guilty.

"What truly 'beggars belief' is the arrogance of judges in their mink-lined ivory towers who leave the rest of us to cope with the real crisis of soaring crime," fumes the paper.

It castigates Lord Falconer's efforts to defend the judiciary in the Lords yesterday: "As things stand, judges can cock it up every time they sit on the bench - and frequently do. But he or she is immune from the sack unless caught with pants down or fingers in the till. No other profession has that protection. Nor should they."

The Mirror also splashes with the Sweeney case, but reports Judge Williams' remarks at greater length. It becomes clear that he explained to the court why it was impossible for him to impose a longer minimum sentence. Accordingly, the paper demands a change in the law to ensure that paedophiles who reoffend are never released from jail.

Sweeney's case has been referred to the Court of Appeal on the recommendation of the Crown Prosecution Service, reports the Telegraph.

* Sun: Sack the softie judge now

* Mirror: Our paedo law campaign

* Telegraph: Goldsmith rebukes Reid

POLLUTION UP AS UK SWELTERS

Longer sentences in the Sun

The Independent runs another of its anxiously green splashes. "TODAY'S FORECAST: HOT, WITH RISING LEVELS OF SMOG, ASTHMA AND HAY FEVER," it says, picturing the City and Docklands under a haze. Actually, it rained in London this morning - but fair point.

Yesterday was the hottest June 12 in more than 80 years, and the warmest day of the year so far. The government has advised people to avoid exercising in the afternoon, when pollution levels are high.

The Times, meanwhile, raises the prospect of a second tax on householders for "rubbish collection". The Lyons review of local government finance is mulling the possibility of charging 25p-50p per kilo to collect waste.

"Why should people who don't take recycling very seriously, or have a lifestyle that generates a lot of waste, be able to do that when their neighbours are being very careful not to generate waste and putting their energies into recycling?" asked Sir Michael Lyons.

- * Independent: Today's forecast
- * Rubbish bag 'tax' to encourage recycling

'IT TAKES TWO TO NEGOTIATE'

Were the Guardian and the Times at the same summit yesterday? The latter says the prime minister gave Ehud Olmert "tacit approval" to go ahead with his unilateral withdrawal from part of the West Bank, and that the Israeli leader was "jubilant".

But in the Guardian: "Tony Blair refused yesterday to endorse publicly the plan ... [He] insisted the only way forward for Israel was not unilateral action but to embark on negotiations with the Palestinians." He did, however, say that if negotiations failed, he would expect Israel to act unilaterally.

"It takes two to negotiate," says the Times, whose interpretation of Mr Blair's remarks seems to be based on the presumption that talks will either fail or simply not take place.

"Faced with a Palestinian government, led by <u>Hamas</u>, that refuses to recognise Israel's right to exist, let alone sit down to discuss the notion of peaceful coexistence, that is currently not possible." It says the Gaza pullout had invigorated the peace process and withdrawing from the West Bank might, too.

Meanwhile, the Fatah and <u>Hamas</u> factions went on "rival rampages" in Ramallah last night, according to the Herald Tribune. The Palestinian president, Mahmoud Abbas, declared a state of emergency.

- * Blair refuses to back Olmert plan
- * Times: Blair risks Arab anger
- * IHT: Violence erupts between Fatah and Hamas

WORRYING ABOUT WAYNE

The agonising saga of Wayne Rooney's recovery takes a new turn. "DON'T DO A GAZZA WAZZA," pleads the Sun's back page. Translated: "ENGLAND FEAR ROO WILL SELF-DESTRUCT ... Wazza has already clattered into Theo Walcott and Jermaine Jenas at England training. Now some members of the England camp fear Rooney will injure himself or a team-mate like Paul Gascoigne in the 1991 FA Cup final."

Some of the other back pages are worried about what they call "long-ball lunacy" and Michael Owen. There are some things about the World Cup the Wrap isn't even going to pretend to understand.

Refreshingly, the Independent highlights Brazil's first match today with a very readable piece on the country's style of play by James Lawson.

* Sun: Don't do a Gazza Wazza

* Independent: James Lawton

SHOP AND AWE

Some of the ladies pictured shopping in Baden-Baden yesterday may be under the impression that they are in Germany to support their menfolk - and, perhaps, indulge in pre-match coitus, now no longer verboten.

These **women** are mistaken, of course. Their real purpose is to boost the **female** readership of British newspapers.

A snap of five ladies walking along a street gives several editors the same idea. "A vibrant display of teamwork that astounded Baden-Baden's traders," chuckles the Telegraph.

"The <u>women</u> blew more than GBP4,000 in a lightning one-hour shopping blitz - with speed and precision that would make Wayne Rooney proud," smiles the Mirror, indulgently. "They took the field in an attacking formation and never looked like wilting in the heat," reports an admiring Mail.

Just because we aren't football fans doesn't mean we can't admire the style of the WAGs (Wives and Girlfriends), eh? Go on, buy a pair of Gucci heels for England.

This may explain the Sun's furious reaction to a piece in the German tabloid Bild, which criticised the "Beckham-Family".

"Germany's biggest newspaper plumbed new depths in their attack on innocent family members of an international sports star," growls the paper. "Of Joanne [Beckham's sister], they wrote: "Dear me, she is chubby. Arms, bust, bum, all very British. Joanne is the sort of girl who drinks sangria on the beach in Majorca. And then dances on a table with her top off."

And the Sun is the sort of paper that would publish photos of her doing it, nein? Er, no - at least not today. "PROOF OUR GIRLS ARE DAS BOOTIFUL," it declares. "Can anyone name a partner of the German footie stars?"

A quick inspection of Bild's website suggests the paper has considerable respect for Beckham himself. "Er ist da. Welcome, Mr. Beckham!" it announced last week, adding "aber die Rowdies sollen bitte auf der Insel bleiben...[but please keep the hooligans on the island] ... Dickes Ding: Englands Fans zeigen, dass sie gerne essen und Bier trinken," adds the tabloid, picturing an Arsenal fan whose stomach amply accommodates his vast tattoo.

Even a Telegraph article on the growing inadequacies of French baccalaureate students - the average philosophy mark is now eight out of 10 - finds a World Cup angle: "One philosophy teacher told Liberation newspaper: 'Among my 32 students, only three really follow.' He said he had more success when he departed from 'concrete themes' and used football analogies to help explain theories."

The paper publishes some of the questions in yesterday's bac, several of which the WAGs might intriguingly ponder. "Is our duty only to others? ... Explain John Stuart Mill's text on confidence being fundamental to social well-being ... Explain John Locke's text on property ... Can culture be the bearer of universal values?"

Finally, Asda has a product recall for a carbon steel hand axe. No, the Wrap doesn't know what one does with such a thing. But apparently the head can become detached. "Quite clearly this is not on so we've decided that you need to know," says the supermarket. "Thankfully no one has been hurt."

* Bild: Welcome, Mr Beckham!

* Sun: Germans attack Beckhams

* Telegraph: Sartre leaves France's young thinkers puzzled

COMING UP ON GUARDIAN UNLIMITED TODAY

Longer sentences in the Sun

The headline rate of RPI inflation, which includes mortgage interest payments, rose from 2.6% to 3% in May. The underlying rate of Retail Price Index (RPI) inflation rose from 2.4% to 2.9%.

Two brothers held as terror suspects for more than a week following a controversial raid by armed police will speak publicly for the first time about their ordeal.

Load-Date: June 13, 2006



Israeli army in Lebanon raid

Guardian.com July 17, 2006

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theguardian

Length: 911 words

Highlight: Blair calls for international forceLatest Israeli strikes kill at least 2340 British nationals evacuated

Body

Israeli ground forces briefly entered southern Lebanon to attack Hizbullah bases on the border, an Israeli government spokesman said today.

The new Israeli offensive, the first use of Israeli ground troops in the fighting, came as the prime minister, Tony Blair, led calls for an international stabilisation force to be deployed in the area.

An Israeli army spokesman said the troops were withdrawn after the raid. "There was a very small incursion overnight to destroy a few Hizbullah positions immediately on the other side of the fence. That has been done," he said.

The Israeli prime minister, Ehud Olmert, yesterday vowed a "far-reaching" response following a Hizbullah rocket attack on the port city of Haifa that killed eight civilians.

Mr Blair, speaking after private talks with the United Nations secretary general, Kofi Annan, said: "The only way we are going to have a cessation of violence is if we have an international force deployed into that area."

Speaking to reporters in St Petersburg, where he is attending the final day of the G8 summit, Mr Blair said international troops could "stop the bombardment" of Israel with Hizbullah missiles. The Finnish foreign minister, Erkki Tuomoija, whose country holds the revolving EU presidency, said in Brussels that the EU or UN may deploy such a force to end the conflict. A small UN contingent has been in the area for many years.

Israel said it was too early to talk about a new deployment of troops under UN or EU auspices. "I don't think we're at that stage yet," said an Israeli government spokeswoman. "We're at the stage where we want to be sure that Hizbullah is not deployed at our northern border."

Israeli fighters continued to bomb Lebanon today after warplanes extended the bombing to the north of the country. The attacks follow a missile strike on the Israeli port city of Haifa that killed eight railway workers.

Planes and artillery struck 60 targets overnight. An army base was hit in Tripoli, Lebanon's second largest city, killing at least nine Lebanese soldiers, and at least 16 civilians were killed after an Israeli bomb flattened a building in the southern town of Tyre.

Israeli army in Lebanon raid

At least 140 Lebanese civilians have been killed since the violence broke out last week following Hizbullah's capture of two Israeli soldiers. At least 12 Israeli civilians have died in the Hizbullah rocket attacks on Israel, as well as 12 Israeli soldiers and sailors.

Israel's Channel 10 television station reported today that Israel's military was threatening to destroy Lebanon's electricity grid if the rocket attacks did not stop. The southernmost strike hit a village outside Nazareth overnight, 33 miles from the Lebanese border.

About 40 British nationals, mainly <u>women</u>, children and those needing medical care, were evacuated from Beirut early this morning by Royal Air Force Chinook helicopters to be taken to Cyprus.

Two Royal Navy ships are on their way to Lebanon and there are plans for a possible larger evacuation of British nationals. Some 4,000 British families are registered in Lebanon.

In a message to stranded Britons, the Foreign Office said people should "stay put, exercise caution, keep in touch with the embassy and heed local advice" and listen to English language broadcasts.

A cruise ship chartered by France was due to arrive at Beirut's port later today to begin evacuations of French nationals and other European citizens. Russia sent a plane to Jordan this morning to start evacuating its citizens from the region, while the UN was also considering evacuation plans for its staff.

In France, the French president's office said that Dominique de Villepin, the French prime minister, was travelling to Beirut today to meet the Lebanese prime minister, Fuad Saniora, and express the "support and solidarity of the French people in this trial".

Mr Saniora today described Israel's offensive as "terrorism" that would foster extremism in the region.

It is expected that the US secretary of state, Condoleezza Rice, will soon make a visit to the region. In a private conversation about the crisis with Mr Blair at the G8, the US president, George Bush, was overheard saying "I think Condi is going to go pretty soon".

Yesterday, leaders at the G8 put the onus on Hizbullah, which is backed by Syria and Iran, ending the conflict by freeing the two Israeli troops and stopping the attacks on Israel with rockets.

One Israeli newspaper said today that the offensive had so far destroyed a quarter of Hizbullah's fighting capabilities. It has forced hundreds of thousands of Lebanese to flee, with residents of southern Lebanon going to Beirut or the eastern Bekaa valley, while some of the capital's residents have moved to homes on the hills to the east.

The fighting in Lebanon last week opened a second front for Israel. In Gaza, where Israeli believes one of its soldiers is being held by *Hamas*-linked militants, Israeli jets were in action, largely destroying the empty Palestinian foreign ministry, and severely damaging about 50 flats nearby.

In the West Bank today, Palestinian militants killed an Israeli soldier and wounded six others when they set off a bomb near troops in Nablus. Meanwhile, police in Jerusalem said they arrested a Palestinian with a large bag containing explosives.

Israel has been attacking Gaza since June 28, three days after <u>Hamas</u>-linked militants tunnelled under the border and attacked an Israeli army post at a Gaza crossing, killing two soldiers and capturing a third.

Load-Date: July 17, 2006



Olmert's gamble

Weekend Australian
April 1, 2006 Saturday
All-round Country Edition

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Section: FEATURES; Inquirer; Pg. 22

Length: 1473 words

Byline: GREG SHERIDAN, FOREIGN EDITOR

Body

MATP

EHUD Olmert, Israel's new Prime Minister, is easy to underestimate. A less than charismatic comb-over hairdo, a penchant for cigars, a loud and ebullient manner, snappy suits, he can look kind of un-Israeli.

But he is an immensely formidable politician. And he is going to have a serious crack at solving Israel's long-running and rancorous dispute with neighbouring Palestinians.

His election may be a turning point in Israeli history.

Incidentally, Olmert has visited Australia more often, knows it better and likes it more than any previous Israeli prime minister. If ever there was going to be a visit to Australia by a serving Israeli prime minister, it would be Olmert. During the past 20 years I've met Olmert a half-dozen times in Australia and Israel. His political journey during that time represents a fascinating arc and mirrors the journey of Israel more broadly.

Olmert began in politics as a right-wing Likud member. Likud, the party of Menachem Begin, is a broad Centre-Right party and has dominated Israeli politics for the past 30 years, until this week's election. It replaced the previous Labour dominance, which had lasted for the previous 30 years, from the formation of the state of Israel.

But Olmert was a right-winger within the Centre-Right party. In the early days, like Benjamin Netanyahu, he believed there should not be a Palestinian state, that Jordan was Palestine, that when Israel came to make a territorial compromise, in the far distant future, it would be with Jordan resuming control of much of the West Bank.

But over time he moderated and joined Ariel Sharon in embracing a negotiated two-state solution, with a separate Palestinian state, though this turned out to be a way station on the road to disengagement.

The last time I interviewed Olmert, in early 2003, he was mayor of Jerusalem. Apart from displaying a quite thorough knowledge of Australian politics and foreign policy, Olmert was even then strongly proclaiming himself a Sharon man. He told me: "The Israeli Government will deal with the Palestinian issue in a reasonable method. Sharon did something almost unheard of. He stood up against what he perceived as the mainstream of his own party [Likud] prior to the party primaries. He kept stressing the view, which was unpopular in Likud, that he would continue to push for a political solution and recognition of a Palestinian state."

Olmert's gamble

Later that year Sharon announced his radical unilateral withdrawal plan and subsequently pulled all Israeli settlements and military out of the Gaza Strip.

Olmert was his strongest backer in this policy. However, well-informed Israeli sources suggest it was Olmert who convinced Sharon of the necessity to go down this path rather than the other way around.

Now Olmert has said that he wants Israel's final borders settled by 2010. If he can, he will negotiate a settlement with the Palestinian Authority. If this is not possible, he'll impose a border on the West Bank.

Olmert's gamble is huge from every direction. It shows the folly of the Palestinian unwillingness to make a deal during the preceding decades.

Had Yasser Arafat accepted the deal on offer at Camp David in 2000, the Palestinian state would have consisted of more than 95per cent of the West Bank, with perhaps some land from Israel proper to compensate for the missing 5 per cent, plus all of Gaza and East Jerusalem as its capital. If the Palestinian Authority had agreed to this deal and renounced terrorism, normalcy could have returned in time to Gaza and the West Bank. This would have meant, above all, access for Palestinians to the Israeli economy.

I first visited the West Bank in 1986. The territories then were undoubtedly more prosperous, and routine living infinitely more normal and life opportunity generally much greater than it is now or has been since the first intifada.

Thousands of Palestinians then had jobs in Israel and movement between the territories and Israel proper was easy and routine. All the talk in Palestine then was of opening universities and the secular ambitions of all Palestinians, not least Palestinian **women**.

Now daily life is a misery and the Palestinians live in the most difficult circumstances, while they have just elected <u>Hamas</u>, a branch of the Muslim Brotherhood committed to the military destruction of Israel and the Islamisation of Palestinian life.

Whatever Olmert does by way of unilateral disengagement will be much less advantageous for the Palestinians than the deal they could have had in 2000.

Olmert's plan is that Israel will withdraw from 90 per cent of the West Bank and evacuate 60,000 Jewish settlers.

But he will keep two-thirds of the settlements, especially the big population blocks and the settlements near Jerusalem. He will complete the building of a separation barrier along the borders that he determines and the Israeli Army will keep control of the West Bank's border with Jordan. This plan, which once would have seemed astonishingly radical, has won broad support in the Israeli electorate, yet the election showed a kind of resignation about it rather than wild enthusiasm. The twin dreams of Israeli politics, of a greater Israel ruling Gaza and the West Bank forever or a negotiated peace agreement with Israel and Palestine living in harmony beside each other, have both been shattered by the past decade of violence. This disengagement plan is a hard-headed, pragmatic, unromantic compromise with circumstance.

Kadima, the new party led by Olmert and formed by Sharon when Likud refused to accept his disengagement plan, did not win the kind of slashing victory that it might have expected under Sharon, who has been for months in a coma.

Olmert is not a charismatic military figure like Sharon, Ehud Barak or Yitzhak Rabin. But Israel's greatest prime minister, David Ben-Gurion, was a civilian and he made the right political and military judgments.

Olmert will try once more to negotiate a settlement with the Palestinians, but he will not deal with <u>Hamas</u> and a final negotiated settlement looks unlikely. He wants Israel's final borders determined by 2010 so the country will no longer be held responsible for the quality of life in the Palestinian areas.

Olmert's gamble

This is driven in part by the sustained hostility to Israel in much of the Western media and overwhelmingly at Western universities. Olmert and other Israeli leaders realise that Israel is in danger of losing much Western support, though support seems solid in the US and Australia.

A telling example of the toxic anti-Israel atmosphere at Western universities was a recent essay in the London Review of Books by two US academics, John Mearsheimer and Steven Walt, entitled The Israel Lobby.

This is a quite disgusting screed of juvenile conspiracy theory which posits that the pro-Israel lobby is the all-powerful driving force behind all US policy towards the Middle East. It is a ridiculous piece, with faux-academic footnotes and patently absurd assertions, such as the idea that concern for the Palestinians was a prime motivator for Osama bin Laden when in fact the al-Qa'ida leader added Palestine very late to his menu of causes.

Similarly, the authors' line of causation is ludicrously simplistic, as though no other factor has ever weighed with American policy-makers except Israel.

The article, full of half-truths and misrepresentations, is a first cousin of anti-Semitism in the way in which it posits a vast, predominantly Jewish conspiracy apparently ruling the world. It seems to be motivated more than anything by a hatred of US neo-conservatives and a desire to damage them by attributing to them a motive for supporting action against Iraq that was not the motive they themselves cited. But in its bilious hostility to Israel and its simplistic and ridiculous assertion that Israel is the cause of Muslim hostility to the West, it is a perfect exemplar of the temper of even US universities towards Israel.

Whether Olmert's bold gamble can counter the attacks on Israel's legitimacy throughout the West is another thing. The Israeli electorate is committed to disengagement purely on pragmatic grounds. One way for <u>Hamas</u> and others to sabotage it, therefore, is to raise the level of trouble that greets disengagement. Such a strategy would not lead to an independent Palestinian state but, in a worst-case scenario, it could lead to a renewed Israeli occupation, which would certainly put Israel firmly back in the dog house of international opinion.

Olmert has a big selling job to do. He has much better English than Sharon did and he doesn't have Sharon's baggage with a Western audience. He lacks Rabin's gravitas and the wonderful, appealing, grandmotherly personality of Golda Meir. But he speaks clearly and has a coherent plan.

Apart from the fact that nothing works in the Middle East, it has as good a chance as anything ever has.

Load-Date: March 31, 2006



As gold rush ends, meltdown begins

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

June 10, 2006 Saturday

First Edition

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

Length: 940 words

Byline: Ed O'Loughlin Herald Correspondent in Gaza

Body

FOR weeks it has been the best little story in town, but now the great Gaza gold rush is trickling to a close.

"The market has been full of journalists for the past month," complained Akram Abu Zinadi, owner of a small store in Gaza City's ancient gold souk. "They get in the way -but you are welcome."

The attraction for the media has been the sight of thousands of desperate people selling their most prized possessions so they can buy food for their families. Treasured heirlooms, Arab <u>women</u>'s traditional golden dowries, exquisite antique masterworks - all are assessed at a smart discount to world bullion prices, melted down and spirited off to the world-famous gold souk in Dubai.

With its remaining export trades devastated by a de facto Israeli blockade and cut off from Western aid since Palestinians elected the militant Islamic movement <u>Hamas</u>, the already squalid Gaza enclave has instead become an exporter of gold.

But not for long. This week Jamal al-Derdisawi came back to the souk to sell his wife's remaining piece of jewellery, a wedding ring that fetched \$95. Four rings and a bracelet were sold in previous visits, melted down to feed the couple and their two children, aged 18 and four months.

"I have no choice but to sell this ring," said Mr Derdisawi. "We've no money left at home. I'm just a labourer, but there's no more work for me. All my friends have had to do the same thing."

Back in the 1980s, when the US and Britain opposed the international campaign to solate apartheid South Africa, they argued that sanctions did not bring down governments but instead hurt only the poor and the weak.

Times change. When the Palestinians voted out Fatah, the party favoured by Israel and the West in parliamentary elections last January, sanctions were quickly imposed by the US and Europe.

Israel began withholding customs revenue from the Palestinian Authority, worth about \$50US million (\$67 million) a month, while the European Union and the US cut off all aid - the authority's main source of income. The US also threatened to impose crippling sanctions on any banks that channelled money to the authority from other donors, mainly in the Muslim world.

As gold rush ends, meltdown begins

As a result, 160,000 employees of the authority - the principal income source for more than 3 million residents of the occupied territories - have been largely unpaid for more than three months.

The situation is particularly desperate in Gaza, where Israel has for much of this year shut off or greatly restricted the flow of goods through the enclave's sole terminal for trade with the world.

Claiming to have intelligence of imminent terrorist attacks, Israel has persistently reneged on an agreement it made last November, following the personal intervention of the US Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice, to allow exports and imports to flow freely through the Karni terminal.

Although the situation has eased under the new Israeli Defence Minister, moderate Labour leader Amir Peretz, the closures at Karni wiped out much of Gaza's vital export trades in horticultural goods and textiles.

At the end of May the United Nations reported that unless funding was quickly restored, poverty would soar, with 70 per cent of Gaza's workforce likely to be unemployed or unpaid. Children would be at risk of malnutrition as family incomes collapsed, schools and other vital services could close and the Palestinian economy was "conservatively estimated" to shrink by a quarter this year.

Even when goods are in the shops, many are no longer able to pay cash for them. Supermarkets tried to stay open by selling goods on credit, then had to stop when their suppliers began demanding cash payments.

Similar problems are threatening the government. This week the UN Works and Relief Agency, the biggest employer in the occupied territories after the Palestinian Authority, reported that public services in Gaza would shortly collapse if funds were not restored.

The agency's Gaza field director, John Ging, said he had spent the week touring the 365-square-kilometre enclave and found the situation "deplorable and getting worse".

Even the gold traders say they face disaster. "I've never seen things so bad - soon there'll be nothing left to trade," Akram Abu Zinadi said.

GAZA STRIPPED

Erez crossing The only permitted entry point for foreigners and diplomats, and for the few Palestinians permitted to work or enter Israel or to cross it to the West Bank.

Beit Hanoun A senior Israeli official has proposed turning it into a ghost town because of Palestinian missile fire from the area.

Ashkelon The Israeli coastal city which could come within the range of Palestinian fire if the Palestinians manage to smuggle missiles into Gaza from Egypt.

Rafah crossing The border crossing at which Palestinians are allowed to cross between Gaza and Egypt. Control of the area, nominally under EU supervision, has become a point of at times violent contention between Fatah and *Hamas*.

Sederot A large Israeli town which has been repeatedly targeted by Palestinian

homemade rockets.

Nahal Oz Site of the 155mm howitzer battery which is bombarding Gaza each day.

Karni cargo crossing Goods can enter or leave Gaza here. Closed for most of this year because Israel claimed it had intelligence of terrorist attacks, which never happened.

Kerem Shalom Israels proposed new crossing. The Palestinians have rejected

As gold rush ends, meltdown begins

Israel's attempts to shift all freight here, saying that it is an attempt to create an

alternative to Rafah that would reimpose Israeli control on Palestinians travelling to and from Egypt.

Proposed seaport Blocked by Israel.

Gaza International Airport Shut down by Israel at the start of the intifada.

Graphic

MAP: ISRAEL

Load-Date: July 17, 2007



In Short

The Irish Times April 5, 2006 Wednesday

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Section: WORLD; Other World Stories; Pg. 12

Length: 393 words

Body

A round-up of today's other stories in brief

Israeli air strike on Gaza compound

GAZA - Israeli missiles hit a Palestinian security compound in Gaza yesterday, the first such air strike in two years, and Israeli shells killed a Palestinian in the north of the strip after rocket attacks on the Jewish state.

<u>Hamas</u>, sworn to destroying the Jewish state, said Israel was trying through the strikes, which wounded a policeman, to send a message in response to the Islamic militant group's victory in January elections. - (Reuters)

SA police officer kills eight

JOHANNESBURG - A rampaging South African police detective killed eight people including four colleagues and an infant before being shot dead by police yesterday.

Supt Chippa Mateane (42) shot three <u>women</u> and a two-year-old boy on Monday night, then opened fire at Kagiso police station in Krugersdorp, a town west of Johannesburg.

The killings, shocking even by the standards of South Africa's violent crime epidemic, prompted calls for compulsory psychological counselling for police officers. - (Guardian service)

Court rules out asylum for Iragis

BERLIN - A German court ruled yesterday that Iraqis do not have a right to asylum or protection from deportation, despite Iraq's unstable security situation and problems with food, water and electricity.

The decision came at a high court in the state of North Rhine-Westphalia, which rejected petitions by several Iraqis and upheld the government position that Iraqi citizens are no longer entitled to automatic protection against deportation. - (Reuters)

Ten killed as tanker hits bus

VENEZUELA - A fuel tanker truck exploded after crashing into a packed passenger bus in central Venezuela, killing 10 people and injuring 22 others, rescue officials said yesterday.

The truck smashed into five other vehicles before bursting into flames on Monday afternoon on a road in Aragua state, a civil protection spokesman said.

In Short

Six people on the 32-passenger bus were killed instantly and the other four died later from serious burns, he said. - (Reuters)

Poland demands ex-envoy's release

WARSAW - Poland yesterday demanded Belarussian President Alexander Lukashenko release Warsaw's former ambassador, imprisoned for taking part in rallies to protest at Lukashenko's re-election in March.

The ex-envoy's father is on hunger strike in protest at the imprisonment. - (Reuters)

Load-Date: April 5, 2006



The New York Times
April 8, 2006 Saturday
Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2006 The New York Times Company

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

Length: 950 words

Body

INTERNATIONAL A3-7

Suicide Bombers Kill 71 At a Major Shiite Mosque

Three suicide bombers, including at least one who appeared to be a woman, killed at least 71 people and wounded at least 140 at the main mosque of the most powerful Shiite political party in Iraq. A1

Amid recriminations within the Bush administration over its reconstruction program in Iraq, the State Department has produced a document saying that in future conflicts the United States should establish a secure and stable environment before starting a rebuilding program.

A7

U.S. and Europe Bypass Hamas

The United States and the European Union announced that they would halt payments to the <u>Hamas</u>-led Palestinian government but that aid would flow to ordinary Palestinians through the United Nations and other independent organizations. A6

An Israeli airstrike on a car carrying Palestinian militants in the Gaza Strip killed six people and wounded about a dozen, Palestinian security officials said. A6

III-Fated Drug Trial Roils Britain

A test of a new type of stimulant for immune systems that almost killed six people in Britain has sent shock waves through the research world and caused regulators to rethink procedures for testing new drugs. A1

Nuclear Monitor to Visit Iran

Mohamed ElBaradei, the director of the United Nations' nuclear monitoring agency in Vienna, will visit Iran to conduct high-level talks on the country's nuclear program, a senior agency official said. A4

Brazil Space Program Criticized

Brazil fulfilled a longstanding ambition last month when it sent its first astronaut into space, but national pride over the voyage has been mixed with criticism of the cost of the launching and of weaknesses in the country's space program. A3

NATIONAL A8-11

Senate Goes Into Recess Without an Immigration Bill

The Senate's effort to pass immigration legislation collapsed, and lawmakers went home for a two-week recess to face voters who are as passionately divided on the issue as Congress has proven to be. A1

Kerry Criticizes Bush Policies

Senator John Kerry made a slashing attack on the Bush administration, comparing it to the faltering government in Iraq and equating its war strategy with its planning for Hurricane Katrina. A11

Efforts on Archdiocese Stall

Efforts to change the Archdiocese of Boston in the wake of the clergy sexual abuse crisis have been hampered by diminished resources, according to a report issued by an independent panel. A11

Mother Spared by Insanity Plea

A mother charged with murder for cutting off her baby daughter's arms in what her lawyers portrayed as a religious frenzy was found not guilty by reason of insanity. A11

Earmarks Draw Scrutiny

Amid an explosion of lawmakers slipping pet projects into federal spending bills over the past decade, one West Virginia congressman exploited his powerful perch on the House Appropriations Committee to funnel some \$250 million into five nonprofit organizations of his own founding, prompting questions of whether any of that taxpayer money helped fuel his personal fortune. A1

Religion Journal A8

SCIENCE/HEALTH

Wind Farm Bill Fails

A Senate-House conference committee has approved a measure that would effectively kill a proposal for the first large offshore wind farm in the United States, in Nantucket Sound south of Cape Cod, Mass. A9

NEW YORK/REGION B1-6

A Column of Scandals In a Scandal of Its Own

The New York Post is cooperating with federal authorities in an investigation into whether a longtime contributor to the Page Six gossip column tried to extort money from a California billionaire, according to a spokesman for The Post. A1

Seminary to Pick Chancellor

The Jewish Theological Seminary, the flagship institution of Conservative Judaism in America, appears close to having a new leader at a pivotal period when the movement is struggling with dwindling membership and whether to become more accommodating to gay Jews. B1

SPORTSSATURDAY D1-7

Chad Campbell Leads Masters

At the Masters, 54-year-old Ben Crenshaw, left, stood five shots behind the leader, Chad Campbell. Campbell shot a five-under-par 67 and held a three-shot lead over Vijay Singh (74), Fred Couples (70) and Rocco Mediate (73). D1

OBITUARIES C10

Maggie Dixon

A <u>women</u>'s basketball coach who last month guided Army to its first N.C.A.A. tournament, she was 28. C10

ARTS B9-19

'Da Vinci Code' Author Cleared

A High Court judge ruled that Dan Brown did not steal the idea for his stratospherically successful thriller, "The Da Vinci Code," from an earlier book, and he cleared Mr. Brown's publisher, Random House, of accusations of copyright infringement. B9

BUSINESS DAY C1-9

Work Force Grew In March

The nation's work force grew by 211,000 jobs in March and the unemployment rate dipped to 4.7 percent, the government reported, suggesting that the economy has picked up speed and is likely to keep growing in the months ahead. C1

Medicare and Cancer Drugs

As a result of the new Medicare drug program, thousands who take pills to fight cancer have found themselves with new bills to pay for their essential medicines. C1

Gas Prices Continue Climb

Gasoline prices have soared in recent weeks, reaching a national average of \$2.61 a gallon for regular gasoline, 36 cents more than at this time last year, according to AAA. C1

The Secrets of Infomercials

Americans spent more than \$8.5 billion last year on products advertised on infomercials, and a few Web sites try to reveal their secrets. B1

Business Digest C2

EDITORIAL A12-13

Editorials: Trading up in China; know when to hold 'em; the blowup in Baltimore; political animals bite fat cats.

Columns: Maureen Dowd, John Tierney.

Bridge B18
Crossword B17
TV Listings B19
Weather B20

http://www.nytimes.com

Graphic

Photos

Load-Date: April 8, 2006



Heart of Glass

The Sunday Times (London)
May 7, 2006

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Section: FEATURES; Culture; Pg. 42

Length: 874 words

Byline: Christina Lamb

Body

THE TRIBES TRIUMPHANT: Return Journey to the Middle East. By Charles Glass. Harper Press £ 25 pp472

This time of year, when all the old epic films are churned out for the May bank holidays, you can usually be sure to catch David Lean's Lawrence of Arabia. One of the most memorable scenes is when Lawrence marches into the officers' club in Cairo dressed in Arab robes and orders a drink. As he is about to be thrown out, he announces, "We've taken Agaba."

Fancying himself as a latter-day Lawrence but with more of an eye for the girls than the boys, American journalist Charles Glass set off on his own Levantine journey from Turkey to the Red Sea port of Aqaba in 1987, intending to arrive for the 70th anniversary of Lawrence's most famous conquest and "take it by force".

His trip was brought to a brutal halt when he was captured by Shi'ite gunmen in Beirut, and held hostage for three months.

Most people would have taken that as a sign to stick to Tuscany. But he returned to complete the journey and wrote a book about it, Tribes with Flags. Fourteen years later, when he sets off to repeat the trip the other way round for a sequel, politics again intervenes. This time he has only got as far as Florence when he gets the news of the September 11 attacks and a stream of phone calls from friends and family, including his 16-year-old daughter, worried that it might not be the wisest time for an American to travel through the Middle East.

That it should prove so complex just to make a journey through the region is a fitting metaphor for a part of the world where politics underlines everything. The taking of Aqaba from the Ottoman Turks by Lawrence and his Arab warriors paved the way for the forces of British commander General Allenby to capture Jerusalem and Damascus and the region to be divided into Syria, Lebanon, Israel and Jordan.

By drawing borders where there had been none, Glass states: "Lawrence and his masters had created the conditions for the wars that I had come again and again as a journalist to report: not only the many between Israel's Jewish colonists and the Arab natives, but between Arabs and Kurds, Christians and Muslims, Iranians and Iraqis.

He believes that the only way to understand this, one of the most fought-after parts of the world, is to tread its ancient paths and talk to its people. This book is an account of this quest, though focusing mainly on Israel and the Palestinians.

As he wanders through Aqaba, Amman, Damascus, Jerusalem, Gaza and floats in the Dead Sea, we meet a fascinating array of characters, from refuseniks and orthodox nuns in Jerusalem, Palestinian film directors and an

Heart of Glass

aging actress in Jaffa he was once in love with, to a psychiatrist in Gaza who tells him that, during the intifada, a staggering 53% of young people witnessed Israeli soldiers beating their fathers.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, as Glass makes clear his preference for five-star hotels, most of those he meets seem to be professors, politicians and analysts rather than ordinary workers and farmers. Even so, these encounters lead to some intriguing conversations. At the funeral of a 16-year-old Palestinian boy, killed by Israelis, Glass meets MPs Rifaat Najjar and Jawad Tibi, both former prisoners, and gets into discussion over why Palestinians didn't find a former prisoner, an Arab Mandela, to lead them, but instead chose strongmen such as Yasser Arafat. "The cat likes the one who chokes it," explains Tibi. "Our people like the whip carriers."

Describing himself as a person of no fixed abode, Glass is skilled at bringing alive people who have lost their homelands and depicting life in the cage that is Gaza, a city of 1.2m with just one public park, and no cinemas. "The Israelis had closed the roads but <u>Hamas</u> had closed the cinemas," he writes, going on to explain that life for the citizens of Gaza is not just a struggle against occupation but against arbitrary brutality from their own Palestinian Authority.

I would have liked to have heard more to explain the popularity of the Islamic resistance movement <u>Hamas</u> but this book was researched before its surprise victory in the Palestinian parliamentary elections in January. One of the activists to whom Glass talked described it as a generational divide, whereby younger people believe Arab nationalism has failed and turn to militant Islam.

Several things detracted for me from this otherwise important book. Glass has an unfortunate tendency toward purple prose, so American warplanes do not just bomb Afghanistan but "send thunder and lightning from the heavens" and he seems incapable of meeting a woman without referring to her looks or "ample breasts" -a number of whom he then goes home with. More fundamentally, I could not quite understand his thesis of "the tribes triumphant" at a time when many of his interviewees seem to talk of tribal society breaking down.

At one point a Druze novelist in Haifa says to him, "Happy peoples are like innocent <u>women</u>. They have no past." As I read this, I could not help feeling that, Lawrence nothwithstanding, the problem with the whole region is that it has far too much past.

Available at the Sunday Times Books First price of £ 22.50 (inc p&p) on 0870 165 8585 and timesonline.co.uk/booksfirst

Load-Date: May 7, 2006



EDITORIAL: Butcher of Beirut

The Nation (AsiaNet)
January 8, 2006 Sunday

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Section: NATIONWIDE INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 380 words

Body

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon is reportedly fighting for his life after suffering a massive brain haemorrhage. Even if he survives, his political life, according to close aides, would come to an end; so extensive has been the brain damage. Mr Sharon has fought for the Zionist cause of expansionist Israel ruthlessly all his life, beginning as a full-fledged terrorist, and ending as a supervisor of state terror. He terrorised Palestinians out of their homes and lands, marauding against their properties, forcibly occupying them for Jews in Diaspora to come and settle. This cruel mission he continued even after joining the army, where his actions in the 1956 and 1967 wars showed an almost psychopathic recklessness. But the low point of an already low career came when he was a cabinet minister, in the unprovoked slaughter at Sabra and Shattila in Lebanon in 1982 where over 1000 died, including women and children. Although the Israeli Chief Justice whitewashed him as "indirectly" responsible, the evidence directly points a finger at him. The irony is that today Palestinians, legitimately fighting for their homeland, are being called terrorists by Western leaders and press, while Sharon, who shares with many other Israelis the harrowing deeds of looting, arson and kidnapping is being hailed as a statesman for vacating the Gaza Strip. He is also the instigator of the second Intifadah by his controversial visit to the Al-Aqsa Mosque.

No doubt, as PM he demolished Jewish settlements from the Gaza Strip in the teeth of opposition from his Likud stalwarts, but only when he realised that holding on to them was working against Israel's interests. To the world, he tried to project the evacuation as a definite advance in the peace process but lost no time in expanding settlements in the West Bank. With his absence, his newly formed Kadima party's chances in upcoming polls have become doubtful. For one thing, the outcome also depends on how <u>Hamas</u> fares in Palestine's January 25 poll.

Mr Sharon's nature has been best characterised by Uzi Ben Ziman, an Israeli journalist, in his biography as "irascible, vulgar, foul-mouthed, belligerent, haughty, suspicious, disloyal, demanding of total obedience, a poor scholar, outrageously untruthful, violent and vicious."

Load-Date: January 9, 2006



The New York Times
February 24, 2006 Friday
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Section: Section A; Column 3; Metropolitan Desk; Pg. 2

Length: 956 words

Body

INTERNATIONAL A3-10

Violence Grows in Iraq After Bombing of Mosque

An outpouring of sectarian fury continued to shake Iraq after the bombing of a major Shiite shrine, leaving at least 138 Iraqis dead and political negotiations over a new government in shambles. A1

A day after the bombing, Iraqis woke to a country as close to open civil war as it has come, expressing shock, assigning blame and setting up makeshift roadblocks in their neighborhoods.

Α1

Roof Collapse Kills 56 in Russia

A roof laden with snow collapsed over a popular vegetable market in an outer district of Moscow, killing at least 56 people, mostly young men from Central Asia and the Caucasus. A3

Old Conflict Reopens in Nigeria

More than 100 people in Nigeria have been killed in the worst violence yet linked to anger over cartoons depicting the Prophet Muhammad, reigniting old ethnic and political tensions between the country's Muslims and Christians. A8

Europe Aid May Bypass Hamas

The European Union is considering making direct payments to the moderate Palestinian Authority president, Mahmoud Abbas, as a way of supporting him while trying to maintain financial pressure on <u>Hamas</u>, the anti-Israeli militant group that swept to power in elections last month. A9

Visa Delays Test U.S. and India

Complaints from three Indian scientists about visa applications for the United States have stirred a diplomatic tempest just days before President Bush is to visit India. A6

U.N. Rights Council Hits Snag

Secretary General Kofi Annan and human rights groups said that a resolution on a new Human Rights Council for the United Nations fell short of their expectations but still provided the best option for replacing the discredited Human Rights Commission. The American ambassador, John R. Bolton, said it should be renegotiated. A4

NATIONAL A12-20

Dubai Company May Delay Move Into U.S. Ports

The Dubai company at the center of a political furor over its plans to take over some operations at six American ports said that it planned to close the deal next week but that it would "not exercise control" over its new operations in the United States while the Bush administration tried to calm opposition in Congress. A1

Twins in the Classroom

Lawmakers in the Illinois House passed a resolution recommending that school districts take parental preference into consideration when deciding whether to separate twins in classrooms. A1

Alabama, the 2nd Peach State

Alabama legislators have some fences to mend with neighboring Georgia after state representatives passed a resolution naming peaches Alabama's official tree fruit. A12

A Big Gift and a Big Tax Break

Boone Pickens, the often controversial Texas oilman turned investor, took advantage of a temporary tax break to make a gift that propelled him into the ranks of the nation's top philanthropists last year. A12

Bush Raises Money for G.O.P.

President Bush plunged into the 2006 midterm elections, headlining back-to-back fund-raising events for Republican candidates in Indiana and Ohio, bringing in at least \$1.6 million, party officials said. A16

Disaster Response Plan

The Bush administration, acknowledging the multitude of Hurricane Katrina failures, advocated giving federal agencies from the Pentagon to the Department of Justice a greater role in the nation's disaster response playbook. A19

Disputes Over Storm Cleanup

Dozens of courthouse disputes and public controversies have erupted recently over the still-gargantuan task of removing tons of debris in Louisiana and Mississippi, almost six months after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita hit. A1

NEW YORK/REGION B1-7

Anthrax Victim Failed To Declare Skins, U.S. Says

Federal authorities say Vado Diomande, the New York City man who has inhalation anthrax, could have avoided infection had he properly declared the animal skins he was bringing back from Africa with him, and which are believed to have made him sick. B1

In Hot Pursuit of Bicyclists

The New York police have regularly conducted aggressive pursuits of biyclists participating in the monthly Critical Mass group ride, despite guidelines that urge caution when chasing cars. B1

Albany's Plan to Combat Flu

Each county in New York would be charged with formulating its own response plan in the event of an outbreak of pandemic influenza in the state, according to a formal plan released by the State Health Department. B1

FASHION B8

WEEKEND E1-30; E31-40

ESCAPES F1-11

OBITUARIES A21

SPORTSFRIDAY D1-8

Arakawa Wins Gold; Cohen Falls

Shizuka Arakawa, left, of Japan won her country's first medal at these Olympics, taking the gold in <u>women</u>'s figure skating. The American Sasha Cohen could not manage her demons, fell on her first jump and ended up stunned to take home even a silver medal. A1

BUSINESS DAY C1-14

U.S. and the Port Business

In the outcry over who should run America's port terminals, one trend appears to have been overlooked: companies in the United States began withdrawing from the business decades ago. C1

New Fannie Mae Evidence

An internal investigation has uncovered new evidence that senior executives of Fannie Mae manipulated its accounting in the 1990's to meet earnings projections so that top executives could receive more than \$27 million in bonuses. C1

Wal-Mart's Health Benefits

Wal-Mart Stores, facing a raft of state legislation that would require it to increase spending on employee health insurance, said it planned to ease several longstanding restrictions on who is eligible for the company's benefits. C1

Business Digest C2

EDITORIAL A22-23

Editorials: Reaping what you sow; outrage in Samarra; Francis X. Clines on city life: the great cormorant calls.

Columns: Paul Krugman, Thomas L. Friedman

Crossword E5

Weather A18

TV I	istings	E29
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Graphic

Photo

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February 11, 2006 Saturday
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Section: Section A; Column 3; Metropolitan Desk; Pg. 2

Length: 919 words

Body

INTERNATIONAL A3-7

Ex-C.I.A Officer Says U.S. Ignored Prewar Data

A C.I.A. veteran who oversaw intelligence assessments about the Middle East from 2000 to 2005 accused the Bush administration of ignoring or distorting the prewar evidence on a broad range of issues related to Iraq in an effort to justify the American invasion of 2003. A6

The American general in charge of training the new Iraqi military after Baghdad fell says the Bush administration's strategy to use those forces to replace American troops was hobbled by poor prewar planning.

A6

Iraqi officials certified the results of parliamentary elections, setting Iraq on a timeline for forming a new government, while the kidnappers of an American journalist issued a new deadline for killing her if their demands were not met. A6

France Backs Russia on Hamas

France endorsed Russia's move to hold talks on the Middle East conflict with <u>Hamas</u>, the radical Islamic Palestinian group, saying the discussion could "contribute to advancing our positions." A7

Danish Cartoon Editor on Leave

Flemming Rose, the Danish editor whose decision to publish cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad helped provoke weeks of fury in the Muslim world, said he was leaving his newspaper on indefinite vacation. A5

Russian Forces Fight Militants

A clash between armed militants and security officers in southwestern Russia ended after more than 24 hours of sporadic fighting, with 12 militants and at least 6 security officers dead. A5

Ancient Tomb Opened in Egypt

An intact tomb, the first discovered in 84 years at the Valley of the Kings in Egypt, was opened just 16 feet from King Tutankhamen's tomb. A5

NATIONAL A8-12

Former Chief of FEMA Lashes Back at Superiors

Michael D. Brown, the former federal emergency management chief who became a ridiculed symbol of the Bush administration's flawed response to Hurricane Katrina, returned in anger to Capitol Hill and lashed back at his former superiors, saying the administration was too focused on terrorism to respond properly to natural disasters. A1

Telecom Companies Questioned

Though Washington has been caught up in the debate over the National Security Agency's domestic surveillance program, one set of major players has kept silent: telecommunications corporations, who are now being questioned about their possible role in the program. A11

Parade Battle in San Francisco

Every year throngs marvel at the Chinese New Year Parade in San Francisco, the oldest and largest in the country. But this year's parade has been marred by a public battle over the decision to exclude practitioners of Falun Gong, a movement outlawed in China, where the government routinely arrests and detains followers. A8

Attacks on Mexican Border

American officials said Mexican criminal syndicates were stepping up their attacks on American agents patrolling the border as efforts to stem the flow of immigrants and drugs into the United States intensify. A9

Beliefs A12

SCIENCE/HEALTH

Group Blasts Drug Safeguards

The nation's leading dermatology association told an advisory panel that the government-approved system for preventing pregnant <u>women</u> from taking Accutane, the acne drug linked to miscarriages and severe birth defects, is a "disaster." A11

NEW YORK/REGION B1-5

Man Confronts Mother Convicted for Starving Him

Bruce Jackson, 21, who two years ago was found rummaging through a neighbor's trash, for the first time publicly confronted his adoptive mother, as she was about to be sentenced to 7 years in prison for starving him and his three younger brothers. The case drew national attention to the failures of New Jersey's welfare system. A1

Former Governor Released

The former governor of Connecticut, John G. Rowland, was discharged from federal prison, two days before his scheduled release date. He served more than 10 months on a corruption conviction for accepting \$107,000 in gifts and vacations from people doing business with the state. B1

Churches Still in Limbo

Despite months of waiting, the faithful at dozens of Roman Catholic churches and schools across the Archdiocese of New York might have to wait until late spring to find out whether they will be forced to close as part of the largest reorganization in the more than 150-year history of the archdiocese. B1

FASHION B20

SPORTSSATURDAY D1-8

OBITUARIES C14

ARTS B7-19

Makeover for the Met

Peter Gelb, who takes over as the Metropolitan Opera's first new general manager in 16 years, has laid out broad-ranging plans to remake the venerable house. A1

BUSINESS DAY C1-13

A Record Trade Deficit

The United States trade deficit widened to a record \$726 billion in 2005, adding more fuel to the increasingly partisan debate between advocates of further globalization and those who contend that free trade is causing the loss of too many American manufacturing jobs. A1

Improper Trade Verdict

A New York State judge has found that Clark E. McLeod, the former chief executive of McLeod-USA, a once highflying telecommunications company, is liable for improper trading of hot new stock offerings during the technology stock boom. C1

Job Cuts at Volkswagen

Volkswagen, the German auto maker, announced that it planned to eliminate up to 20,000 jobs in the next three years. C1

Business Digest C2

EDITORIAL A14-15

Editorials: Another cave-in on the Patriot Act; Congress's duty on energy; a wink and a nod for lobbying reform; political skeletons, cut and pasted.

Columns: Maureen Dowd, John Tierney.

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Graphic

Photo

Load-Date: February 11, 2006



The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

March 5, 2006 Sunday

Main Edition

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The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Section: EDITORIAL; Pg. 5B

Length: 2453 words

Byline: VINCENT J. FARLEY, CATHERINE BOONE SHEALY, JOHN FOSTER, PAUL SIMS, D. DEMETRIUS PRATHER, EUGENE D. RHODES, HOWARD S. BROWN, SHAUL LAVAN, JEROLD S. LOWER, DAVID ROBINSON, CAROLYN GEHL, TONNA HARRIS-BOSSELMANN, JERRY SCHULL, DOROTHY FOSTER, ANN

W. YEARWOOD

Body

President Bush: Responses to Cynthia Tucker's column "United States reaps the grief Bush has sown," @issue, Feb. 26

Boykin's extremism deserves criticism

Cynthia Tucker's column is right on target.

She correctly observes that Gen. William "Jerry" Boykin's well-publicized views on Islam have significantly hurt the United States. Clearly, any foreign leader preparing for a meeting with him knows where he stands.

I think Boykin has gotten easy treatment from the media, considering his speeches regarding the presidential election. One of the major networks ran tapes of him speaking before large audiences in churches in 2002/2003. He said that George Bush was not elected by the American people; "he was appointed by God."

VINCENT J. FARLEY

Farley, of Atlanta, is a retired U.S. State Department senior foreign service officer.

Bush-bashing hits out-of-line mark

The conclusion of Cynthia Tucker's column is: When waging a war on terror, you don't have to make sense. In the United States, it is all President Bush's fault.

There is a war going on that truly does not make sense. It is not our strong war on terror. It is Tucker's "War on Bush" that is ridiculous. When are we going to see some editorials that are not totally slanted and slanderous?

CATHERINE BOONE SHEALY, Atlanta

Lopsided picture of war on terror

Once again, Cynthia Tucker goes off on multiple tangents trying to tie unrelated things together.

Saddam Hussein is a secular nut case, and Osama bin Laden is a religious nut case, but Tucker doesn't want to admit that the only things tying them together are Islam and hatred for civilization. As for her disparaging remarks about Gen. William Boykin, he only stated what most Americans believe.

I don't defend President Bush, and I certainly don't like the ports deal. But don't try to make Saddam less of a monster and don't try to make the average American feel sorry for the Arabs. After all, "peace loving" Muslims started this war.

JOHN FOSTER, Newnan

Blatant slam just weakens credibility

Cynthia Tucker's column takes the biggest piece of cake in the "I hate President Bush" sweepstakes. It was so blatantly anti-Bush that she has finally removed any vestige of credibility with regard to anything related to the president.

She seems to imply that Bush is responsible for other people's xenophobia. She scarcely had time to mention that Bush was on the correct side of the Dubai ports issue. Even Sen. Hillary Clinton's (D-N.Y.) comments are implicitly Bush's fault. Incredible!

PAUL SIMS, Birmingham

Policies leave nation in a bind

I agree completely with Cynthia Tucker's assessment of the repercussions of the Bush administration's continued policies and practices, both foreign and domestic.

Bush and his administration continue to infringe on the most basic rights of every American, while politicizing our national security. To add insult to injury to the American people, they have creatively created a facade complete with anti-Arab sentiments and a senseless war against something intangible called "terrorism," and have used fear to their advantage.

The Rev. D. DEMETRIUS PRATHER, Atlanta

Media remain blinded by hate

In my almost 80 years, I don't believe that I have seen a president so hated by the news media as is George W. Bush.

Who is Cynthia Tucker going to blame for all the ills of this country and the world when Bush's term is over? The sheep don't think the wolves are out there; at least they try to pretend the wolves are not coming. But the wolves will come, and the sheep will try to hide and hope the sheepdogs can save them.

EUGENE D. RHODES, Roswell

'Heart of Gold' fails to wow

I disagree with Bob Townsend's analysis of the movie "Neil Young: Heart of Gold" ("Neil Young can stop searchin'; concert film has heart of gold" Movies & More, Feb. 24).

I have never been to Nashville, and now I never will go there. What I saw at the Tara was an hour and 43 minutes of country-western. I am sort of a country-western fan, but walked out of this one when it became too much to tolerate. Most country-western artists seem to be in need of haircuts. It irks me that this movie received a critic's grade of A-minus.

There were only two of us at the 4:45 p.m. performance --- only one after I walked out, and that was probably one too many.

HOWARD S. BROWN, Atlanta

U.S. can't trust *Hamas* with aid

A recent letter writer forgets that Israel offered the West Bank for peace under the Clinton-brokered accords ("Middle East peace rests in Israel's hands," Feb. 25). Yasser Arafat responded with war. The recent election of <u>Hamas</u> simply confirms Palestinian intentions. <u>Hamas</u> publicly vows to destroy Israel, and even the Jewish people. Furthermore, the new <u>Hamas</u> prime minister refused to accept previous treaties.

Aid to the Palestinian Authority serves little purpose. A Palestinian Authority report conceded this month that \$700 million has been stolen in recent years. The multimillion-dollar houses of numerous Palestinian leaders along the Gaza seashore are testament to that theft. If <u>Hamas</u> follows its mentor Iran, it will become yet another corrupt theocratic regime.

The foreign-funded Palestinian budget mostly pays the salaries of 70,000 militiamen. Many are involved in terror, and some run criminal gangs. Precious little goes to actual services. The United States should rather provide aid to the innocent victims in Darfur than the militants in the West Bank.

SHAUL LAVAN, Atlanta

Bad behavior trumps profanity

As a boy, I heard much profane, filthy language at school and summer camp ("Profanity," Letters, Feb. 26). I went on to two doctoral degrees and to a successful professional career. My ability to express myself well in speech and writing was highly respected. I think my moral and ethical standards have been above serious reproach.

Since moving to the Southeast, I have been alternately amused and disgusted by the emphasis on "proper" language. I find prissy euphemisms annoying when we all know what they mean.

Morality is fairly and honestly dealing with others, not the words used to describe it. No one was ever harmed by taboo words, but many by bad deeds. It is time to attend more to our behavior rather than the niceties of verbal expression.

JEROLD S. LOWER, Atlanta

Stepping on abortion rights

With Samuel Alito and John Roberts on the Supreme Court, the stars are aligned to take away a woman's right to choose to have an abortion even in the case of rape or incest ("Bill targets Roe v. Wade," Page One, Feb. 25).

So this is the philosophy of the anti-abortion movement? Then why don't they lobby just as hard against capital punishment? Where is the legislation for treatment programs for sex and drug offenders in lieu of prison time? Where is the access to contraception without a court order? Why are Lisa Clark and her teenage husband being prosecuted? At least they conceived their baby willingly. Or is this really about controlling <u>women</u> in our fundamentally misogynistic society and less about the sacredness of life?

As a husband, I don't think I'd be willing to watch my wife carry and deliver the child of her rapist. And I believe that I'd kick the teeth out of any government hack who would use the rule of law to force any couple or woman to put up with any such cruel and unusual punishment for being the victim of a violent crime.

DAVID ROBINSON, Norcross

Illegal immigration: Responses to "Senate bill reveals rift on illegals," Page One, Feb. 26

To solve problem, face it head-on

Sen. Chip Roger's (R-Woodstock) illegal immigration bill does not get at the source of the problem: Our craven addiction to foreign labor. As long as consumers demand cheap landscaping, cheap chicken and other fast food, cheap housecleaning and low construction costs, businesses will feed that habit.

The Georgia consumer is the problem, pure and simple. Rogers himself admits that when he needed some work done at home, he wondered about the guys who showed up. But he said they assured him they were legal. I propose we all show the courage Rogers showed and ask the people who are serving you the next time you are eating Mexican food or fried chicken, having the grass cut or getting the house cleaned: Are all you guys legal? Good --- bring it on!

CAROLYN GEHL, Canton

Paper should avoid racial undertones

When did "illegal" become a noun? And why is it used to refer to only a certain group of people who break the law? If I drive too fast, I am committing the illegal act of speeding, but would anyone refer to me as an "illegal"? Worse, if people steal, rape or murder, their acts are certainly illegal, in fact criminal, but they are never addressed as "illegals."

The term illegal, as I see and hear it used currently, has racial undertones. People who overstay their visas or who enter the United States without inspection are breaking the law --- but perhaps seeking work so that you can feed your family isn't the most serious of offenses.

TONNA HARRIS-BOSSELMANN, Tucker

Hiring practice drains economy

It amazes me that some people think they should feel compassion for someone from another nation who has broken, and continues to break, our laws. And they naively believe those people are helping our economy.

If a business can hire an illegal immigrant for rock-bottom wages and pay no worker's compensation, insurance, Social Security or any payroll taxes, why would they hire a legal resident? Legal workers will always cost more to employ. I believe such businesses should be prosecuted. The business that plays by the book cannot compete, and eventually fails, leaving legal workers unemployed. How can this be good for our economy?

Sen. Chip Rogers' bill is a good start.

JERRY SCHULL, Marietta

Many work hard, seek a better life

Senate Bill 529 is inhumane and irrelevant. Denying health and education benefits to undocumented immigrant adults will negatively affect us all.

As an educator, I have helped thousands of immigrants in Georgia learn English and become good citizens over the past 30 years. The vast majority of them have been motivated, hard-working people who came to America seeking a better life. To deprive those who are undocumented of higher education is immoral. To punish those who hire

them is also wrong, and may lead to discrimination against all foreigners. Making local laws is irrelevant because immigration is a national matter. Federal comprehensive immigration reform is urgently needed, not harsh, unforgiving bills such as SB 529.

DOROTHY FOSTER, Sautee

Employers, workers deserve solid policy

Instead of trying to "catch" illegal immigrants or "expose" employers, we need a method to permit them to work. Why not allow the employer to verify that he needs the worker, issue him a permit and declare him legal? This would put the responsibility on the employer to be something of a sponsor, not a lawbreaker, and hopefully would guarantee that the worker and his family would remain employed and seek citizenship.

These families are assets to our communities and provide both economic and social benefits. What do we gain by trying to "catch" them? We simply uproot the families, whose children were born here, making them move again and again to prevent being discovered and deported. We already have forced them to dishonesty in forging papers to drive and work.

When a family has left home in a foreign country to make a new start here with eagerness and skills, it is not necessary to demean them. Surely our elected officials can come up with a more workable policy than punishment for employers and deportation for those whose skills we need.

ANN W. YEARWOOD, Concord

Honor Roosevelt with a state holiday

What a shame our legislators failed to make Jan. 30, the birthday of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, FDR Day in Georgia ("Blocking FDR Day, on moral grounds? @issue, Feb. 26). How can they talk about "mistresses" when it was common knowledge in Warm Springs and among FDR's inner circle that he was a dying man in 1944 and 1945?

How sad that our leaders have forgotten that FDR established the premier center for the treatment of polio here in Georgia, and that the foundation he established was instrumental in finding a cure for polio. Do they not remember that Roosevelt put their fathers to work in the 1930s and sent electricity to rural America --- and don't they remember who led us through World War II?

Can't we honor this world leader, who adopted our state, with FDR Day?

HAL RAPER, Atlanta and Warm Springs

NASCAR: Responses to "NASCAR outraces ASO bid," Arts & Books, Feb. 26

Don't pass up on Symphony Center

I am astonished that the city of Atlanta would consider having the NASCAR hall of fame building erected in lieu of the proposed Atlanta Symphony Center.

Atlanta has been presented a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to have the architectural statement it needs to be recognized as a metropolis of culture.

The proposed Symphony Center will do for Atlanta what the Sydney Opera House has for Australia. Architect Santiago Calatrava has designed a magnificent structure, and it would be a disaster if ignored.

RICHARD KLIEMT, Roswell

Hall for car racing does not compare

LETTERS

Local officials typically endorse the values of NASCAR fans and consider car racing to be more important than improving the city's culture.

A new concert hall is far more valuable than a building full of trophies, plaques and tributes to race-car drivers. Classical music contributes much more to a people's culture than a sport associated with fast cars, beer and near-crashes.

More shocking is the possibility that architect Santiago Calatrava's beautiful design for a new concert hall may be dumped.

If any expenditure is worth it, that one is. He is the greatest architect to come along in the past 50 years, and Atlanta has grossly undervalued his work before.

It would be a black mark against the city and its officials if we were to once again dump Calatrava's services because a few people are too stupid and shortsighted to realize how valuable he could be to Atlanta.

ALBERT SANCHEZ MORENO, East Point

Redirect funds

If Atlanta doesn't get the NASCAR hall of fame, the city and state governments should redirect all public funding intended for the museum to the Atlanta Symphony Center.

TIM COWLBECK, Atlanta

Holocaust memories

After reading Richard Halicks' article about Joe Maloy, a POW in one of the German prison camps in 1944, I wonder how anyone can ever doubt that there truly was a Holocaust ("Bearing witness," @issue, Feb. 26). I have not personally known anyone who had that horrible experience, but when there are victims still living to tell their story, how can anyone in their right mind doubt that it's true?

I pray, with all my heart, that God has a special place in heaven for our POWs and every Holocaust victim.

MARIE L. PONDER, Madison

Load-Date: March 5, 2006



Ten Israeli reservists killed; SINGLE STRIKE MIDDLE EAST CRISIS

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

August 7, 2006 Monday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; International News; Pg. 6

Length: 388 words

Byline: Ed O'Loughlin Herald Correspondent in Beirut and agencies

Body

FIGHTING and killing continued unabated in the Israel-Lebanon war over the weekend.

At least 10 people were killed when a Hezbollah rocket struck a building in the northern Israeli village of Kfar Giladi yesterday, medics said. The army said all were reserve soldiers. Ambulance workers said another nine people were wounded, four critically.

Among the Lebanese dead 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 was attacked by Israeli bombs 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 <u>women</u> 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 575, although the Lebanese Government says that the real toll, including bodies hidden in rubble in inaccessible border areas, could 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 the Israeli Government claims to have killed 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.

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

Ten Israeli reservists killed SINGLE STRIKE MIDDLE EAST CRISIS

process that could takes 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.

Load-Date: July 17, 2007



'No one sees policy as credible'

The Independent (London)

August 4, 2006 Friday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 2

Length: 366 words

Byline: Mohammad Sarwar Labour MP for Glasgow Central

Body

"While I condemn the hostage taking of Israeli soldiers and rocket attacks on Israel, I believe the response was disproportionate and appalling.

As a Labour MP, I say with sadness and a heavy heart that the Prime Minister's press conference did not inspire me at all. He needs to take a much more even-handed approach.

He refused to endorse Jack Straw's comments that the Israeli response was disproportionate. He refused to condemn Israel, even over the massacre at Qana in which 60 civilians, including 37 children, died.

How can he say this Government's policy is independent when we have provided logistical support in a British airport for the transport of bombs that are being used against innocent men, **women** and children in Lebanon?

Tony Blair talked about wanting to see the spread of democracy in the Middle East and yet at the same time he refuses to talk to <u>Hamas</u>, which was democratically elected, and he stands by while the democratic government of Lebanon is attacked.

He mentioned the creation of a viable Palestinian state and yet he didn't mention the need for the full implementation of UN resolutions 242 and 338, which call on Israel to withdraw its forces to the pre-1967 borders.

He didn't mention the apartheid wall that has caused misery and hardship for many Palestinians. He didn't mention the illegal settlements in the West Bank. There is immense anger among rank-and-file members of the Labour Party and backbench MPs.

He refused again to call for an immediate ceasefire - on both sides. The level of civilian casualties in Lebanon has helped build support for Hizbollah. Yet if George Bush and Mr Blair had called for an immediate ceasefire and Hizbollah had refused to comply, Hizbollah would have faced wide anger, including in the Muslim world.

I was against the Iraq war, I voted against it, but I still believed at the time that at least something good could come out of it and that our Prime Minister would work day and night to bring a peace to the Middle East. This peace now looks distant.

I believe that the Prime Minister's response is not representative of our country's feelings and this is why I have requested, with 15 other Labour MPs, a recalling of Parliament.

Graphic

An Israeli soldier loads shells for a tank at the border REUTERS

Load-Date: August 4, 2006



Across the Middle East, Sermons Critical of the U.S.

The New York Times
July 22, 2006 Saturday
Late Edition - Final

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Section: Section A; Column 1; Foreign Desk; Pg. 8; TURMOIL IN THE MIDEAST: IN THE MOSQUES

Length: 930 words

Byline: By NEIL MacFARQUHAR

Dateline: DAMASCUS, Syria, July 21

Body

In mosques from Mecca to Marrakesh, sermons at Friday Prayer services underscored both the David-versus-Goliath glamour many Arabs associate with Hezbollah's fight against Israel and their antipathy toward the United States and its allies in the region 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 Hazzaa al-Maswari, an Islamist member of Yemen's Parliament, in his Friday sermon at the Mujahid Mosque in Sana, the country's capital.

"Where are the Arab leaders?" he said. "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 suggests that the fighting in Lebanon is further tarnishing the image of the United States in the Arab world as being solely concerned with Israel's welfare and making its allied governments look increasingly like puppets.

"What is creating radicalism in the region is not authoritarian regimes," said Mustafa Hamarneh, director of the Center for Strategic Studies at the University of Jordan. "Mainly it is American policy in the region -- survey after survey shows that."

The attacks against Arab leaders from the pulpit were all the more surprising because so many governments have exerted some manner of 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 could inspire extremists.

Here in Damascus, where the Syrian government has been trying to keep a low profile as the fighting in Lebanon surges, prominent prayer leaders focused on the need to donate generously to help tens of thousands of Lebanese refugees pouring over the border. But they also took other Arab countries to task -- although without mentioning by name such critics of Hezbollah as Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Jordan.

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

Across the Middle East, Sermons Critical of the U.S.

In an interview, the cleric said the United States was helping religious extremists by encouraging the Israelis to continue their onslaught. By not working harder to stop the deaths of scores of Lebanese <u>women</u> and children, he said, the United States is abetting the recruiting efforts of the likes of Osama bin Laden and the late Abu Musab al-Zargawi.

"The United States is creating more Zarqawis, more bin Ladens in the Mideast every day," Mr. Habash said.

The United States, for its part, blames Syrian support for groups like Hezbollah and <u>Hamas</u> as being among the root causes of such extremism.

The Saudi government has taken a strong public position against Hezbollah's having brought on the crisis by capturing two Israeli soldiers, last week condemning the organization's "uncalculated adventures." Washington has leaned heavily on that and similar statements 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 Saudi royal policy.

The Muslim world should be proud of the bravery shown by the Palestinians and the Lebanese confronting Israel, said Sheik Abdul Rahman al-Sudais, who pointedly urged Muslim leaders to return to "sound reason and unify their ranks."

He took an indirect swipe at the United States for claiming to promote 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 asked. "Don't they fear that history will condemn them for their double standards?"

In Egypt, Sheik Khalid Saoudi at the Sayyida Hafsa Mosque in the well-to-do Cairo suburb of Heliopolis, criticized the Saudis and the Arab League for trying to rely on international intervention.

"Every time we rely on the 'big guys,' we get slapped," he told the gathered worshipers, suggesting that Islam was under assault around the world, with conflicts raging in Iraq, Afghanistan, Lebanon and the Palestinian territories.

In downtown Cairo, police officers in riot gear prevented several thousand chanting worshipers at sprawling Al Azhar Mosque near the city's main bazaar from taking their protest out into the streets, while thousands marched after sermons in other capitals including Amman, Jordan.

The Iranian government -- whose support of Hezbollah and <u>Hamas</u> as a means of widening the reach of its Islamic revolution is causing worry in some other Middle Eastern capitals -- also took the opportunity to condemn Arab leaders.

Former president Hashemi Rafsanjani of Iran, speaking at the main Friday Prayer sermon in downtown Tehran, said Arab and Islamic countries "do not even bother to condemn the fact that Muslims are being butchered by nonbelievers."

"This is a historic catastrophe," said Mr. Rafsanjani, who is a Shiite cleric.

He went on to say that all Hezbollah fighters should be considered heroes, according to Reuters. The most radical Shiite cleric in neighboring Iraq, Moktada al-Sadr, also spoke out in support of Hezbollah.

In mosques across the region, virtually every prayer leader used the traditional call-and-response period after the main sermon to ask God to grant a victory to the Muslims. "Amen," responded the congregations in one voice.

Graphic

Photos: In Amman, Jordan, protesters shouted anti-American and anti-Israeli slogans during a rally in solidarity with Lebanon and the Palestinians. (Photo by Ali Jarekji/Reuters)

Outside Al Azhar Mosque in Cairo, a boy waved a Lebanese flag. (Photo by Khaled Desouki/Agence France-Presse -- Getty Images)

Load-Date: July 22, 2006



Debate on the crisis in the Middle East

The Irish Times
August 1, 2006 Tuesday

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Section: LETTERS; Pg. 15

Length: 1642 words

Body

Madam, - As in 1996, there is only one word that needs to be said to all those contributors, well meaning and otherwise, who write to defend and excuse Israel's barbaric behaviour in the Middle East. Qana. - Yours, etc,

JIM O'SULLIVAN, Rathedmond, Sligo.

Madam, - After Qana can there be any doubt that the Israeli armed forces are terrorists? - Yours, etc,

Dr COLM STEPHENS, St Patrick's Terrace, Drumcondra, Dublin 3.

Madam, - With the latest massacre perpetrated by the Israelis, surely the time has come for the civilised world to publicly show its disgust at such violations of the most basic principles of international law. We can no longer go on treating the Israeli state as a normal member of the international community. We must now publicly and clearly distance ourselves from such horrific assaults on the most innocent and vulnerable members of the Lebanese population.

The fact that this indefensible attack came just days after the killing of four unarmed members of the UN only underlines the Israeli government's complete indifference to all norms of international conduct and human rights.

I believe the Irish Government should lead the way by calling for the exclusion of Israel from next year's Eurovision Song Contest. This may sound like a trivial action, especially when set against the appalling massacre of children perpetrated by the Israeli state, but such a move would be a very public and high-profile indication that Israel cannot be considered a normal member of the international community while it persists in ignoring that community's most basic precepts. If Israel is not excluded, I believe Ireland should boycott the event.

Israel has placed itself outside the pale of normal civilised conduct. The state of Israel should hang its head in shame, as should any state that defends or excuses it. - Yours, etc,

BRIAN MACGABHANN, Béal an Daingin, Connemara, Co Galway.

Madam, - Alan Shatter (July 29th) makes some telling points about the position of the Irish left on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and by implication on the wider issue of the struggle between the West and growing Islamic fundamentalism. There is confusion, and some plain bad politics, being propagated by some on the Left on these important guestions. As an active member of the Labour Party I hold a different view.

However murky, heartbreaking and confused the war and politics in the Middle East may be, the issue is the right of the state of Israel to exist within the pre-1967 borders. This right is denied to it by both Hizbullah and *Hamas*. The

Debate on the crisis in the Middle East

other issue is the growing hold of theocracy, fanaticism and fascism on many Islamic people. The question is where people of the left should stand on these matters.

The struggle going on today between reactionary fundamentalism and the West is a continuation of the conflict which started in Europe over 300 years ago between those who pined for a return to the certainties of pre-Enlightenment politico-religious systems and those who believed, with the likes of Thomas Paine in, the rights of man - liberty, equality and democracy - despite the uncertainty they bring.

There is an unfortunate tendency on the left to identify all who oppose America as objectively progressive. This has often been so, but is not always the case. In the matter of Islamic medievalism and its aggressive political and military manifestations it is certainly not the case. The US has made many mistakes and has needlessly alienated potential allies in this struggle, but it is on the right side this time.

It is the job of all those on the left to be clear where they stand on the basic principles of liberty and equality; to criticise where necessary the American/Israeli actions; to support those elements in the Middle East and elsewhere who oppose the growing fanaticism and fascism in their own societies; and not to confuse anti-Americanism with progressive politics. - Yours, etc,

Cllr JOHN McMANUS, Novara Road, Bray, Co Wicklow.

Madam, - It is ironic that Alan Shatter (July 29th) attacks Michael D Higgins for a "lack of objectivity" in his comments on Israel's military action in Lebanon. Mr Shatter's own contribution owes more to propaganda than to objectivity.

He rightly points out that under international law a state has the right to defend itself and its citizens from attack. By his logic, Lebanon should by now have taken military action against Israel. What exactly has Israel been doing other than attacking the state of Lebanon and its citizens? Israel has not simply sought to overcome the terrorist threat from Hizbullah in a limited military operation. Instead Israeli forces have launched a brutal assault on the civilian population centres of Lebanon.

Israeli politicians claim to have no quarrel with the Lebanese people, yet over 400 Lebanese civilians have died due to Israel's military action. Israel claims to support deployment of the Lebanese army in southern Lebanon, yet Lebanese soldiers perished in an unprovoked Israeli attack on a military base in the first week of the current conflict.

Certainly Lebanon would have the right to defend itself by force and to call in aid from Israel's enemies in Syria and Iran. The world should be thankful that Lebanon's moderate government has called for a ceasefire, instead of exercising the right to defend itself which Mr Shatter has correctly identified.

Mr Shatter also conveniently ignores the unlawful killing of four United Nations observers by Israeli forces at Khiam last Tuesday. This Israeli action showed at best a reckless contempt for human life and at worst a deliberate determination to eliminate UN observers from the scene of the conflict. It is no surprise that apologists for Israeli militarism should wish to gloss over the appalling and possibly deliberate attack on the UN.

Mr Shatter calls upon Michael D Higgins to wake up "to the type of world in which we live" and to the threat of Islamic fundamentalism. Such propaganda seeks to justify Israel's actions at all costs. Israel's supporters would do well to wake up to the reality that terrorism will never be defeated by the slaughter of innocent civilians or UN observers. - Yours, etc,

JOHN WALSH, Dunshaughlin, Co Meath.

Madam, - For the past two weeks your Letters page has been filled with many versions of the history of the conflict in the Middle East, depending on the point being argued. Now all this all pales into insignificance as we learn of the latest war crime committed by the Israelis.

Debate on the crisis in the Middle East

The sequence of events was as follows. The Israelis ordered all residents in southern Lebanon to leave. The United Nations requested a three-day ceasefire to allow civilians to leave the area. This was refused by the Israelis and now scores of civilians - old people, **women** and children - have been killed as they slept, by a bomb probably made in the United States.

This pattern of Israeli behaviour had been reported earlier in the conflict. They order people to leave their homes and when they do they are attacked. This is a war crime to add to the many already reported. There is no excuse for this, no justification whatever. What type of nation would allow or even order its armed forces to behave in such a way and how can the Israelis possibly believe that such behaviour is conducive to good relations with their Arab neighbours in years to come? Have they lost all sense of reason and decency?

When are we going to apply the same standards of criticism to Israel as we do to other countries? When are we going to stop feeling residual guilt over the Holocaust? The Israelis and Zionist organisations have used the Holocaust - and I repeat "used" the Holocaust - as a stick with which to beat public opinion and as a cover for the atrocities committed by successive Israeli governments.

It is time to call a spade a spade. If it looks like a war crime, if it smells like a war crime, the chances are it is a war crime. - Yours, etc,

ALAN McPARTLAND, Grange Court, Rathfarnham, Dublin 16.

Madam, - Few can deny the distress that Lebanese and Palestinian civilians are enduring due to the Israeli offensive against Hizbullah and <u>Hamas</u> but it is disingenuous of commentators to argue that the Israeli response is disproportionate. How should they respond to organisations whose raison d'être is to wipe the Israeli nation from the map?

After Israel withdrew from both Lebanon and the Gaza Strip, both <u>Hamas</u> and Hizbullah with their incursions have provided casus belli. Israel, as the only true democracy in the Middle East, is entitled to exist peacefully with its neighbours and, difficult as it is to acknowledge for many of us in the West, the endowment of human rights in the region is a two-way process that involves both the recognition of Israel's right to existence and the creation of a Palestinian state.

The real problem lies with Iran and Syria which continued to fund Hizbullah and other other Islamic fundamentalist organisations while Israel was slowly moving towards withdrawing from the West Bank.

There is now no room for moderates in the Middle East and it is unlikely that we will see further acts of withdrawal by Israel, whose very existence has been challenged again. What would you do in Israel's position? - Yours, etc,

CATHAL McCANN, Riverstown, Dundalk.

Madam - Ivana Bacik (July 25th) writes that "the tragic consequences of such a disproportionate reaction to Hizbullah provocation make the inaction of the international community, including our own Government, wholly indefensible".

Arguably it has been the continued inaction over the past six years by the United Nations which, along with many Western governments including our own, turned a blind eye to the arming of the terrorists by Syria and Iran, perhaps for short-term political gain, that has led us to this dreadful conflict. - Yours, etc,

DAVID M ABRAHAMSON, Trinity College, Dublin 2.

Load-Date: August 1, 2006



Israeli army raids Lebanon

Guardian.com July 17, 2006

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theguardian

Length: 944 words

Highlight: /B Blair leads calls for UN peace force/B More Hizbullah rockets hit Haifa/B 40 British nationals

evacuated

Body

Israeli troops made a brief raid into southern Lebanon overnight to attack Hizbullah bases on the border, the Israeli government revealed today.

News of Israel's ground offensive came as the prime minister, Tony Blair, led calls for an international stabilisation force to be deployed in the area as the only way to stop the violence.

The overnight raid marked the first time Israeli ground troops had been used in six days of conflict with Hizbullah that began after the militant group kidnapped two Israeli troops.

Some analysts believe a major ground invasion of southern Lebanon is being considered by Israel, which wants to remove Hizbullah's capacity to fire missiles over the border. One Israeli newspaper said today that Israel's offensive had so far destroyed a quarter of Hizbullah's fighting capabilities.

An Israeli army spokesman said the troops used overnight were quickly withdrawn. "There was a very small incursion overnight to destroy a few Hizbullah positions immediately on the other side of the fence. That has been done." he said.

The raid came after the Israeli prime minister, Ehud Olmert, vowed a "far-reaching" response to a rocket attack yesterday on the northern Israeli city of Haifa that killed eight Israeli railway workers.

There were more Hizbullah rocket attacks on Haifa today, and reports that a building had collapsed. Initial reports said two people were injured and there were fears people could be trapped in the rubble. Hundreds of rockets have hit northern Israel in recent days, reaching as far as 33 miles south of the border.

Israeli jets continued to pound targets in Lebanon today, extending its air raids into the north of the country. At least 23 Lebanese were killed in the latest attacks, reports said.

At least 140 Lebanese civilians have been killed since the violence broke out last week. At least 12 Israeli civilians have died in the rocket attacks, as well as 12 Israeli soldiers and sailors.

Mr Blair called for an international peace keeping force after private talks with the United Nations secretary general, Kofi Annan.

Israeli army raids Lebanon

Speaking to reporters in St Petersburg, where he is attending the final day of the G8 summit, Mr Blair said: "The only way we are going to have a cessation of violence is if we have an international force deployed into that area."

A small UN contingent has been in the area for many years.

Israel said it was too early to talk about a new deployment of troops under UN or EU auspices. "I don't think we're at that stage yet," said an Israeli government spokeswoman. "We're at the stage where we want to be sure that Hizbullah is not deployed at our northern border."

Lebanese television claimed that an Israeli F-16 was shot down overnight, and showed footage of falling burning debris, but the Israeli military denied it had lost a plane.

Israel's Channel 10 television station reported today that Israel's military was threatening to destroy Lebanon's electricity grid if the rocket attacks did not stop.

About 40 British nationals, mainly <u>women</u>, children and those needing medical care, were evacuated from Beirut early this morning by Royal Air Force Chinook helicopters to be taken to Cyprus.

Two Royal Navy ships are on their way to Lebanon and there are plans for a possible larger evacuation of British nationals. Some 4,000 British families are registered in Lebanon.

In a message to stranded Britons, the Foreign Office said people should "stay put, exercise caution, keep in touch with the embassy and heed local advice" and listen to English language broadcasts.

A cruise ship chartered by France was due to arrive at Beirut's port later today to begin evacuations of French nationals and other European citizens. Russia sent a plane to Jordan this morning to start evacuating its citizens from the region, while the UN was also considering evacuation plans for its staff.

In France, the French president's office said that Dominique de Villepin, the French prime minister, was travelling to Beirut today to meet the Lebanese prime minister, Fuad Saniora, and express the "support and solidarity of the French people in this trial".

Mr Saniora today described Israel's offensive as "terrorism" that would foster extremism in the region.

It is expected that the US secretary of state, Condoleezza Rice, will soon make a visit to the region. In a private conversation about the crisis with Mr Blair at the G8, the US president, George Bush, was overheard saying, "I think Condi is going to go pretty soon".

Yesterday, leaders at the G8 put the onus on Hizbullah, which is backed by Syria and Iran, to end the conflict by freeing the two Israeli troops and stopping the attacks on Israel with rockets.

The Israeli offensive has forced hundreds of thousands of Lebanese to flee, with residents of southern Lebanon going to Beirut or the eastern Bekaa valley, while some of the capital's residents have moved to homes on the hills to the east.

The fighting in Lebanon last week opened a second front for Israel. Israeli jets were also in action in Gaza, where Israel believes one of its soldiers is being held by <u>Hamas</u>-linked militants. Air raids largely destroyed the empty Palestinian foreign ministry and severely damaged about 50 flats nearby.

In the West Bank today, Palestinian militants killed an Israeli soldier and wounded six others when they set off a bomb near troops in Nablus. Meanwhile, police in Jerusalem said they arrested a Palestinian with a large bag containing explosives.

Israel has been attacking Gaza since June 28, three days after <u>Hamas</u>-linked militants tunnelled under the border and attacked an Israeli army post at a Gaza crossing, killing two soldiers and capturing a third.

Israeli army raids Lebanon

Load-Date: July 17, 2006



Debate on crisis in the Middle East

The Irish Times

July 25, 2006 Tuesday

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Section: LETTERS; Pg. 15

Length: 1570 words

Body

Madam, - Recent reporting on the escalating and disproportionate attacks by the Israeli armed forces is an indictment of our spineless Government's handwringing reaction.

The Israelis' contention that they are carrying out "pinpoint" attacks on Hizbullah activists is a complete sham. How many more innocent people will have to die before somebody with the power to make a difference decides to take action to stop the slaughter?

The weasel-words of Condoleezza Rice that any ceasefire would be a fraud reflects the unstated satisfaction of the US Government with current Israeli policy. The inaction of our own Government reflects poorly on a nation with a proud humanitarian record. - Yours, etc,

PETER CLIFTON, Peatlands, Midleton, Co Cork.

Madam, - Mary Raftery (Opinion, July 20th) is right. In the face of this palpable wrong - this appalling bombardment of Lebanese civilians by Israeli planes - each of us has a duty to speak out.

I cannot believe how anyone can seek to justify the Israeli attacks. The reports of children dying in the rubble of their homes, of whole families being wiped out as they try to flee the bombing, are utterly horrific. The tragic consequences of such a disproportionate reaction to Hizbullah provocation make the inaction of the international community, including our own government, wholly indefensible. - Yours, etc,

IVANA BACIK, Law School, Trinity College, Dublin 2.

Madam, - All my adult life I have been an ardent supporter of the struggle for freedom of the Palestinian people. I have witnessed with my own eyes the daily suffering they endure under occupation. I fervently support the goal of a secular democratic state in Palestine/Israel where Jew, Muslim and Christian can live together in peace and equality. Yet these strongly held views have never prevented me from stating my unqualified condemnation of the killing of Israeli civilians by the armed wings of *Hamas*, Hizbullah and others.

What I find shocking, therefore, is the total failure of those whose sympathies lie with the state of Israel to condemn, without equivocation, the murder of hundreds of Lebanese and Palestinian civilians by Israeli forces in recent days. I can only conclude that they believe that these people are not as deserving of life as Israelis are. There is only one word for an attitude that justifies and lauds the murder of innocent human beings because of their nationality: racism. - Yours, etc,

Dr COLM BREATHNACH, Cedar Brook Walk, Cherry Orchard, Dublin 10.

Debate on crisis in the Middle East

Madam, - Paddy Monaghan, of "Irish Christian friends of Israel" (July 20th), writes "to express support for Israel". Judging by both the tone and content of his letter, he should as a Christian be not so defensive and uncritical of Israel's disproportionate reactions in its ruthless bombardment of the sovereign state of Lebanon, where many Christians have been among the victims.

His partisan support for Israel makes a mockery of the message of justice and peace announced by Jesus, a message which all Christians are obliged to uphold, rather than becoming an uncritical ally of any side in a conflict where the Geneva Conventions are deliberately ignored.

He calls upon the Irish Government to deal with the "root cause of the conflict", which he perceives to lie with Syria and Iran. He fails to understand that the root cause of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict goes back to 1948; but without raking up the rights and wrongs of the past, the need now is for Israel to recognise the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people to have their home in Israel and for Palestinians to respect the Jewish people's right to co-exist in harmony and justice in the same homeland.

As a Christian I dissociate myself from the extreme position of these so-called Irish Christian Friends of Israel. Muslims, Christians and Jews must learn to co-exist in a world where extremists and fundamentalists of all these major religions of the world have distorted and disfigured their revealed message: that all people are equal in the sight of God, Allah, and Yahweh. - Yours, etc,

BRENDAN BUTLER, The Moorings, Malahide, Co Dublin.

Madam, - There is no justification for Israel's devastating bombardment of Lebanon. As a response to the abduction of two Israeli soldiers it is massively disproportionate and the consequences in terms of the loss of innocent life and the destruction of the infrastructure relied upon by ordinary Lebanese people were entirely predictable.

Israel is also doing exactly what Hizbullah (and its supporters in Iran and elsewhere) wants it to do. It is escalating the conflict with potentially catastrophic consequences for the whole region. In particular, it is likely that the Israeli attack will serve only to destabilise Lebanon and radicalise the large element of its population which up to this point has rejected Hizbullah terrorism.

Supporters of Israeli aggression tell us that the bombing is justified by the firing of rockets into Israel from south Lebanon and the abduction of Israeli soldiers by Hizbullah. While there is no justification for the rocket attacks on Israel, which clearly target civilians, and while the abduction of Israeli soldiers is utterly to be condemned, it must be remembered that the rocket attacks came after the beginning of the Israeli bombardment and that Israel itself abducted two Gaza civilians on June 24th. - Yours, etc,

LENNY ABRAHAMSON, Leinster Road West, Rathmines, Dublin 6.

Madam, - Last Friday's letter from Noam Chomsky et al. makes mention of "a doctor and his brother" who were kidnapped by the Israelis, claiming that incident was "scarcely reported anywhere except in the Turkish press". However, after a brief trawl through the Internet I find it mentioned by - among others - the Observer, Haaretz, the Jerusalem Post, the Los Angeles Times, the New York Times, Agence France Presse, Associated Press, CNN and Xinhua, the Chinese state news agency.

Furthermore, the source for this story seems to an Israeli Defence Forces spokesman. The "doctor and his brother" accordingly become "two <u>Hamas</u> members believed to be planning a large attack against Israel". Additionally, the "doctor" in the story is a 31-year-old medical student lately returned from university in Sudan: I could not ascertain from the story whether he had ever practised medicine anywhere, though the letter seems to imply that the Israelis plucked the scalpel from his hand and dragged him away from sick patients.

Although the missive from planet Chomsky alleges that all this is indicative of "the double standards repeatedly employed by the West", one could just as easily draw the opposite conclusion - namely that we care so little about <u>Hamas</u> attacks on Israel that they fail even to raise an eyebrow in the West, whereas once Israel decides to act, everyone is a critic.

Debate on crisis in the Middle East

What Chomsky seems to be implying is that, put simply, "Israel started it". He cannot say this directly because it is untrue - not to mention childish and irrelevant - so he turns to innuendo and obscure references to the Turkish press, since he knows that his acolytes are too lazy or ignorant to check his footnotes or supply the missing context for themselves. The timeline Chomsky offers also suffers from the flaw that spokespersons for the Popular Resistance Committee boasted after the raid on Israel that they had been planning it for two months.

This letter is just an example of dishonest innuendo wrapped around with a lot of windy rhetoric. We do not need "the world's greatest intellectual" to remind us that war is horrifying: Chomsky's simple demonologies and ludicrous conspiracies are just fantasies that in their own small way are standing in the way of peace. - Yours, etc,

MAURICE FOLEY, Raheny, Dublin 5.

Madam, - I laughed out loud at Tom Carew's attempt (July 19th) to show us by using statistics why it was OK for the Israeli army to kill children. It was a classic. Let's hope we hear from him again. - Yours, etc,

MICHAEL CUDDY, Thor Place, Stoneybatter, Dublin 7.

Madam, - The European Union should send a rapid response group to the Middle East. As Ireland has recently signed up to EU "battlegroups", there is nothing to stop Irish MEPs from initiating such action. Israel has prevented the assets and supports of the European Union - i.e. food and medicines - from reaching hungry, needy and fearful men, <u>women</u>, and children. The battlegroup should be sent to monitor how the assets of the European Union are being treated, and not to engage in military action.

I am sure that the simple arrival of a battlegroup representing 25 nations would send a message to Israel that it cannot bully the European Union as it is bullying the Lebanese and Palestinians. - Yours, etc,

PETER KENNEDY, Sutton Park, Sutton, Dublin 13.

Madam, - Among the numerous bits of military hardware mentioned by observers of the current Israeli attack on Lebanon, two are noticeable by their absence from dispatches. What happened to the (in)famous "smart" missiles of the Gulf wars? And amid the "rain" of Hisbullah missiles falling on northern Israel, where are the Patriot missiles - those paragons of US technology that were to render Israel immune to Arab missile attacks?

The media that so slavishly extolled these technical wonders in recent Middle East conflicts are very quiet. Does their silence indicate a healthier scepticism, or simple embarrassment? - Yours, etc,

PHELIM MURNION, Páirc Thiar, An Spidéal, Gaillimh.

Load-Date: July 26, 2006



Guardian.com February 20, 2006

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theguardian

Length: 2038 words

Highlight: Welcome to the Wrap, Guardian Unlimited's round-up of the best of the day's papers.

Body

Welcome to the Wrap, Guardian Unlimited's round-up of the best of the day's papers.

Also in today's Wrap: Council tax bills to rise again, Brokeback Mountain dominates Baftas, and Andrew Murray hits tennis heights

BRITAIN BRACES ITSELF FOR BIRD FLU

"We're in a flap," the Sun flaps. "Don't panic," says the Mail, reassuringly. Except what's this underneath the Corporal Jones headline? "Bird flu at our door. Hotlines swamped. But minister says: We're prepared (Now isn't that what they said about foot-and-mouth?)".

Ah, so it was a touch of irony from the Mail. As avian flu advances across Europe towards the UK, with a duck in France confirmed as having had the HN51 strain of the virus, the paper reports that worried people "inundated" a government hotline to report dead birds, and helpfully provides the number of the hotline at the end of its report in case readers have any further sightings of dead ducks.

The paper wants ministers - whom it accuses of "breathtaking complacency and incompetence" - to take a more proactive approach to the spread of bird flu and to order all poultry indoors.

France, the Netherlands, Germany, Luxembourg, Norway, Sweden, Greece and Slovenia have already moved flocks inside, but the animal welfare minister, Ben Bradshaw, yesterday said British poultry would only be moved if the disease arrived here. Too late, says the Mail, all the Dad's Army-style pretence of the headline dropped. "This is an emergency - and ministers need to start treating it as such".

The Telegraph also finds Defra's attitude confusing, suggesting that the government department needs to act more quickly, not only to prevent an epidemic but also to emphasise the message that avian flu is not a food-borne virus.

Perhaps, the paper adds helpfully, the government should adopt the slogan "make it chicken tonight". Possibly even a chicken you have slaughtered yourself - it is also exercised by the fact that the outbreak is likely to affect the next shooting season because more than half the pheasants and partridges reared in Britain come from France.

Back to the Sun's flap which, on closer inspection, seems to be based on the fact that, according to its report, "grasping" French farmers have asked for GBP650m in compensation from the EU over their confirmed case of bird flu. The reaction of the "feather-bedded French" is predictable, the red-top scoffs, but then it starts flapping again.

"Before we scoff too much, we had better get ready for our own poultry industry to be heavily damaged by the dreaded flu ... then we won't be feeling so superior as we look across the Channel". No, indeed.

Instead of looking across the Channel, the paper may be better advised to look across the world - to Vietnam. Or so the Independent, which splashes with an unusually positive story headlined: "From the Far East, a lesson in how to beat bird flu", thinks.

According to the paper, Vietnam - the hardest bird flu-hit country with 93 human cases and 42 deaths - has become the first to successfully contain the disease. No new cases of avian flu in humans have been reported there since last November. It has been contained through a combination of vaccination, culling and public communication and, in its leader, the paper says it believes the British government could learn a few lessons about public communication from the Vietnamese.

It says it is inevitable that the virus will reach these shores and is likely to deal our poultry industry a heavy blow. Yet the government has not publicised its timetable for action on British free-range ducks and birds.

"The way to defuse panic would be to help us to adjust to that probability step by step," it says. "And a first step would be to get the birds indoors, however much this upsets the farmers."

- * Tests begin as UK braces for bird flu
- * Telegraph: The danger of Defra
- * Independent: From the Far East, a lesson in how to beat bird flu
- * Independent: Move British poultry inside before the virus arrives

COUNCIL TAX BILLS 'TO RISE 4.3%'

Bird flu aside, it's tax - in one form or another - that's of concern to the broadsheets this morning. The Times and Telegraph both splash on council tax rises and the results of surveys suggesting households will be paying bills above inflation for the tenth year running.

A Times survey says the average bill will rise by 4.3% in April, while the Telegraph - basing its report on a study by the Local Government Association - finds much the same.

Both papers agree the bills will come as a "blow" to people already facing higher energy bills, and older people in particular. And both rail against the tax in their leader columns. The annual rise in the rate is "drearily predictable", sighs the Telegraph (as is the paper's pop at the Guardian in the same column, in which it jabs "an accusing finger at the hundreds of municipal non-jobs advertised in Guardian Society every Wednesday").

But - the Guardian aside - the paper thinks the real cause of the rising rates is an absence of direct accountability and a system that actively penalises thrift. The way to break the cycle, it opines, "is to create a link between taxation, representation and expenditure at a local level". In other words, to replace VAT with a local sales tax.

Meanwhile, the Times thinks there is no "magic formula" to create a level of contentment that the rates, the poll tax and the council tax have failed to achieve. Instead of searching for new ways to fund local government, it says, we should be asking what it is we want local government to do. Until we have consensus on that point, the tax will continue to increase and be "unloved".

The tax is especially likely to be unloved by unsporty Londoners, one assumes, because another report in the paper suggests capital-dwellers face some of the highest rises when they are called upon to pay GBP550m towards the cost of the 2012 Olympics over 10 years, starting this April.

The Guardian is more worried about a draft treaty that could restrict Britain's ability to impose taxes. The paper splashes with a report on the text of the draft "open skies" treaty between the EU and the US, which is designed to liberalise aviation and includes a clause requiring EU states to agree with each other and the US before taking measures to tackle noise or pollution from airlines.

The paper quotes industry sources as saying the clause was included at the insistence of US negotiators - the country vigorously opposes taxes on aviation fuel and emissions trading schemes. The Guardian says the draft treaty will "alarm" environmental activists.

- * Open skies air treaty threat
- * Telegraph: Council tax to rise above inflation for 10th year
- * Times: Council tax rise pushes family bills over GBP2,000
- * Times: Londoners to be hit harder by cost of Olympics

ISRAEL HALTS FUNDING TO PALESTINIANS

The Palestinian Authority, which swore in a new, <u>Hamas</u>-dominated legislature on Saturday, faces an immediate shortfall in its budget following Israel's decision to freeze funds and contacts.

The Israeli cabinet decided to halt the transfer of around \$50m (GBP29m) a month in tax and customs receipts until *Hamas* renounces violence, and has appealed to foreign governments to do the same.

However, the International Herald Tribune says Israel's move puts it at odds in terms of timing with its main ally, the US, as well as the EU, Russia and the UN. The quartet have said funding for the Palestinian Authority will continue until the new government is in place.

The Times, however, believes Israel's move is "temperate". The <u>Hamas</u> leadership is acting on a "curious logic" by which it expects a state it does not recognise to function as its tax collector. It is <u>Hamas</u>'s "addiction to violence" which is causing this impasse, and the paper says this must end if talks are to begin.

- * IHT: Israel freezes funds owed Palestinians
- * Times: Peace on hold

BERLUSCONI ANGER AT JOWELL HUSBAND

"Hideously embarrassing," says David Mills, the husband of the culture secretary, Tessa Jowell, of the alleged hush money scandal in which he and the Italian prime minister, Silvio Berlusconi, risk being tried for corruption.

The Guardian reports today that there is now a rift between the two men, with Mr Berlusconi telling a rally in Verona that "someone has taken advantage of my name".

It says Mr Mills's business interests have been a target for the tabloids because his wife's career has taken her to a high-profile cabinet role and that, although there is no suggestion of a conflict of interests, "the drip drip of headlines will not be helpful in her Olympic role".

And so it is that the Mail's take on the tale features a large picture of Ms Jowell - rather than her husband or Mr Berlusconi - and begins "Tessa Jowell is under financial pressure to reveal her financial links with Italian premier Silvio Berlusconi after fresh details emerged of her husband's involvement in a bribery role".

* Berlusconi hits out at Tessa Jowell's husband

BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN DONIMNATES BAFTAS

On its masthead today, the Telegraph offers readers the chance to "Win a Bafta lifestyle". So that'll be a raindrenched excursion to Leicester Square followed by a damp squib of an evening then, will it?

"We're heart Broke" wails the Sun after Brokeback Mountain led a Hollywood clean sweep of the awards and British effort The Constant Gardener was "almost completely snubbed". The Telegraph manages to put a brave face on it all. "Of course, the Brits did at least win the awards set aside for the British," it says.

And then there were the frocks. Most of the papers dedicate space to the sartorial efforts of the leading ladies. For the Telegraph's Hilary Alexander, the way in which the stars traversed the length of the soggy red carpet was nothing less than an Olympian effort, worthy of a gold medal.

"As the rain poured down and the wind howled," she purrs, "it required a will of iron, the balancing skills of an Olympic gymnast and, preferably, two burly minders with a brolly apiece, to negotiate the waterlogged red carpet and a 30ft cantilevered ramp of slippery pvc squares that were more like climbing a toboggan run uphill."

In the icy, driving rain of the square, the Guardian's Mark Brown took a more paternalistic approach. "For goodness sake wrap up, you wanted to cry, you'll catch your death," he wrote. "It's not Los Angeles."

- * Bafta night for year of gay shepherds
- * Telegraph: Glamour shines through as leading ladies brave the British weather
- * Sun: Bafta Brits heart Broke

'IMPROBABLE' MURRAY HITS HEIGHTS

"Pulsating and slightly improbable," marvels Mark Hodgkinson in the Telegraph. "He is a freak in British terms," agrees the Times's Neil Harman.

The source of their amazement? A decent British tennis player. Specifically, Andy Murray, the world number 60, who yesterday beat Andy Roddick, the world number three, in the semi-finals of the SAP Open in San Jose.

"British 18-year-olds are not expected to defeat the world number three and say 'it was quite a good effort'", comments Harman. As the clock winds down on the careers of Tim Henman and Greg Rusedski, he says, there are a lot of hopes riding on the Scot.

Sports fans are in need of some good news, as it appears the British <u>women</u>'s curling team's hopes of holding onto their gold medal are hanging in the balance after they were hammered 10-5 by Japan. According to the Telegraph, "in football terms it was like Manchester United losing to Macclesfield Town".

- * Telegraph: Weekend of euphoria for Murray
- * Times: 'Murray is giving everyone in tennis cause to take notice'

DI: ANOTHER DAY

In a world of bird flu and British Bafta snubs, it's good to know that the Express is there as an oasis of constancy. For, after a week in which the paper seemed a little peaky and perhaps off its food, tending to rely on the big weather stories for its splashes, it is truly back on form this morning.

Beside a smiling picture of the lady herself, it screeches: "Diana's death: panic as truth is revealed". Phew. There's little to add to the headline except that the truth is not - of course - revealed, and the French are to blame, naturellement.

And this is because, in an unfortunate turn of phrase from a source "close to the investigation", the French are all "running around like headless chickens".

Load-Date: February 20, 2006



Boy George faces jail if he won't rake park; World at a glance

The Evening Standard (London)
June 27, 2006 Tuesday

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Section: LSE; Pg. 8 Length: 373 words

Byline: RACHEL WILLIAMS

Body

BOY GEORGE today criticised his community service punishment of sweeping leaves in a New York park, saying a charity concert would have been more worthwhile.

The former Culture Club frontman, whose real name is George O'Dowd, had wanted to put on a show to raise money for an Aids organisation as part of his sentence for wasting police time. He was charged after falsely reporting a burglary last year.

But a judge at Manhattan Criminal Court ruled earlier this month that he should do the same sort of task as everybody else. And today he warned O'Dowd that if he did not complete his five days' raking duty by the end of August, he would be jailed.

"I'm not going to give you another chance," Judge Anthony Ferrara said.

After the hearing the singer said he was relieved and untroubled by the menial nature of his punishment, but still believed it was not the best choice. "It would have been more useful to make 30 grand with a concert, rather than be prancing around in a park," he said.

"I could have raised some money, could have done something that would have helped." He said of the leaf raking, which he will do at an unspecified park in the city: "I don't care about doing cleaning up.

My mum was a cleaner. I've always been a scrubber."

He vowed to dress up for duty in "something loud" after being told an orange boiler suit wasn't required.

Picture of the day

. BLACK smoke is released from a watch tower on the Great Wall of China to mark International Anti-Drug Day yesterday

Boy George faces jail if he won't rake park World at a glance

Israel threaten 'severe response' over soldier's kidnap

ISRAEL has threatened a punishing offensive in the Gaza Strip over the abduction of an Israeli soldier.

It rejected militant demands for the release of imprisoned Palestinian <u>women</u> and youths in return for information on Corporal Gilad Shalit, kidnapped by gunmen on Sunday.

With tensions rising on the Israel-Gaza border, militants fired rockets into southern Israel late yesterday.

In northern Gaza, Israeli forces massed at the border.

Israeli premier Ehud Olmert warned: "The question of releasing prisoners is not on the agenda of the Israeli government at all.

"The time is approaching for a comprehensive, sharp and severe Israeli operation. We will not become a target of *Hamas*-terrorist blackmail."

Load-Date: June 27, 2006



SEVEN DAYS

Financial Times (London, England)

July 1, 2006 Saturday

London Edition 1

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Section: BACK PAGE - FIRST SECTION; Pg. 18

Length: 1003 words

Byline: By KWAN YUK PAN and EMMELINE RAVILIOUS

Body

BUSINESS

*BP faces US price probe

BP was facing allegations of price manipulation in North America after the US energy regulator slapped the UK-based group with a lawsuit alleging it cornered a significant portion of the US propane market.

*News Corp eyes PCCW assets

News Corporation is in talks with Macquarie Group to join its Dollars 7.3bn (Pounds 3.9bn) bid for PCCW's telecoms and media assets, in a deal that could again put Rupert Murdoch and Richard Li, PCCW chairman, on opposite sides of the negotiating table.

*Arcelor and Mittal agree

Lakshmi Mittal, the Indian steel billionaire, emerged as head of the world's biggest steel company after an audacious five-month takeover struggle.

*Forgeard defiant

Noel Forgeard insisted it was "out of the question" that he would resign as co-chief executive of EADS, amid signs of rising tensions between the aerospace group's French and German shareholders.

*Rosneft warns of 'risk'

Rosneft, the Russian oil group that is planning one of the world's biggest and most controversial initial public offerings, said potential investors faced numerous risks.

*Google to rival Ebay's PayPal

Google will take a major step beyond search, launching an online payment service that will undercut the charges of providers such as Ebay's PayPal.

*EMI snubs Warner counterbid

SEVEN DAYS

EMI, which has been trying to acquire Warner Music for years, rejected an unexpected Pounds 2.5bn counterbid from the US company, setting the stage for a protracted battle between the two groups.

*Siemens in Bayer testing deal

Siemens, the German engineering group, made the biggest acquisition under chief executive Klaus Kleinfeld as it agreed to pay Euros 4.2bn (Pounds 2.9bn) for Bayer's diagnostics business.

*Consortium buys Univision

A consortium of private equity groups agreed to buy Univision Communications, the US Spanish-language broadcasting company, for Dollars 12.3bn (Pounds 6.6bn) in cash.

*Dell in Americas revamp

Dell Computer, the world's largest PC maker, has reorganised its struggling Americas division in a bid to inject fresh momentum into sales and customer service.

*Microsoft to face EU action

The European Union's top antitrust regulator is set to issue a formal ruling that finds Microsoft guilty of breaking EU competitionrules. The ruling is likely to be followed by fines for the US software group of up to Euros 2m (Pounds 1.1m) a day.

*Ghosn warns on Nissan sales

Carlos Ghosn, chief executive of Nissan Motor, warned that sales in Japan were likely to fall short of targets this year, underscoring the carmaker's troubles in its fiercely competitive home market.

*Volatility hits hedge fund gains

The recent market turmoil has wrong-footed a wide swathe of hedge funds, many of which have seen their gains this year wiped out in the past few weeks, according to figures obtained by the Financial Times.

WORLD

*Nabucco gas pipe go-ahead

Plans for a 3,300-km pipeline to transport gas from the Caspian region to Europe secured backing from the European Commission in a move that could bring the Dollars 5.8bn (Pounds 3.1bn) project closer to fruition. The decision comes as the EU is looking to lessen its dependence on Russia for gas.

*Sri Lanka violence flares

A Tamil Tiger suicide attack killed top Sri Lankan military official Major General Parami Kulatunga and three others near the army central command in Colombo. Further violence followed, with five sailors dying in another Tamil Tiger attack.

*Central Bankers under fire

Central bankers came under fire for their failure to tackle inflation, in a report from the Bank of International Settlements, the central bankers' banker. The BIS said that the main risks to the global economy stemmed from globalisation and that inflationary pressures were now becoming more apparent.

*Hurricane warning

Oil and gas companies said the sector was still struggling to repair billions of dollars worth of hurricane damage caused last year to Gulf of Mexico infrastructure. The warning came as this year's season began.

SEVEN DAYS

*G8 sets deadline for Iran

The Group of Eight industrialised nations gave Iran a deadline of next week to give a clear answer to an international offer to resolve tensions over its nuclear programme.

*Italian football clubs on trial

The trial of four leading Italian football clubs - Juventus, AC Milan, Fiorentina and Lazio - on match-fixing charges was opened and adjourned until next week. Meanwhile Italy was shocked by the apparent attempted suicide of senior Juventus official Gianluca Pessotto.

*Paulson sets out his stall

Hank Paulson defended President George W. Bush's tax cuts at the Senate committee which approved his nomination as US Treasury secretary. Mr Paulson, yet to be confirmed by the full Senate, also said reform was needed in China.

*Turkey acts to stop lira slide

The Turkish central bank again raised rates in a move designed to curb a steep slide in the lira. The bank increased rates by 200 basis points to 22.25 per cent having already raised rates by 400 basis points this month. The lira has been hit hard by the turbulence in the global markets.

*Kidnapping sparks Gaza crisis

Israel launched a series of missile attacks on the Gaza Strip, arrested dozens of <u>Hamas</u> MPs and massed forces at the border after an Israeli soldier was kidnapped by <u>Hamas</u> militants. The group said it would hold the corporal until Palestinian **women** and children were released from Israeli jails.

*Guantanamo blow to Bush

The US Supreme Court ruled that President George W. Bush's administration did not have the authority to try terror suspects by military tribunal. The justices upheld a challenge by Salim Ahmed Hamdan, Osama Bin Laden's exdriver.

*Japan jobless falls

Japan's jobless rate dropped to an eight-year low, while consumer prices continued to rise, fuelling expectations that the Bank of Japan might raise interest rates. The news came just ahead of a decision by the US Federal Reserve to raise rates and amid reports that the eurozone was seeing an upswing in private sector borrowing.

Compiled by Emmeline Ravilious and Pan Yuk

Load-Date: June 30, 2006



Young defector who fitted mold of martyr - Abraham Rabinovich - Jerusalem

The Australian

April 19, 2006 Wednesday

All-round Country Edition

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 7

Length: 381 words

Body

MATP

BEFORE setting out to blow himself up in Tel Aviv, Sami Salim Hamad stood in front of a video camera with a Koran in his hand and a banner of Islamic Jihad behind him to announce his readiness to become a shahid, or martyr.

His allegiance was new but his readiness to die was not. He had reportedly been a member of <u>Hamas</u> until a few weeks ago but left when that organisation, honouring its commitment to a ceasefire with Israel, refused to dispatch him on a mission.

Hamad has been called a 16-year-old, which would have made him the youngest ever suicide bomber, but his family, poor and from the village of al-Araga near the West Bank city of Jenin, said he was 21.

After completing high school, he began a correspondence course in social work at the al-Quds Open University but stopped, reportedly for economic reasons, and began working in restaurants in the Jenin area. He left home last Tuesday.

In his video testimony, Hamad said he was dedicating his sacrifice to the Palestinian prisoners in Israeli prisons.

He fits the mold of Palestinian suicide bombers by being a young, single, Muslim male. More than 80 per cent of Palestinian suicide bombers are single, most are aged between 18 and 23 and the ranks do not not include Christian Arabs. *Women* suicide bombers remain the exception.

The Israeli occupation and the broad support suicide bombers have enjoyed among the Palestinian population as a way of striking back are primary motivations for those setting out on suicide missions.

In a study of would-be Palestinian suicide bombers, Pakistani journalist Nasra Hassan found that none of those she interviewed conformed to the typical profile of the suicidal personality. "None was uneducated, desperately poor, simple-minded or depressed," she wrote.

An instructor whose task was to prepare suicide bombers told Hassan: "We focus his attention on paradise, on being in the presence of Allah, on meeting the prophet Mohammed, on interceding for his loved ones so that they, too, can be saved from the agonies of hell."

Young defector who fitted mold of martyr - Abraham Rabinovich - Jerusalem

A would-be bomber who changed his mind at the last minute told Hassan of feeling the closeness of paradise as he prepared to self-detonate: "It is very, very near -- right in front of your eyes. It lies beneath the thumb, on the other side of the detonator."

Load-Date: April 18, 2006



Syria's secular regime attempts to ride a religious revival MIDDLE EAST: Bashar al-Assad is making unfamiliar displays of piety to defuse Islamist discontent with his rule

Financial Times (London, England)

May 11, 2006 Thursday

London Edition 1

Copyright 2006 The Financial Times Limited

Section: COMMENT AND ANALYSIS; Pg. 15

Length: 996 words

Byline: By ROULA KHALAF

Body

"They're like someone who has had a big surgical operation, which might have been fatal, but he didn't die." Yassin Haj Saleh, a Syrian writer and dissident, is describing his country's Ba'athist government. "But now he has to be extremely cautious about his health and he's holding on to life very tightly."

Tellingly, the patient has also turned to religion.

A new Islamic fervour is abroad in Syria as the regime headed for six years by President Bashar al-Assad, and for 30 years by his father, Hafez, before him, abandons what was a fiercely secular identity. Mr Assad prays more visibly and made a special appearance at a commemoration in Damascus last month of the Prophet Mohammed's birthday, an event that had rarely roused much interest in Syria. This year was different. Banners were hung on lamp posts and festivals organised in every town.

That followed a fraught time for the regime, which faces a United Nations investigation into the alleged involvement of top Syrian officials in the killing last year of Rafiq Hariri, the former Lebanese prime minister (a charge Damascus denies). Washington, leading efforts to isolate Syria, had been hoping an internal coup would sweep the regime aside.

But in recent months the strains have eased as the US and Europe have turned to more pressing crises - Iran's nuclear dispute and the election of the radical <u>Hamas</u> group in the Palestinian territories. With Iraq sliding into sectarian conflict, Arab states also have softened their attitude towards Damascus, fearing that a collapse of the regime would bring similar chaos.

Still, a progress report on the UN inquiry is due to be delivered to Kofi Annan, secretary-general, next month and an internationally supported tribunal is being set up to try those who will be directly accused of responsibility.

With the prospect of more turbulence ahead, Mr Assad's priority has thus been to consolidate his rule and prevent any domestic challenge from taking advantage of outside pressures. So the government has been using religion to rally people around the flag while at the same time moving more forcefully against dissidents.

Syria 's secular regime attempts to ride a religious revival MIDDLE EAST: Bashar al-Assad is making unfamiliar displays of piety to defuse Islamist discontent w....

"Every time they (the regime) feel squeezed they try to flirt with Islamic symbols," says Mr Haj Saleh. "They attempt to give an Islamic legitimacy to the regime."

The Assad regime sees Islamists as the main threat in a country where the Sunni Muslim majority is ruled by a tiny minority that belongs to the Alawite sect, an offshoot of Shia Islam. The regime went into a frenzy when Abdelhalim Khaddam, former vice-president, defected at the end of last year and in February formed an opposition front with exiled leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood, a banned party that Mr Assad's late father brutally crushed in the 1980s.

According to Michel Kilo, an author and opposition figure, security services called in dissidents after the February announcement of the opposition front. "The message was that the front was a red line that could not be approached," says Mr Kilo.

Arrests of political activists intensified. Most were detained only briefly but opposition figures say Ali al-Abdullah, a writer, and his two sons were arrested in March and have not been heard of since.

Meanwhile, in a sign of playing to Islamist sentiment, Mr Assad recently appointed as vice-president Najah al-Attar, the former culture minister: her brother was a Muslim Brotherhood leader in exile. The regime has also allowed demonstrations in defence of the prophet to get out of hand - mobs torched the Norwegian and Danish embassies in Damascus in February during the uproar across the Muslim world over cartoon depictions.

More recently, the government has given a green light to a long-established movement led by a <u>female</u> preacher, Munira al-Qubaisi, to teach religion in mosques. The students of the elderly Ms al-Qubaisi have been organising religious lessons in homes for many years and have been instrumental in spreading religious sentiment among young <u>women</u>.

The religious revival in Syria is visible in the rising number of girls who wear the headscarf and the growing number of men who attend prayers at mosques.

"The government is trying to gain strength from a current that is on the scene and they're saying: 'I'm with you so support me against the outside world,'" says Haitham Maleh, a human rights lawyer.

"They also want to take the card from the hand of the Muslim Brotherhood - what can the Brotherhood say? The regime supports (regional Islamist groups such as) <u>Hamas</u>, Hizbollah, the resistance in Iraq, they build mosques, they had, for the first time ever, big celebrations for the birthday of the prophet," adds Ayman Abdel-Nour, a Ba'athist who has been calling for a modernisation of the party.

Some Ba'athists say the government is deliberately promoting conservative voices to keep people away from the more independent and radical groups, especially the Brotherhood.

One of the most prominent Islamic figures these days is Mohammad al-Habash, a member of parliament and head of the Islamic Studies Centre in Damascus.

A soft-spoken cleric, Mr Habash says that after the 1980s clash with the Brotherhood, there were official attempts to reduce the influence of religion - praying in the army, for example, was banned. More recently, however, "the government realised their attitude towards religion is a mistake. Now we find a relationship between the Islamic current and the government is getting closer day by day."

Some analysts in Damascus warn that playing the religious card could also backfire on the regime, making the ground more fertile for Islamist parties and perhaps for more radical groups than the Brotherhood, which rejects violence.

For now, Syrian intelligence services are watching mosques and scrutinising sermons and everyone is warned against political activity. "You have to be watching all the time and you have to manage the situation at every turn," says Ahmad al-Haj Ali, a former adviser to the information ministry.

Syria 's secular regime attempts to ride a religious revival MIDDLE EAST: Bashar al-Assad is making unfamiliar displays of piety to defuse Islamist discontent w....

Roula Khalaf

Load-Date: May 10, 2006



The New York Times

June 12, 2006 Monday

Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2006 The New York Times Company

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

Length: 1058 words

Body

INTERNATIONAL A3-11

Talks With Russians On Investment Freedom

Russian, American, European and Japanese officials are negotiating over whether Russia should be allowed greater latitude to invest in utilities, pipelines, natural gas facilities and other infrastructure in the United States and Europe. A1

U.S. Rejects Witness Account

The top American commander in Iraq rejected as "baloney" an account by an Iraqi eyewitness who said a dying man resembling Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the terrorist leader, had been beaten by American troops after warplanes demolished Mr. Zarqawi's safe house with two bombs. A10

Iran Refuses Preconditions

Iran has begun a public campaign apparently aimed at nudging the six nations that have offered a package of incentives into negotiations over its nuclear program without first freezing its efforts to make nuclear fuel. Ali Larijani, Iran's chief negotiator, told reporters that Iran would support negotiations but without prior conditions. A11

China Fires Olympics Official

A senior Beijing official responsible for overseeing the huge construction projects planned for the 2008 Olympics was dismissed from his post for corruption, the state news media reported. A11

Shift in Mexico's Election Law

Courts in Mexico recently interpreted electoral law to give the Federal Election Institute, created by congress to eliminate campaign fraud, broad authority to ban any speech that besmirches a candidate's reputation or is false. The agency's rulings in this year's campaign have raised free-speech issues. A3

Hamas to Fight Referendum

The militant faction <u>Hamas</u> announced its intent to block a July 26 referendum called for by Mahmoud Abbas, the Palestinian leader, after failing to reach an agreement in talks with him. A8

NATIONAL A12-15

Prisoners' Ruse Is a Focus Of Guantanamo Inquiry

Three detainees at the United States military prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, tried to conceal themselves in their cells to prevent guards from seeing them commit suicide, a senior military official said. Military officials said one focus of an investigation into the suicides would be the need for procedural changes. A1

Auto Union Expects Hard Times

The president of the United Automobile Workers union, Ron Gettelfinger, left, told his members in a strikingly blunt report that they cannot ride out the automobile industry crisis and should be prepared to make tradition-breaking decisions to help rescue the industry. A1

Elderly **Women** Held in Fraud

Two <u>women</u> in their 70's, posing as aunts, fiancees or cousins, took out numerous life insurance policies on two homeless men, prosecutors say, collecting over \$2.2 million after the men died in hit-and-run traffic cases. The <u>women</u> pleaded not guilty to federal charges of mail fraud and submitting false insurance applications. A12

Questions on Duke Rape Case

The case against the three Duke lacrosse players accused of rape appears to some to be falling apart. Three players have been indicted, but evidence that has surfaced has thrown the accusuer's account into doubt. The prosecutor has refused to speak publicly about the case since the beginning of April. A13

Study of Arab-Americans

In a study financed by the Justice Department, Arab-Americans reported suspicion of government and law enforcement, and concerns about their civil liberties. The study also concluded that local police officers and federal agents were straining under the pressure to fight terrorism and that new federal policies in this effort were poorly defined and inconsistently applied. A15

NEW YORK/REGION B1-6

Black and Hispanic Leaders Meet to Block Candidate

A group of black and Hispanic elected officials from Brooklyn plan to devise strategies to keep a white city councilman from winning the Congressional seat held for the last two decades by Major R. Owens, who is black. B1

Ring Tone Only for Young

High school students in the New York area have begun using a high-pitched cell phone ring tone, inaudible to older people, to surreptitiously communicate in classrooms and places where phone use is prohibited. A1

Mentally III With Diabetes

Roughly one in five mentally ill people develop diabetes, and as more of the mentally ill population die from the disease and related complications than from suicide, mental health professionals have begun to debate the customary limits of psychiatric practice. A1

ARTS E1-10

Tonys Are Awarded

"Jersey Boys," the surprise hit about the Four Seasons as told through their songs, won the big prize -- best musical -- at the Tony Awards, as well as three more, including best actor for John Lloyd Young The show's main competitor, "The Drowsy Chaperone," picked up five awards, including best book, best score and best featured actress. E1

Ensler Organizes Arts Festival

Eve Ensler, the author of the "Vagina Monologues," has organized an arts festival in New York focused on violence against <u>women</u>. The festival, set to begin today, expands the V-Day franchise, the global movement that Ms. Ensler ignited in 1998 with benefit performances of her play. E1

OBITUARIES B7

Flora Gill Jacobs

An internationally recognized authority on dollhouses, she was 87. B7

BUSINESS DAY C1-12

Investors Reducing Risk

As stock markets from India to Brazil to the United States skidded last week, there was little doubt that investors were dumping risk from their portfolios. The question for the coming week is whether investors feel comfortable with the risk they have left. C1

Product Placement in Books

Procter & Gamble has signed an unusual marketing partnership to showcase its Cover Girl makeup products in a novel for young adults. C1

Credit Suisse May Sell Unit

AXA, the French insurance company, is in exclusive talks with Credit Suisse to buy its Winterthur insurance division in a deal worth more than \$8 billion, according to a person with direct knowledge of the transaction. C2

Leaking Exclusive Pictures

The first pictures of Shiloh Nouvel Jolie-Pitt were leaked to several gossip blogs before they appeared in People Magazine, which paid millions for the exclusive right to publish them. C1

Business Digest C2

EDITORIAL A16-17

Editorials: The deaths at Gitmo; missing the Medicaid fraud; in foreign territory; hard to say goodbye.

Columns: Bob Herbert, Paul Krugman.

Bridge E8 Crossword E2 Metro Diary B2 TV Listings E9 Weather D10

http://www.nytimes.com

Graphic

Photo

Load-Date: June 12, 2006



Saturday Comment: News Matrix: 18.02.06 - 24.02.06

The Guardian - Final Edition February 25, 2006 Saturday

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Section: GUARDIAN SATURDAY COMMENT PAGES; Pg. 26

Length: 381 words

Body

In San Jose, 18-year-old Andy Murray wins his first ATP tournament, and celebrates with a decidedly teenage kiss for his girlfriend

Sporting nothing but socks and boots, Stephen Gough and Melanie Roberts complete their nine-month, 874-mile trek from Land's End to John O'Groats

Days after British cinema is swamped by US movies at the Baftas, the BBC announces it will spend at least £250m on domestic film-making in the next 10 years

Rumours circulate that the fugitive war leader General Ratko Mladic has been captured, as the EU warns Serbia that EU entry negotiations will be halted unless he is delivered

Three French photographers who tailed Princess Diana on the night she died are fined euros 1 each for invasion of privacy by a Paris appeals court

Prince Charles's action against the Mail on Sunday is bedevilled by a damning statement from Mark Bolland and the release of more of the heir to the throne's journals

The proportion of children born outside wedlock in the UK increased almost four-fold between 1980 (12%) and 2004 (42%), reported the Office for National Statistics

The WHO says Vietnam, the country worst affected by bird flu , has found no new cases in humans or birds since last December

The FA announces, to no one's surprise, that the FA Cup final will be played in Cardiff because Wembley might not be ready in time

Mayor of London Ken Livingstone is suspended for four weeks after being found to have brought his office into disrepute for comparing a journalist to a concentration camp guard

David Irving is sentenced to three years in prison by an Austrian court for denying the Holocaust in speeches made in 1989

An armed gang escapes with up to £50m, the largest haul in British criminal history, after a raid on a security depot in Tonbridge, Kent

Saturday Comment: News Matrix: 18.02.06 - 24.02.06

There is an annual 'baby gap' of 90,000 - the difference between the number of children <u>women</u> say they want and the number they have - says an Institute of Public Policy Research study

Bird flu looms on the horizon, with France confirming the dreaded H5N1 has been found in ducks

The Israeli cabinet freezes payments to the Palestinians following the transfer of power to *Hamas*

Iraq teeters on the brink of civil war after the destruction of the golden mosque, one of Shia Islam's holiest sites, sparks widespread violence

Load-Date: February 25, 2006



The New York Times

March 20, 2006 Monday

Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2006 The New York Times Company

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

Length: 985 words

Body

INTERNATIONAL A3-13

Iraq Strategy Defended On War Anniversary

On the third anniversary of a war that they once expected to be over by now, President Bush and senior officials argued that their strategy was working despite escalating violence in Iraq, even as a former Iraqi prime minister once favored by the White House declared a civil war had already started. A1

Iraqi officials announced that they had agreed to form a council to make policy on security and economic issues in the new government, in an attempt to include all the country's major factions in the decision-making process at a time of rising sectarian tensions.

A10

Polio as an Unending Challenge

The drive against polio threatens to become a costly display of all that can conspire against even the most ambitious efforts to eliminate a disease: cultural suspicions, logistical nightmares, competition for resources from many other afflictions, and simple exhaustion. A1

French Unions Set Deadline

Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin of France faced an ultimatum from union leaders to withdraw the employment law that set off huge nationwide demonstrations and sporadic violence, or face a general strike. A11

Protests Against Belarus Vote

An expected landslide for President Aleksandr G. Lukashenko drew several thousand Belarussians into the streets, as protesters ignored swirling snow and official threats of arrest to denounce the election as a sham. A11

Hamas Submits Cabinet List

<u>Hamas</u> delivered its proposed cabinet list to the Palestinian Authority president, Mahmoud Abbas, and is expected to control the most important government ministries after weeks of negotiations failed to persuade other Palestinian parties to join its government. A8

NATIONAL A14-19

Problems for Black Men More Dire, Studies Warn

The plight of black men in the United States is far more dire than is portrayed by common employment and education statistics, a flurry of new scholarly studies warn. And it has worsened in recent years even as an economic boom and welfare reforms have brought gains to black <u>women</u> and many other groups. A1

Louisiana Aid Reconsidered

The Bush administration originally rejected Louisiana's housing recovery plan. Soon after, Donald E. Powell, President Bush's Gulf Coast rebuilding coordinator, whose own idea of aid had excluded thousands of homeowners, many of them poor, announced that the president would seek \$4.2 billion more for Louisiana to compensate homeowners. A1

Oil Spill Raises New Concerns

An oil spill this month in Alaska, the largest ever on the North Slope, has raised new concerns among state and federal regulators about whether BP, the subsidiary of the oil company that operates the corroded transmission pipeline from which more than 200,000 gallons of crude oil leaked, has been properly maintaining its aging network of wells, pumps and pipelines. A14

Protest Costs City \$2 Million

A clash between the police and antiwar protesters in Oakland, Calif., nearly three years ago will cost the city more than \$2 million, including dozens of payouts to people who were injured when officers fired wooden dowels, bean bags and rubber pellets. A14

Utilities Offer Site for Waste

A group of nuclear utilities planning to build a private nuclear waste dump on an Indian reservation in Utah has offered to sell space there to the federal government. The move could help the government avoid billions of dollars in potential legal damages over its failure to build its own repository. A14

NEW YORK/REGION B1-7

New Building Eats Up Envied Manhattan Views

Writers and editors at Conde Nast magazines and top lawyers at Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom are dealing with a reality many Manhattan workers face: coming to terms with the construction of a new building, and the loss of their view. B1

Transit Chief Demands Vote

Roger Toussaint, the president of the transit workers' union, demanded that the Metropolitan Transportation Authority agree to a second vote on the proposed contract that his divided membership previously rejected by only seven votes. B5

Arrests at Antiwar Protests

The police arrested 17 demonstrators in Times Square on charges of disorderly conduct during a small antiwar protest that wound its way through Midtown. B7

SPORTSMONDAY D1-11

Upsets at N.C.A.A. Tourney

When George Mason defeated the defending national champion North Carolina Tar Heels, the upset capped four of the most harried days in the history of the N.C.A.A. men's basketball tournament. Ten teams knocked off competitors seeded at least five spots higher, tying a record set in 1986 and matched in 1990 and 2002. A1

ARTS E1-8

OBITUARIES A20-21

Bill Beutel

The journalist who helped bring about change in the nature of local television news as the dapper and unruffled anchor of "Eyewitness News" at WABC-TV in New York for more than 30 years, he was 75. A21

BUSINESS DAY C1-12

Major Enron Witness

The government will head into the stretch run of its case against two former Enron chief executives. Prosecutors will be looking to end on a flourish with the testimony of Ben F. Glisan Jr., the only former top executive who has already been sentenced in the Enron debacle. C1

Arguments on Patent Case

For the first time in a quarter-century, the Supreme Court will hear a case involving the basic question of what type of discoveries and inventions can be patented. Both sides say the case could have a wide-ranging impact on the development of diagnostics. C1

A Craigslist Challenger

Microsoft has introduced Windows Live Expo, another node in its growing network of Internet services, and a challenger to the heart of Craigslist: free, local classified ads. C4

Business Digest C2

EDITORIAL A22-23

Editorials: The president and the courts; spreading genocide to Chad; the road to nowhere.

Columns: Bob Herbert and Paul Krugman.

Autos D12

Bridge E6

Crossword E2

Metro Diary B2

TV Listings E8

Weather B8

http://www.nytimes.com

Load-Date: March 20, 2006



International Briefs

Telegraph Herald (Dubuque, IA)

January 2, 2006 Monday

Copyright 2006 Woodward Communications, Inc.

Section: National/World; Pg. a7

Length: 420 words

Byline: ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dateline: TEHRAN, Iran

Body

Iran's president rips European countries

Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, Iran's hard-line president who has said the Holocaust was a myth, now has charged that European countries sought to complete the genocide by establishing a Jewish state in the midst of Muslim countries.

"Don't you think that continuation of genocide by expelling Jews from Europe was one of their aims in creating a regime of occupiers of Al-Quds (Jerusalem)?" the official Islamic Republic News agency quoted Ahmadinejad as saying Sunday. "Isn't that an important question?"

Russia halts natural gas sales to Ukraine

MOSCOW - Russia's natural gas monopoly halted sales to Ukraine in a price dispute Sunday and began reducing pressure in transmission lines that also carry substantial supplies to western Europe.

Ukraine's natural gas company Naftogaz acknowledged the reduction by Russia's Gazprom.

Gazprom had given Ukraine a deadline of midnight Saturday to agree to pay quadruple the amount it previously paid for Russian gas, which accounts for about a third of the consumption in the country of 48 million people.

Wildfires break out north of Sydney

SYDNEY, Australia - Walls of flames 100 feet high swept through parched eucalyptus forests Sunday as several fires raged out of control in southeastern Australia, injuring one man and destroying several homes and seven fire vehicles.

Dozens of people fled their homes north of Sydney - some using boats - as hundreds of firefighters battled flames lapping the edges of the city. One ambulance volunteer died of a heart attack Sunday night while helping evacuees in the town of Woy Woy.

Palestinian officers free Italian hostage

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip - Palestinian security officers stormed a building where an Italian hostage was being held Sunday, freeing the man in a shootout with his kidnappers.

International Briefs

It was a rare show of force in a wave of kidnappings, shootouts and other mayhem in the Gaza Strip that has embarrassed Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas, threatening to undermine his Fatah Party in Jan. 25 legislative elections and boost the Islamic militant group *Hamas*.

Tribesmen release 3

SAN'A, Yemen - Tribesmen seized five Italian tourists Sunday, but released three <u>female</u> hostages after a government negotiator convinced the kidnappers that abducting <u>women</u> violated tribal values, Yemeni officials said.

Sheik Darham al-Damaa, secretary-general of a government council in Marib Province, said negotiations were continuing for the release of the two Italian men, according to the Web site of Yemen's ruling party.

Load-Date: January 2, 2006



Politicians Court a Not-So-Silent Minority: Israeli Arabs

The New York Times

March 21, 2006 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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

Length: 934 words

Byline: By DINA KRAFT

Dateline: BAQA AL-GHARBIYEH, Israel

Body

Dr. Ahmed Tibi waved to supporters as his car moved slowly down the main road of this Arab town, past carpet shops, vegetable stands and billboards that call him "a son of the village," unmistakable code for Arabs who are citizens but resist identification with Israel or Zionism.

"Look in the mirror and see whom you're voting for," Dr. Tibi told a gathering of potential voters here, a town bordering the West Bank. His eyes fixed on theirs, he said, "Zionist parties are the problem, not the solution."

As Israel's election approaches on March 28, Arab and mainstream Israeli parties, the ones that Dr. Tibi meant by "Zionist parties," are competing for the votes of an alienated minority: Israeli Arabs.

A recent survey of 500 Arab voters found that only about 16 percent planned to vote for mainstream Israeli parties. In the last election roughly 30 percent of Israeli Arabs voted for these parties.

Almost 20 percent of Israel's 6.8 million citizens are Arabs (a group distinct from the Palestinians in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza Strip), and a significant voting bloc that has made a difference in past races.

Israeli Arabs speak of frustration with everyone who is trying to represent them. Many criticize both the Arab parties, for focusing more on Palestinian issues than on their own needs, and the mainstream ones, for decades of unfulfilled promises.

The <u>Hamas</u> victory in the Palestinian elections adds another element to the already complex political relationship between Israel's Jews and Arabs. But the Arabs say what would matter to them is if that victory produced further violence between Palestinians and Israelis.

"There is a fear that Israel will impose solutions and not negotiate, as in Gaza, and that will lead to clashes that will have some bearing on Arabs in Israel," said Muhammad Amara, an Israeli Arab who teaches political science at Bar-Ilan University, outside Tel Aviv.

Some Jewish Israelis are worried about a growing Islamist movement that appears emboldened by the <u>Hamas</u> victory. Leaders of the pragmatic Islamist wing in Israel that does participate in politics -- unlike its more militant branch, which refuses to -- stress that they are the face of moderate Islam. "We are against all extremists, whether they are Arab or Jewish," said Sheikh Abas Zakoor, a candidate of the Islamic Movement.

Dr. Tibi, a gynecologist who has been a member of Parliament since 1999, has joined in a coalition with the more pragmatic wing, which currently has two seats.

The heated nationalism practiced by Dr. Tibi and the Arab parties is an effort to tap into the mood of a fed-up minority.

"People live under continued and planned discrimination when it comes to the economy, education and jobs, and we do not see Israeli governments changing the situation," said Ali Haider, co-executive director of the Association for the Advancement of Civic Equality, a group advocating equal status for Arabs and Jews.

Candidates from the mainstream parties are busy courting the Arab vote, too, touting their political muscle and promising to improve towns and villages, and schools and job prospects.

Fighting political discontent with economic solutions is part of Nadia Hilo's strategy to sway Arab voters. An Arab with a high spot on the Labor Party list, she criticizes the Arab parties for claiming to be their people's only legitimate representatives. She says she believes Labor will be part of the governing coalition with the power to force through an agenda focused on narrowing the economic gap between rich and poor.

"This will give a chance to the Arab sector to be more influential and improve their daily lives," she said.

The apathy of a community grown increasingly cynical about the power of government to change its status makes turnout uncertain. This could hurt the Arab parties, which dropped in 2003 to 8 seats, from 10, in the 120-seat Parliament. Only 62 percent of Israeli Arabs voted in 2003, a significant drop from previous years. Pollsters predict a similar figure this year, and expect the parties to win eight seats.

This year, the threshold for a party to win a seat was raised, so some of the smaller parties have banded together in new coalitions.

Mustafa Abu Mokh, 46, a member of Baqa's municipal council, said he doubted he would vote for any party. "What will convince me," he said, "is a party that will answer our day-to-day problems."

Arabs in Israel have higher levels of education, medical care and standards of living than their counterparts elsewhere in the Middle East. But they compare their lives with those of Israeli Jews, who are generally better off.

"Our life in this country is a kind of ambivalence," said Professor Amara. "On the one hand you are a citizen, but what kind of citizen can you be as an Arab citizen in a Jewish state?"

A 32-year-old resident of Baqa who would identify himself only as Hassan said the mainstream parties held no sway with him. His vote will be going to the Arab Balad Party. "We tried Labor; we tried Likud," he said. "They've done nothing."

Azmi Bishara, an Arab member of Parliament who heads Balad, said that compounding the community's sense of isolation was that Jewish Israelis viewed Arabs with suspicion. "The best-case scenario is that they are a demographic burden or tolerated guests, and at worst a fifth column," he said.

Weary of politics and promises, Hanan Ihsaniya, a 23-year-old college student, is among those tuning out the elections all together. "We always vote," she said, "but we don't see results."

http://www.nytimes.com

Graphic

Photo: At campaign headquarters for the Arab Movement for Change, Israeli Arab <u>women</u> are asked for their votes. (Photo by Rina Castelnuovo for The New York Times)Map of Israel highlighting Baqa al-Gharbiyeh: A politician in Baqa al-Gharbiyeh is critical of "Zionist parties."

Load-Date: March 21, 2006



The New York Times

January 18, 2006 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2006 The New York Times Company

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

Length: 1025 words

Body

INTERNATIONAL A3-8

Hamas Using TV Station To Broaden Strategic Role

The Gaza Strip's newest television station and its popular children's program are part of the strategy of the militant Palestinian group *Hamas* to broaden its role in Palestinian politics and society. A1

Egypt Won't Deport Migrants

Egyptian officials said they would not deport any of 462 Sudanese being held in jails and prison camps since they were detained nearly three weeks ago after a deadly raid on a squatter camp the migrants had set up as a protest. A3

The Bush administration has halted negotiations with Egypt over a free-trade agreement to protest the Egyptian government's harsh imprisonment of a political dissident. A6

Israel's Leader Open to Talks

The acting Israeli prime minister said he would be willing to restart peace talks with the Palestinians if they met the longstanding Israeli demand to break up armed factions. A4

Details on Oil-for-Food Suspect

Details emerged in court about where a South Korean lobbyist who is facing charges in the United Nations' oil-for-food program scandal spent the last year after fleeing when prosecutors let him leave the United States. A5

Iran Offer for Talks Rebuffed

Iran proposed a resumption of nuclear talks with the Europeans, a move that was immediately rejected by Britain as "vacuous." A6

Iraqi Kidnappers Set Demands

A kidnapped American freelance reporter appeared in a silent videotape broadcast by Al Jazeera television, which said her captors had threatened to kill her if the United States does not release all <u>female</u> prisoners in Iraq within 72 hours. A8

Niger Uranium Sale Unlikely

A high-level intelligence assessment by the Bush administration concluded in early 2002 that the sale of uranium from Niger to Iraq was "unlikely" because of a host of obstacles. A8

NATIONAL A10-17

Supreme Court Upholds Assisted Suicide in Oregon

The Supreme Court removed an obstacle to state efforts to authorize physician-assisted suicide, ruling 6 to 3 that John Ashcroft, the former attorney general, acted without legal authority when he threw the federal government's weight against Oregon's Death With Dignity Act. A1

House Begins Lobbying Reform

House Republican leaders laid out a proposal to rewrite House lobbying rules as they moved to contain the political damage from an election-year scandal over undue influence and access afforded to lobbyists. A1

Drug Users Strain Hospitals

A sharp increase in the number of people arriving in emergency rooms with methamphetamine-related problems is straining local hospital budgets and treatment facilities across the country, particularly in the Midwest, according to a two new surveys soon to be released. A10

New Orleans School Overhaul

A mayor's committee set out a plan to decentralize New Orleans' troubled schools. The plan recommends shifting power away from the much-discredited central school administration here, and giving it to individual schools. A12

Hurricane Demolitions Settled

A federal judge approved a settlement in a lawsuit over the first demolitions of homes ruined by Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans, after city officials agreed to provide advance notice to homeowners. A12

Elderly Inmate Executed

California executed Clarence Ray Allen, a 76-year-old man sentenced to death in 1982 for arranging the murders of three people, amid a gathering debate over capital punishment and a proposed moratorium on executions. A16

Drug Plan's Rolls Growing

The Bush administration said more than 2.6 million people had voluntarily signed up for Medicare's prescription drug benefit in the last 30 days, pushing the total voluntary enrollment to 3.6 million. A17

NEW YORK/REGION B1-7

A Run for the White House, Or Maybe More of a Tiptoe?

Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton has been building a political network around the country while running for reelection in New York, consciously steering clear of presidential stomping grounds like New Hampshire or Iowa in a deliberate strategy to avoid suggesting that she has political ambitions beyond the Senate. A1

Pataki Urges Big Tax Cuts

Governor Pataki called for billions of dollars' worth of tax cuts and rebates as the centerpiece of his 12th and final budget, proposing that the state lower income taxes, eliminate New York's tax on inheritances and abolish the so-called marriage penalty. A1

New York's Royal Irish Blood

A new survey suggests that 1 in 50 New Yorkers of European origin carry a distinctive genetic signature, possibly inherited from an Irish high king of the fifth century. B1

Corzine Takes the Helm

Jon S. Corzine was sworn in as New Jersey's 52nd elected governor. B1

Neediest Cases B5

EDUCATION B8

SPORTSWEDNESDAY D1-6

DINING OUT F1-12

ARTS E1-10

OBITUARIES C15

Col. Edward N. Hall

An engineer who as an intelligence officer scrutinized the V-2 rockets of Nazi Germany and later supervised programs leading to the development of the United States' intercontinental ballistic missiles, he was 91. C15

BUSINESS DAY C1-14

S.E.C. and Pay Disclosure

The Securities and Exchange Commission voted unanimously to overhaul the way companies report their pay packages for senior executives, a move that is expected to lead to greater disclosure but not to any significant decline in executive compensation. A1

New Twist in Guidant Battle

Boston Scientific, with financial help from Abbott Laboratories, bid \$27 billion for Guidant, the medical device maker. Within hours, Guidant said it would switch its support from Johnson & Johnson's merger proposal in favor of Boston Scientific's. C1

Intel Misses Earnings Target

Intel said slower sales of desktop computers and weaker prices led it to miss its revenue target for the fourth quarter. C1

Google Acquires dMarc

Google said it would buy dMarc Broadcasting, whose software can allow marketers to send advertisements directly to local radio stations, for up to \$1.24 billion. C1

Business Digest C2

EDITORIAL A18-19

Editorials: Spying on ordinary Americans; DNA's weight as evidence; Governor Pataki's goodbye budget; Dr. King's legacy is being lost.

Columns: Thomas L. Friedman, Maureen Dowd.

Crossword E4 TV Listings E9 Weather D7

http://www.nytimes.com

Load-Date: January 18, 2006



Jobless and lawless: Armed militants in Gaza; Intifada is ended, but not the violence

The International Herald Tribune
January 10, 2006 Tuesday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 4

Length: 1000 words

Byline: Craig S. Smith

Dateline: GAZA

Body

Virtually sealed off from the outside world, residents of this strip of land along the Mediterranean Sea liken it to a giant, deteriorating prison, and at its worst it feels like the film "Escape From New York," where inmates ran the show.

The economy beats feebly, filling the streets with armed men and markets and chaotic traffic during the day and emptying them but for scattered police patrols and idle young men at night. The Palestinian Authority, charged with governing the territory together with the West Bank, maintains tenuous control.

"The intifada has ended but the violent energy is still there," said Eyad Sarraj, a psychiatrist and human rights activist living here.

In Gaza City on Saturday night, one man was killed during a gun battle between militants and the police, while elsewhere in town, another armed group threatened to destroy the local offices of Al Arabiya satellite television station, which is based in Dubai. The men were angry at the station for broadcasting a documentary that criticized their use of *female* suicide bombers.

Farther south that same day, gunmen cordoned off a neighborhood in Khan Yunis, Gaza's second-largest city, while members of a well-known drug-smuggling family battled with the Palestinian police. Eleven police officers were reported wounded.

And in Rafah, along the Egyptian border, armed men from the Abu Taha family stopped cars Sunday, checking identification papers in hopes of catching members of the rival Al Masri family, with which they have been carrying on a deadly feud.

While the world is watching Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's fight for life and wondering who will govern Israel in his absence, people in Gaza are far more preoccupied with growing lawlessness and tension between armed factions since Israel's withdrawal.

"One day, these guys woke up and had nothing to fire rockets at, but they had no food in the kitchen, so they turned on the Palestinian Authority," said Khalid Abu Hilal, known as Abu Adham, a spokesman for 10 branches of Al Aksa Martyrs Brigades, an armed wing of the Fatah political faction. "We are heading toward civil war."

Jobless and lawless: Armed militants in Gaza Intifada is ended, but not the violence

That possibility has cast a pall over the whole peace process as much as the uncertainty surrounding Israel's post-Sharon policies, because any progress toward peace depends on a strong Palestinian negotiating partner.

But the narrow swath of chewed-up roads, dusty orange groves and crumbling concrete buildings covered with graffiti that make up the Gaza Strip, 44 kilometers, or 28 miles, across and the home to 1.4 million Palestinians, is growing more chaotic by the day.

Part of the problem is Fatah's inability to control the armed men who once did its bidding.

Take Alla al-Hams, a brooding 32-year-old man with a short beard and heavy eyebrows. Like tens of thousands of other men in the Gaza Strip, Hams spent five years fighting Israel, commanding as many as 200 men in carrying out mortar and rocket attacks against Israeli forces and fortified Israeli settlements. He says he lost 20 men, four of them in suicide bomb attacks.

But ever since Israel abandoned the settlements and withdrew its troops in September, Hams and his men have been idle. They have lost the financial support they enjoyed as opponents of the occupation and have grown increasingly frustrated by the lack of any reward for what they regard as years of sacrifice.

"The occupation is over, and we have the right to be compensated for the last five years," he said, surrounded by gunmen in the sitting room of his father-in-law's four-story cinderblock house in Rafah. "The least that we expected after Israel withdrew was a job."

About two-thirds of the territory's young men are unemployed and entertainment is scarce, so politics is about the only game around.

Last week, Hams was seized by masked men while walking alone at night near his home and was taken to the Palestinian Authority's military intelligence office in Gaza City, where he was accused of kidnapping three Britons in December.

Gunmen took the Britons away by car shortly after they entered Gaza from Egypt at the Rafah border crossing.

As with two other kidnappings of foreigners last month, the abductions were apparently meant to pressure the Palestinian Authority into providing work for former opponents of the occupation. All hostages were released in a few days.

But Hams's detention set off a series of confrontations between his men and the Palestinian Authority. His guntoting supporters closed government offices in Rafah and temporarily blocked the crossing into Egypt.

Finally, they bulldozed the concrete border wall, leading to an exchange of gunfire with Egyptian border guards that left two of the guards dead.

The Palestinian Authority released Hams, although many people insist that he was responsible for the kidnappings. He denies it, and he still argues that the Palestinian Authority should give him and his men jobs.

"During the intifada, if a fighter was killed their family was adopted by the factions or the Palestinian Authority would support them, but now, they will die from hunger," he said, cradling his young son between his knees. "You can expect me to do anything to guarantee a good life for my family."

An even more volatile element in the deteriorating security situation is the increasing desperation that Fatah and its followers feel in the face of the political challenge by *Hamas*, the radical Islamic group.

Fatah, the Palestinian government's main faction, is in disarray, consumed with infighting and corruption while *Hamas* appears poised to win a significant slice of political power in parliamentary elections this month.

But few people believe that Fatah will give up government control easily if it loses.

Jobless and lawless: Armed militants in Gaza Intifada is ended, but not the violence

"They are not ready to leave their positions and the advantages they have with the projects they've created," said Hilal, a spokesman for Al Aksa Martyrs Brigades. "That is why Fatah is not interested in holding the elections or why they won't accept the results if they do."

Load-Date: January 24, 2006



Prime minister's questions

Guardian.com

February 1, 2006

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theguardian

Length: 949 words

Highlight: Live: After last night's defeats on the religious hatred bill, today's PMQs should prove lively. Follow it as

it happens.

Body

Where was Tony? Expect to hear that cry, or heckling variants on it, as the prime minister turns up today to take his place for question time (unlike last night, when he failed to vote to overturn a peers defeat on the government's bill - an amendment which was lost by just one vote).

That was only the second parliamentary defeat of Mr Blair's nine-year tenure in Downing Street, but it could prove curtains for his chief whip, Hilary Armstrong. Tory leader David Cameron singled her out at his PMQs debut for childish heckling, and it's unlikely she'll relish showing her face in the chamber today.

Meanwhile, it's still Sir Menzies Campbell's leadership job to lose as he represents the Lib Dems' as stand-in leader. He may be tempted to play to his trump card of Iraq, in the wake of the 100th UK soldier's death yesterday.

Other potential topics could include Iran (again), the education bill (again) and climate change.

Noon

Mr Blair begins with paying tribute to both soldiers killed this week - "we owe them a tremendous debt of graititude".

Labour's Ashok Kumar raises the Equal Opportunities Commission report that <u>women</u> are still being paid less than men. The gender pay gap is down to an all-time low, Mr Blair reminds him, before saying a new report will be out in a few weeks' time.

David Cameron echoes those condolences, before asking where Mr Blair was last night. The PM promises he will "turn up" for the education bill.

The Tory leader sarcastically points out that the Labour chief whip is quieter than usual - adding that it's an "interesting career move" to blame the PM for losing a vote.

Mr Blair reels off a long list of statistics on educational achievements. Mr Cameron points out that every Wednesday the PM defends the education bill, and every weekend he reads reports that the bill is being watered down.

The Speaker reprimands one of the other Labour whips for shouting down Mr Cameron from behind the Speaker's chair.

Prime minister's questions

12.05pm

The Tory leader sits mute while the PM quotes back at him his own support for grammar schoools and selecting by ability - positions he now appears to have abandoned in favour of "selection within schools not between them".

Labour's Kelvin Hopkins appeals to the PM to abandon PFI hospital building projects in light of the profits being "creamed off" by private firms.

The PM points out it is the biggest ever building project in NHS history, and he won't be abandoning it.

Sir Menzies asks simply that any action over Iran has full UN authority. The PM chooses instead to talk about Iraq. So Sir Menzies quotes Jack Straw as saying military action against Iran would be "inconceivable", but is now saying Iran has "one last opportunity" - what does he mean by that, asks the stand-in Lib Dem leader?

They have to come back into compliance with their international obligations and we are pursuing that at the UN, says Mr Blair, but the benches behind him are extremely quiet.

12.10pm

Labour's Sir Stuart Bell asks for a view on <u>Hamas</u>'s victory in the occupied territories. Mr Blair says he respects the result, but says <u>Hamas</u> faces "a very fundamental choice - for democracy and for peace".

Mr Cameron turns to climate change, asking "what happened to joined-up government" in the light of news that several scientific labs looking at the issue are to close, quoting one of his own environment ministers as saying the decision "does not make sense".

The Research Council took the decision to close the labaratories, and there is a debate about that, Mr Blair counters, before saying that a recent survey put the UK fifth in terms of climate change action.

Mr Cameron cheekily asks Mr Blair to go away and think about the issue and "report back to the Commons next week".

The PM again bats the query back to the Research Council.

12.15pm

Tory Nigel Evans complains that the chancellor has "pocketed" 60m from speed camera fines. Mr Blair complains that Mr Evans has voted against road safety investment.

Labour's serial rebel Bob Marshall-Andrews receives a large cheer for simply standing up. Before the war, was the cabinet made aware of the attorney general's original March 8 opinion before going to war? Mr Blair says merely that the attorney general was at the relevant cabinet meeting - before rapidly changing the subject to the Iraqi elections.

Tory David Heathcoat-Amory asks about a directive on the resale of art works, which he claims was 'gold-plated' in the UK. Mr Blair jokes that he should worry more about who Tory MEPs will be sitting with in Brussels in future.

12.20pm

Tory Mark Francois, ahead of the opposition day debate on it this afternoon, complains about the lack of consultation on police force amalgamation.

Labour's Andrew Dismore praises a joint JobCentrePlus and Marks & Spencer initiative in his Hendon constituency, which the PM has visited.

The DUP's Rev Ian Paisley whispers his condolences on the servicemen's deaths, then asks about today's IMC reports on IRA decomissioning - has the PM read them yet, and was the original declaration that the IRA had

Prime minister's questions

disarmed a "misjudgement"? Roars of unionist approval around him, although the Speaker cuts him off from asking a second question.

Graham Allen asks for the teaching of "social behaviour" in primary schools, as well as literacy and numeracy.

SDLP Alasdair McDonnell suggests giving the "wrecking parties" six weeks to resurrect the Stormont assembly.

In passing, Gordon Brown, sat next to the PM, is looking particularly grey-haired today, with large bags under his eyes.

PMQs comes to an end, followed quickly by a "personal statement" from Stephen Byers, apologising for a misleading statement in an earlier apology for a misleading statement to a transport select committee.

Load-Date: February 1, 2006



Havana prays, while Little Havana parties

The Vancouver Sun (British Columbia)

August 5, 2006 Saturday

Final Edition

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Section: WEEKEND REVIEW; Pg. C2; 7 Days

Length: 408 words

Byline: Jane Emson, Special to the Sun

Body

Cuba's President Fidel Castro issued what appears to have been a self-fulfilling prophecy shortly before he was whisked to hospital after unexpected bleeding in the nether regions. While Miami's Little Havana went wild with street parties and speculation about the 79-year-old revolutionary's death, citizens in the real Havana kept a low profile, avoided attracting the attention of the police at any cost (as usual), and prayed for his recovery. At his last public appearance July 26, Castro taunted the United States with promises he wouldn't be running the country when he was 100.

Meanwhile, actor and Oscar-winning director Mel Gibson proved that when the police say "you have the right to remain silent," it's a good idea to do so. Nabbed while speeding, allegedly with an open bottle of tequila as a driving companion, Gibson erupted with a verbal volcano of slurs that offended both Jews and <u>women</u>.

Gibson, in his own quirk of dictatorship, reportedly used to demand cast attendance for members of Alcoholics Anonymous at last-minute meetings while in costume and blue-face during the filming of Braveheart. He later apologized publicly (twice) for his verbal insults, but not for apparently endangering lives by driving drunk and speeding.

The names were cuddly, but the massacre was savage. In the hamlet of Wookey Hole, southwest England, a doberman with the plush toy monicker of Barney attacked and disembowelled a stuffed bear named Mabel made by the Stieff company; a toy that was the first love of American rocker Elvis Presley. The owner is said to be distraught. German dog attacks German bear, once owned by an poor American boy and now the prize possession of a wealthy Brit. Can international incidents get any worse?

Well yes, obviously they can. Now marriage and children are joining the weapons of war. While the slaughter continued in the Mideast and Afghanistan, South Korea's military unveiled new policies aimed at making it easier for military couples to have and raise children, in part so they can grow up to be soldiers. The country has the lowest fertility rate among developed countries and the birth rate among military couples is even lower than that in the general population. The army will keep newlyweds together by allowing them to stay in the same posting for five years.

And in Gaza, <u>Hamas</u> staged a mass wedding for 200 couples in the Jabaaliya refugee camp, calling it "a celebration from the heart of the siege."

Load-Date: August 5, 2006



NO GENERAL TO BE ACCEPTED AFTER MUSHARRAF'S EXIT

The Nation (AsiaNet)

August 1, 2006 Tuesday

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Length: 449 words

Body

LAHORE: MMA President and Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan Ameer Qazi Hussain Ahmad has said that General Pervez Musharraf is ruling the country according to his personal whims and wants to give the entire nation in the servitude of America. Addressing a meeting of <u>Women</u> Wing Jamaat-e-Islami Lahore on Tuesday here at Mansoora, Qazi said 2006 is the year of change therefore people of Pakistan will observe August 14 as Youm-e-Nijat. He said all opposition parties are unanimous that no general will be accepted after the exit of Pervez Musharraf.

Lebanon, Palestine, Afghanistan, Iraq and Kashmir are in the clutches of colonial powers, he maintained. Washington is equally responsible for the every brutal act committed by Israeli army in Lebanon and Palestine because Zionists are using the US and providing arsenals to eliminate Muslims and innocent citizens. He was of the view that Zionist state cannot defeat *Hamas* and Hizbullah, as the spirit of jihad cannot be crushed with force.

Qazi said people would throng Minar-e-Pakistan on August 14 from every nook and corner of Lahore while similar activities will be witnessed in Peshawar, Karachi and Rawalpindi on August 20, 27 and September 6 respectively. He said people attending these mammoth rallies and public meeting will urge the army to go back to barracks because the country's borders are in danger.

If the corruption and dishonesty is controlled in Pakistan, it will boost the morale of expatriate Pakistanis and move them to invest here. He said only mass drive could ensure free and fair elections in the country. To a question about amendments in Hudood ordinance, Qazi said that present campaign in favour of abolishing the Islamic punishment is foreign funded. He said West is out to crush Islamic movements and Islam.

Qazi grieved Ameer Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan; Qazi Hussain Ahmad has expressed deep sorrow over the loss of lives and material during recent rains and flood in certain areas of NWFP including Charsadda. He has sent immediate relief of one million rupees to the affected areas and appealed the masses to donate generously in this hour of need. In a statement on Tuesday Qazi said natural calamities are beyond human control but the damaged caused by the calamities can be mitigated by helping the affected brethren. Seminar on Lebanon Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan will hold a seminar today (Wednesday) on the topic of "Lebanon Now" at 5:30 pm at Mansoora.

JI Ameer Qazi Hussain Ahmad will chair the seminar while Editor-in-Chief The Nation Majid Nizami, President PPP Lahore Aziz-ur-Rehman Chan, Secretary-General JUP Qari Zawwar Bahadur, Director Foreign Affairs Abdul Ghaffar Aziz and others will speak on the occasion.

Load-Date: December 6, 2006



Olaf Wiig in kidnap video

Manawatu Standard (New Zealand)

August 24, 2006 Thursday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 1

Length: 437 words

Body

TWO Fox journalists -- including New Zealander Olaf Wiig -- who were kidnapped in Gaza City last week said they are in "fairly good health" and appealed for help to secure their release, a videotape released today shows.

A previously unknown militant group, the Holy Jihad Brigades, has claimed responsibility for the kidnapping nine days ago in the Palestinian coastal strip and demanded the United States release "Muslim prisoners" within 72 hours.

The group did not say what would happen if the demand were ignored.

Fox News Channel correspondent Steve Centanni, a 60-year-old American, and Wiig, 36, a former Palmerston North Boys' High School student, were shown sitting on a blanket on a floor. They sat against a black backdrop with no markings. No militants could be seen.

"We're alive and well, in fairly good health," Mr Centanni said, speaking in a clear and calm voice.

"Just want to let you know I'm here and alive and give my love to my family and friends and ask you to do anything you can to try to help us get out of here."

Mr Centanni said they had been treated well.

Mr Wiig added: "I know my family will already be doing this, but if you could apply any political pressure . . . both here in Gaza and the West Bank, that would be much appreciated by both Steve and myself."

The video bore many hallmarks of tapes of captives issued by militants in Iraq, and the rhetoric of the group also mirrored the heavily religious language used by Iraqi insurgents.

Mr Centanni and Mr Wiig were abducted by masked gunmen in Gaza City on August 14 as they were working on a story.

"Release what you have, and we will release what we have," the Holy Jihad Brigades said in a statement.

"It should include everybody without exception. We will give you 72 hours beginning from midday. If you implement our conditions, we will implement our promise, otherwise you will have to wait . . . Here we are giving you another chance, and God knows how many times we have.

"We will exchange the male and <u>female</u> Muslim prisoners in America's prisons with the prisoners we have. The result will be according to the action."

Olaf Wiig in kidnap video

Until today's statement, no one had claimed responsibility for the abduction, which is now the longest-lasting in Gaza for more than a year.

Palestinian leaders -- including Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh, of the militant Islamist group <u>Hamas</u> -- have called for the release of the two captives. Palestinian security forces have been scouring Gaza for them.

CAPTION:

Picture: REUTERS THIS video grab from a tape released today shows New Zealander Olaf Wiig, left, and American Steve Centanni appealing for help.

Load-Date: August 24, 2006



Stay in Touch

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

August 18, 2006 Friday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; Stay in Touch; Pg. 20

Length: 996 words

Byline: Jacqueline Maley & Alexa Moses

Body

Hollywood is doing its bit for the war effort

NICOLE KIDMAN and 83 of her Hollywood mates have denounced terrorism, 'cos it's, like, really bad?

In a move that has the international Muslim extremist community quaking in its boots, the group of high-profile luvvies has taken out a powerfully worded full-page advertisement in the Los Angeles Times calling for an end to the slaughter of innocents by nasty men belonging to organisations beginning with H. Take that, you terrorist punks!

The signatories include the chairman of News Corporation, Rupert Murdoch, the actors Michael Douglas, Dennis Hopper, Sylvester Stallone, Bruce Willis, Danny De Vito, Don Johnson, James Woods, Kelly Preston, Patricia Heaton and William Hurt, and various directors, including Ridley Scott and Michael Mann.

The ad singles out for special mention Hezbollah in Lebanon and *Hamas* in Palestine.

"We the undersigned are pained and devastated by the civilian casualties in Israel and Lebanon caused by terrorist actions initiated by terrorist organisations such as Hezbollah and *Hamas*," it reads.

"If we do not succeed in stopping terrorism around the world, chaos will rule and innocent people will continue to die. We need to support democratic societies and stop terrorism at all costs."

Last we heard, the UN-brokered ceasefire between Hezbollah and Israel was still holding, so the ad must have worked. No word yet on any mass al-Qaeda surrenders, but we'll keep you posted.

NOT ON THE ROAD AGAIN!

Guitar fans over the age of 45, start salivating now. Mr "Slow Hand, Fast Car" is coming to Australia for the first time in 17 years, and this time we hope no one will let him behind the wheel of a car.

We are referring, of course, to the guitarist Eric Clapton, of Cream and the Yardbirds fame, who was clocked doing 216 kmh in France in 2004, and lost his right to drive in that country.

The promoter Michael Coppel has announced that Clapton will tour Australia for the first time since 1990 and perform in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide and Perth. He will play at the Sydney Entertainment Centre on Monday, January 29, and we sincerely hope someone else is driving him to the gig.

Stay in Touch

LOOK AT ME, LOOK AT ME

The Honourable David Ernest Oldfield, soon to be retiring from politics, yesterday sent the following email to every person who works at the NSW Parliament:

"Dear Fellow Parliament House Dwellers, Like me or hate me, at 8.30 on Channel Seven on Thursday night 17 August and for a number of Thursdays following that, you'll be able to enjoy a good laugh at the shenanigans and tribal politics of Celebrity Survivor. For the record, I do not think of myself as a celebrity, though some of my fellow contestants certainly are celebrities, so join us all and watch the pampered struggle as primitives. In short, I believe this show may be seen as Lost meets Survivor meets Gilligan's Island.Best regards, David Oldfield."

We can't be certain, but we suspect that this correspondence may herald the beginning of the end of Western civilisation.

HISTORY WARS

Concerned that postmodernist hippies were poisoning the minds of our children, John Howard kicked off his history seminar yesterday by stumping up a \$100,000 annual prize to be awarded "in recognition of an outstanding publication or body of work that contributes significantly to an understanding of Australian history".

Come question time, and Labor leader and former historian Kim Beazley decided to quiz Howard on his own past.

"I refer the Prime Minister to the history summit being held in Canberra today and the importance of teaching pivotal facts. Given the Prime Minister is so interested in history, when interest rates hit21.39 per cent in 1982, who was treasurer?"

Among those chuckling away at the rare sight of Howard being stumped by a good 'un was the Treasurer, Peter Costello

His giggles soon turned into perplexity when Jackie Kelly leapt to his defence a little later.

The Labor Whip Roger Price was too clever by half by asking Mr Costello to comment on why chicken slaughter statistics had increased under the Howard Government. (Labor has branded Costello chicken man for failing to challenge Howard - geddit?)

Kelly, who last week was branding Costello a North Shore toff, rose and demanded the question be ruled out of order because it was "pure poess".

Normally it is Beazley who sends people scrambling for the dictionary.

However, the Speaker must have understood Kelly, because he accepted her argument and ruled the question out.

Sugar and spice and all things nice ... grrrr!

DESPITE the right-on roots of Sesame Street (the South African version of the show even has an HIV-positive character), most of the Muppets on the strip are blokes. There's Elmo, Cookie Monster, and Ernie and Bert.

But this week a new girl landed on the block. Is she a scientist? A taxidermist? A wannabe film director in the vein of Sofia Coppola? Nope, Abby Cadabby is a fairy with frothy pink pigtails and a pretty turquoise frock, and she's baffling America as to whether she's a mushy marketing opportunity or a third-wave feminist.

As any Muppette knows, getting a gig on Sesame Street is tough, and keeping it is tougher. The <u>females</u> currently struggling to make it on the strip include spunky Zoe and the bilingual Rosita, and they're nowhere in the race against the heavyweights - even the Count is more famous than frumpy Prairie Dawn, who plays Cookie Monster's killjoy sidekick on the Letter of the Day segment. Dig further back in Sesame history and the trend continues with a string of pathetic Muppettes who weren't pretty enough to make the cut, including monster Lulu and bespectacled Elizabeth. Both were homely, and both were ditched by producers after a few seasons.

Stay in Touch

However, Sesame's producers say Abby has caught the fancy of the kiddie focus groups already, meaning a pretty face and a demure nature may be the key to cracking the Sesame glass ceiling.

Stay tuned for the catfight between Abby and a jealous Zoe in the street.

Graphic

THREE PHOTOS: Abby Cadabby meets Oscar the Grouch. Photo: New York Times Pop a shirt on, hon ... dancer Katie Ripley blocks traffic pondering her goosebumps, as she stars in a Sydney Dance Company television ad for the ballet Underland. Photo courtesy of the Sydney Dance Company

Load-Date: July 17, 2007



Israeli Visa Policy Traps Thousands of Palestinians in a Legal Quandary

The New York Times
September 18, 2006 Monday
Late Edition - Final

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Section: Section A; Column 1; Foreign Desk; Pg. 10

Length: 1069 words

Byline: By GREG MYRE

Dateline: RAMALLAH, West Bank, Sept. 16

Body

Sam Bahour, an American citizen of Palestinian descent, would seem to be the kind of neighbor Israel would welcome.

Mr. Bahour, 41, has a master's degree in business from Tel Aviv University and runs a successful consulting firm. He developed a gleaming \$10 million shopping center in Ramallah, where he has lived for 13 years with his Palestinian wife, Abeer, and their two daughters.

Yet in all that time, Israel has never approved Mr. Bahour's application for a Palestinian identity document, which would allow him to live permanently in the West Bank with his family. He has had to rely instead on repeated renewals of a three-month tourist visa since he moved from Ohio to Ramallah in 1993. And now Israel says he cannot renew it anymore.

"I'm facing a tough choice," Mr. Bahour said. "If I leave, I may not be able to come back here, which is where my life is. If I stay, I will be here illegally."

Mr. Bahour is one of thousands, or perhaps tens of thousands, of people ensnared by an Israeli policy that has effectively frozen immigration to the Palestinian areas of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip since the current Palestinian uprising began in 2000. This spring, after the radical Islamic group <u>Hamas</u> came to power, Israel severed most contacts with the Palestinian Authority and moved to close the last loophole in its immigration policy -- the renewable tourist visa.

Over the past six years, more than 70,000 people, a vast majority of them of Palestinian descent, have applied without success to immigrate to the West Bank or Gaza to join relatives, according to B'Tselem, an Israeli human rights group that tracks the issue. Many who followed Mr. Bahour's route and worked around the ban with tourist visas now have no legal way to remain.

"These people are not really tourists -- they are living and working without legal permits," said Shlomo Dror, the spokesman for the Israeli government agency that handles Palestinian affairs.

"I know these people have a difficult life living this way, and I feel sorry for them," he said. "I think we can solve this when we renew relations with the Palestinian Authority, but right now, we are not talking to them."

Israeli Visa Policy Traps Thousands of Palestinians in a Legal Quandary

Mr. Bahour acknowledges that he has options that others in the same situation may lack. His daughters, ages 12 and 6, are also American citizens, and his wife has a green card that would allow her to live and work in the United States. He and his wife own a second home in Youngstown, Ohio, where Mr. Bahour was born and raised, and his profession as a business consultant is portable.

But the family is committed to building a future here, he said.

"People ask why I don't just leave," Mr. Bahour said. "I tell them it's because I want to make a contribution here."

More common are families in which one spouse has only a Palestinian identity document while the other has a foreign passport, making it difficult or impractical for them to live elsewhere.

Many Palestinians say Israel is pursuing a systematic policy of limiting the population in the Palestinian areas, even if it means separating family members.

"Most every Palestinian knows someone with this kind of problem," said Sarit Michaeli, a spokeswoman for B'Tselem.

In her view, the Israeli policy has several purposes: to apply political pressure on the Palestinians, to create a bargaining chip that could be used in future negotiations and to be a tool in a battle of demographics.

The largest single category of people affected by the Israeli policy is Jordanian <u>women</u> of Palestinian descent who have married Palestinian men and want to move to the West Bank to live with their husbands, Ms. Michaeli said.

Many of those <u>women</u> come to the West Bank on tourist visas and stay on after their visas expire. Complications arise when the <u>women</u> eventually want to travel or visit relatives in Jordan. If they leave the West Bank or Gaza, they face the risk that Israeli authorities will not allow them to return.

Palestinians also say the Israel policy will keep out well-educated, middle-class and politically moderate members of the Palestinian diaspora who could play an important role in developing Palestinian society.

Ali Aggad, a Jordanian citizen of Palestinian origin, has been working in the West Bank since 1999. He is now the general manager at the Unipal General Trading Company, which distributes consumer products for international companies like Procter & Gamble.

For seven years, Israel has routinely granted him a tourist visa that has allowed him to spend weekdays working in the West Bank and weekends in Amman, Jordan, with his wife and two sons. Without warning, Israeli authorities denied him entry to the West Bank twice recently, he said.

Procter & Gamble's office in Tel Aviv is trying to resolve his case with the Israeli authorities, Mr. Aggad said, adding, "All I can do now is wait and hope it works out."

In the past few months, about 50 United States citizens have notified American diplomatic offices that Israel has prevented them from entering the West Bank, said Micaela Schweitzer-Bluhm, a spokeswoman at the United States Consulate in Jerusalem.

"This is an issue we've been monitoring for several months, and it has been raised with the Israeli authorities," she said.

Many people of Palestinian origin sought to return to the Palestinian areas of the West Bank and Gaza after Israel and the Palestinians signed an interim peace agreement in 1993.

Under a 1995 accord, Israel initially agreed to allow 3,000 immigrants to the Palestinian areas each year, as part of a family reunification process, said Mr. Dror, the Israeli official.

Israeli Visa Policy Traps Thousands of Palestinians in a Legal Quandary

Demand proved to be so great, he said, that Israel later increased the number to as many as 20,000 a year. Even so, there was a backlog of some 50,000 applications when Israel froze the process in 2000. Israel resumed allowing immigration last year, but soon froze it again when <u>Hamas</u> won power.

One of the applications stuck in the pile is Mr. Bahour's. He said he applied for permanent residency in 1994 and had not received a reply.

Meanwhile, his current tourist visa expires Oct. 1, and Israeli authorities have written "last permit" in his United States passport.

"I still don't know what I'm going to do," he said. But he will not leave if he can help it. "If I walked away now," he said, "I feel I would be letting my community down."

http://www.nytimes.com

Graphic

Photo: Sam Bahour at the Ramallah shopping center he built. Israel has effectively frozen certain immigration since the uprising began in 2000. (Photo by Rina Castelnuovo for The New York Times)

Load-Date: September 18, 2006



Of racism, tyranny, and oppression

University Wire
July 27, 2006 Thursday

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Section: COLUMN Length: 1123 words

Byline: By Aly Mohamed, OSU Daily Barometer; SOURCE: Oregon State U.

Dateline: CORVALLIS, Ore.

Body

"Is this the price we pay for aspiring to build our democratic institutions? Can the international community stand by while such callous retribution by the state of Israel is inflicted on us?" -Fuad Saniora, Lebanese Prime Minister.

Mr. Saniora received his answer when the Pentagon announced "rushing" Israel a delivery of precision-guided bombs, while Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice ruled out a cease-fire as "false promise." The pro-American government that Israel is smashing was once considered a shining example of President Bush's democracy campaign. Our government has now endorsed unconditional Israeli aggression, leaving them to decide the manner and the number of whomever they wish to butcher. Over the international community and in The Hague's International Court, one hears only faint whispers of the gruesome tyranny - Lebanon should have known not to rely on a community restricted by U.S. backed Israeli interests.

In occupying Lebanon, over 150,000 men, <u>women</u> and children were killed by Israel in 16 years. Six times the dead of Sept. 11 (17,500 civilians) were massacred during the summer of 1982, an invasion which shaped the emergence of <u>Hamas</u> and Hezbollah - yet politicians act as if resistance movements appeared in a vacuum.

After 'ending' occupation in 2000, Israel continued to violate Lebanese sovereignty by air, sea, and land; kidnapping civilians, and holding thousands without cause behind prison walls. What's more, Israel admittedly refuses to provide mapping to more then 400,000 land mines dispersed throughout Lebanon, which continued the reckless slaughter in their absence.

Since inception, Israel has denied Palestinians the most basic of human rights, driving many of them to the point of violent insanity. Israel then has the audacity to use their violence as a justification for perpetual oppression. Riding the rhetoric of fighting terrorism, Israel continues its history of brutal oppression - bombing airports, roads, fuel tanks, power plants, water supplies, bridges and refuge camps. Apparently, the definition of "terrorism" given in official sources must be qualified only as terrorism against 'us'. Take a moment and ask yourself what your reaction would be to such brutal force.

Although it was Bush who called for Palestinian elections and <u>Hamas</u> participation, he bowed to Israeli demands and imposed suffocating global economic and diplomatic blockades on Palestinians. Imagine American reaction to collective punishment for democratically electing our leaders.

In 1941, Hitler ordered "the harshest measures" against civilian resistance, ordering execution of 50 civilians for every German soldier killed, for "only the (collective) death penalty can be a real means of deterrence."

Of racism, tyranny, and oppression

As Israeli forces subject masses of Palestinians to destitute poverty, curfews, and encirclement by barbed wire fences, they essentially strip them of their civil rights - reducing their lives to a condition of dependence while covering them in a cold blanket of fear and despair. Everyday, Israel turns villages into prisons and homes into cells. These tactics are founded on the portrayal of all Arabs as blood sucking terrorist.

When our government, media, and allies mentioned Iraq's breach of 17 U.N. resolutions and imaginary WMDs as a pretext for war, they conveniently disregarded the 64 U.N. resolutions flouted by Israel and a nuclear arsenal of catastrophic proportions. Whatever atrocities Saddam committed, Israel has either matched or surpassed in what is now the longest occupation in history; though we find no one speaking a word about Israel, we have seen no end to ranting regarding Iraq and Hezbollah.

While Israel is a democracy, it is a racist democracy engineered for the advancement of a single tradition. Israeli historian Benny Morris, the leading authority on Palestinian refugees, noted "without the uprooting of the Palestinians, a Jewish state would not have arisen here" adding that "there are circumstances in history that justify ethnic cleansing." Palestinians are asked to forget their 'right of return' and the oppression of the past while they live through it all the same today.

Is it an ugly trend, or is it that contemporary ethnic cleansing is only to be justified when Muslims are the prime target as in Bosnia, Kosovo, Chechnya, Kashmir, and Israel? Colonial powers and their descendants are unable to rid themselves of racist impulses - be it against Native Americans, African Americans, Native Africans, Japanese, or Aborigines - racist hate must be acted upon, and in its path Arab and Muslim lives are considered worthless; blood cheaper than dirt.

Palestinians are indebted to Jews from all walks of life that document and protest their sufferings. In particular, the growing movement "Yesh Gvul" or "There Is a Limit" - founded by Israeli soldiers refusing to serve in the occupied territories - consequentially incarcerated.

The media has decomposed into a hand of Israeli war propaganda, seeking to present not only moral justification, but depiction of symmetry in mass-murder and military weaponry. No matter their deceit, the death toll has always fallen very disproportionately upon the Palestinians.

What has plunged out is anything akin to a dissenting voice. Media outlets edit everything that would cause the government concern of dishonest brain washing. Every news channel employs generals, CIA agents, and terrorism experts as consultants who speak empty rhetoric, supporting everything Israel. Arguably, the most valuable fact based reading for those seeking concrete understanding of Middle-East policy is the article "Whose War?" published in 2003 by "The American Conservative" (of all magazines).

Israel is far off mark in using murder, expulsion, annexation, and the building of walls to bring it security. We as Americans who have only recently experienced the civil rights movement know in our heart of hearts, never can systematic oppression and confinement of the weak be justified. I have a hard time believing there are no prominent Christian leaders, save Pope Benedict, ready to speak out against this senseless malice.

If America prides itself on liberating others, how are we to turn a blind eye to Arab Muslims and Christians in Lebanon and Palestine? Must we wish for Israel to carry on no matter the cost of innocent civilians, billions in tax dollars needed at home, and wreckage of infant democracies? Are we are interested in increasing global anti-Americanism, as we fool no one while standing staunchly for human rights and unconditionally backing Israel. If we truly claim to value freedom and justice for all, we are obliged to demand Israel cease its brutal and atrocious campaigns.

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Load-Date: July 27, 2006



<u>Comment & Debate: Only a negotiated ceasefire can bring a wider</u> <u>settlement: America's embrace of UN diplomacy over Lebanon is a welcome</u> <u>return to pre-9/11 politics. If it fails, expect more Hizbullahs</u>

The Guardian - Final Edition
August 11, 2006 Friday

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Section: GUARDIAN COMMENT AND DEBATE PAGES; Pg. 35

Length: 1051 words **Byline:** Paul Moorcraft

Body

Washington has dumped Tony Blair and its disdain of the UN. America is now working with France, the old colonial power, to shape Lebanese events via the international organisation. Friction between Washington and Paris as well as strong objections from the Arab League are delaying a "first-stage" UN resolution on a ceasefire. Immediate Israeli withdrawal is not in the current text.

The Lebanese government has offered 15,000 troops to replace the Israeli Defence Force and to monitor Hizbullah while a robust French-led UN force moves in. The key is to get UN forces in and Israelis out, without letting Hizbullah regroup and rearm. A quick-fix solution could allow a rapid-reaction French component to link up with the existing UN forces, as lead components of a Lebanese military intervention. A UN resolution could save face all round, but it is more likely that the fighting will go on.

The IDF is moving into phase three of its operations: a slower, meat-grinder advance that could, depending on diplomacy, accelerate to a big ground push to the Litani river and probably beyond. Despite memories of the previous quagmire, the IDF may stay until all UN troops are in place. Israelis have little faith in the Lebanese army doing what it has been unable to do since 2000.

So generals in Nato should take note. The conflict in Lebanon is inspiring a potent kind of warfare, which could have a profound impact throughout the Middle East. Previously Israel could capture Beirut in seven days; now it has struggled for four weeks to control small villages right on its own border.

Hizbullah is a novel hybrid, combining the sophistication and weaponry of a formal army blended with the near-invisibility of a hit-and-run insurgency. It has dramatically modernised guerrilla tactics, but it also holds territory and seats in the Lebanese parliament and government. Hizbullah is responsive to the ayatollahs in Iran but - like Sinn Fein/IRA in Ireland - it has an authentic constituency base, one which was partly created by Israel's 1982 invasion.

Western experts are struggling, not least with naming this new phenome non. Some call it network warfare. Traditional armies are large, often cumbersome and organised in a strict disciplined hierarchy; networks such as Hizbullah have numerous widely dispersed fighters who can improvise quickly, not least in their use of hi-tech communications and propaganda. Israeli special forces are surprised to come up against Hizbullah fighters with almost the same quality of equipment - and training - as themselves.

Comment & Debate: Only a negotiated ceasefire can bring a wider settlement: America 's embrace of UN diplomacy over Lebanon is a welcome return to pre-9/11 poli....

Hizbullah has waged a sustained war of attrition against a nation across a state border. To relieve the pressure on <u>Hamas</u> - the fighting continues in Gaza as well - it opened up a second front in the north and maintained a high-tempo war against the regional superpower.

Hizbullah has learned from the Chechens' fight against a much stronger power, Russia. It has challenged state monopolies of force: air and naval power. It withstood the shock-and-awe tactics of bombing from the air by escalating its counterattacks with rockets.

Thinking in the old paradigm, Israel struck at the infrastructure of the Lebanese state with air attacks, only belatedly engaging Hizbullah on the ground. This is a massive own goal, not least because it undermines the Arab world's most moderate (and also weakest) government.

Hizbullah has done a lot better than the conventional forces of all the Arab states that have fought against Israel since 1948. It has won a stunning propaganda victory and shattered Israel's deterrence posture.

Hassan Nasrallah, the Hizbullah leader, has done what Osama bin Laden could never do: he has united Shias and Sunnis throughout the region, especially the young, in the belief that a Muslim renaissance could come via the gun. Just as Iraq demonstrated the limits of US power, the war on Lebanon displayed Israel's weakness. Radical Islam has been the victor in both conflicts.

Israel will now be far more reluctant to fight <u>Hamas</u>, despite the differences in terrain and organisation. Likewise, the Israeli experience must give the US pause before attacking Iranian forces who will fight just as effectively as their students in Hizbullah.

Hizbullah's success will galvanise jihadists from Boston to Bolton to Bombay. The supine political response of the Sunni Arab leaders (who privately loathe Shia success) has played badly in the Arab street. Militant Islam could soon displace the secular despotisms - ironically even the one in Syria that supports Hizbullah.

The Lebanese war is a race against time: will Hizbullah run out of fighting spirit and rockets before the world - and even the US - runs out of patience with Israeli tactics and forces a ceasefire?

So far, no Islamic fanatic has put unconventional warheads on their Iranian missiles. Whether that remains the case may depend on how long the blood-letting goes on. If diplomats conjure up an intervention army far more successful than the existing ill-fated UN force, a regional war that could include Syria may be avoided.

America's embrace of UN diplomacy is a welcome return to pre-paranoia, pre-9/11 politics. The Middle East may now be treated in a more holistic way. If Lebanon works, the French might be persuaded to repeat the miracle by supervising a UN buffer between Israel and Palestine as the old road map to the two-state solution is finally realised.

But if the UN fails, Hizbullah's deadly hybrid could be replicated across Afghanistan, Iraq and Palestine. Iran acquires nuclear weapons. America withdraws from Iraq as civil war compels a messy partition. Nato forces succumb to domestic pressure and the Taliban retake Kabul. A <u>female</u> Democrat president in Washington reverts to isolation. Such pessimistic probabilities dictate a rapid and orderly western military withdrawal from Arab lands. Whoever rules would sell their oil.

The aspiring French-led diplomacy in Lebanon trumpets the failure of the Anglo-US policy of constructive destabilisation. Only a genuine negotiated ceasefire, allied to a powerful UN intervention force, could - just - lead to a regional settlement.

Dr Paul Moorcraft, a former senior instructor at Sandhurst and the Joint Services Command and Staff College, is director of the Centre for Foreign Policy Analysis <u>paul.moorcraft@cffpa.com</u>

Comment & Debate: Only a negotiated ceasefire can bring a wider settlement: America 's embrace of UN diplomacy over Lebanon is a welcome return to pre-9/11 poli....

Load-Date: August 11, 2006



Focus: Middle East Crisis: THE ROAD TO WAR?: It started with the seizure of one young Israeli soldier by Palestinian militants. This weekend the Middle East teeters on the brink of a regional war as the world stands by, apparently helpless to intervene. Jason Burke, Julie Flint in Beirut, Inigo Gilmore in Nahariya, Conal Urquhart in Gaza and Patrick Wintour in St

Petersburg report

The Observer (London)
July 16, 2006

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The Observer

Section: OBSERVER FOCUS PAGES; Pg. 23

Length: 2790 words

Byline: Jason Burke, Julie Flint, Inigo Gilmore, Conal Urquhart and Patrick Wintour

Body

Beirut was silent yesterday morning. Smoke still hung in the blue sky like a vague threat, but after a night of violence - physical and verbal - the port city waited. A few shops in the centre warily raised their steel shutters, but the Shia Muslim areas in the south of the city were empty. Occasional cars worked their way around the rubble left by the air strikes of the evening before, some packed with families leaving, others filled with families going to funerals. Then came the blasts in the middle of the day, loud enough to rattle windows across the entire city. Plumes of flame and smoke spouted once more above the tattered buildings. And everyone knew that there would soon be more cars full of refugees, and more cars heading to funerals.

There were many funerals last week, and this weekend there were more. At least 20 Lebanese villagers, including <u>women</u> and children, were killed yesterday in an Israeli air strike on a convoy of vehicles evacuating a village near the southern border. And few expect the funerals to stop soon. Yesterday Israeli and Hizbollah leaders declared 'open war'; bodies of four Israeli sailors were retrieved from a warship struck by a Hizbollah drone; beyond Beirut, bombing continued in the Hizbollah heartland of southern Lebanon and even reached the Syrian border; and dozens of Hizbollah rockets continued to fall randomly on civilian areas in northern Israel, reaching as far south as Tiberias, some 40km inside Israel's borders, causing minor injuries and provoking panic. Further south, though the worst violence of the week had ebbed, the Gaza Strip, from where rockets have been fired into Israeli towns, remained tense, with reports of an Israeli air strike and two dead.

And as the violence continued, so the shock waves around the region and the world grew deeper. The crisis, which has pushed oil prices to a historic high of \$78 per barrel and weakened stock markets around the world, dominated the agenda of the G8 summit of rich nations in St Petersburg, dividing international leaders. In the Middle East itself, Syria and Iran, deeply implicated in the events of the past week, are on high alert. The Egyptians, Jordanians, Turks, Saudis - and, of course, the Iraqis - are all very nervous. America is increasingly involved. Diplomats are

frantically formulating plans to defuse what one described to The Observer as 'a powder keg that could blow out all the lights'. And all this in just five days.

The questions are now manifold and evident; answers less so. How and why did the crisis explode so powerfully and so quickly? What are the regional ramifications? And what happens next?

As ever in the Middle East, the crisis can be traced back to a variety of causes. The timeline can start a few days ago - with a daring cross-border raid by Hizbollah militants on Tuesday that led to the capture of two Israeli soldiers and the deaths of eight more. Or it can start two weeks ago - with the kidnapping of another Israeli soldier by hardline Palestinian militants from the *Hamas* organisation in the Gaza Strip. Or it can start

months, years or decades ago in the myriad interwoven causes that link Israel's withdrawal from south Lebanon in 2000, the development (with Iranian assistance) of the Hizbollah militia in response to Israel's invasion of Lebanon 18 years earlier, and even the Iranian revolution of 1979, or the Arab-Israeli wars of 1973 and 1967.

For Ehud Olmert, the recently elected Prime Minister of Israel, the crisis started on Wednesday with Hizbollah's cross-border attack. It should have been expected. The militia's leader, Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah, has repeatedly said that it would seek to capture Israeli soldiers on or near the border, and has been trying to do so since moving back into the frontier zone following the Israeli withdrawal six years ago. The army was 'caught with its pants down', said one Israeli commentator last week.

As soon as Olmert - said by associates to be 'incandescent' with rage - heard of the incident, he called an emergency meeting of the inner security cabinet. Around the table with the right-wing Prime Minister, who leads the Kadima party, were his senior ministers and leaders of the other parties, including the profoundly orthodox Shas, who comprise the ruling coalition. The politicians were briefed by the head of the army, Lieutenant-General Dan Halutz, the head of the internal security service, the head of Mossad, and a series of other military advisers.

Halutz's plan mixed various aims. There was little real hope that the pressure on Hizbollah might force the immediate return of the soldiers. But a land, air and sea blockade would prevent Hizbollah receiving supplies and prevent the militia evacuating the hostages to Syria. A tight cordon coupled with air strikes would allow the destruction of Hizbollah's military capacity. In addition, the physical damage wreaked by the bombing would force the government of Lebanon (and the international community) to act against the Islamic militia, hopefully implementing a recent UN Security Council resolution calling for Hizbollah's disarmament and the positioning of Lebanese troops on the southern border. Civilian suffering leading to anger against Hizbollah would, the politicians and military men knew, force the Lebanese, or the international community, or both, to act rapidly. The plan was accepted unanimously. 'If our security and economy is being hit,' said one minister, 'so shall Lebanon's.'

Their responses were, given Israel's history, relatively predictable. The Jewish state's strategic doctrine has always relied, along with massive foreign aid, on a powerful, ruthless and immediate response to any threat. As a final bonus, the Hizbollah attack offered an opportunity to restore the 'deterrence factor' - a key aim of the hawkish chief of staff who has a significant influence on a government that contains fewer former soldiers than almost any other previous Israeli administration. 'There has been a progressive decline in deterrence over the past six years and the defence establishment want to re-establish it,' said Jonathan Spyer, a former adviser on international relations to the Israeli government and a research fellow at the Global Research in International Affairs Centre in Hertzeliya. 'They see it as a very serious big boy's game.'

Crucially, Halutz's plan was not new. Indeed, according to Gerald Steinberg, professor of political studies at Bar Ilan University, it had been sitting 'on the shelf' for some time. 'The scenario that has been followed has been worked on by the military for several years,' Steinberg said. 'Sharon was briefed on it when he was Prime Minister and it is probable that Olmert knew about it.' Yet the more hardline Israelis were not the only ones acting according to a script. Indeed, the script may well have been written elsewhere: in Beirut, Gaza, Damascus and Tehran.

On Thursday morning, the people of the village of al-Dweir, a few miles from the Israel-Lebanon border, gathered at the mosque for a family funeral. Rockets launched by Hizbollah fighters could be heard echoing off the low hills of

the border area. Overhead, Israeli jets and drones circled unheeded by a crowd full of Hizbollah members and supporters. Before long, the yellow and green flag of the Shia group was fluttering.

Dr Yousef Akkash was among the mourners. His brother, killed along with his wife and eight children earlier in the day when Israeli planes obliterated their home, was possibly a member of Hizbollah, but Akkash was not sure. 'I hope he was,' Akkash said. 'If he was engaged in Hizbollah activities, then it was his fate.' But it was a fate that lay in the hands of shadowy men in different countries.

Israeli diplomats last week insisted on an 'axis of evil' linking <u>Hamas</u> in the Gaza Strip, Hizbollah, Damascus and Tehran. 'They are united to destabilise the situation and act against the wills of most people and governments in the region to progress a peace process,' said Barnea Hassid, an Israeli spokesman.

The argument here is simple. The past few months have seen several developments that have displeased those who stand to benefit from continued strife. There has been an improvement in relations between moderate Palestinian leaders and Olmert, who is committed to a disengagement of Israeli forces and settlers from the West Bank and hints that even elements of *Hamas* might be shifting towards a more pragmatic posi tion. In addition, the Syrians, forced to leave Lebanon last year, have become marginalised and Hizbollah has begun to lose credibility. In addition, Tehran is under huge international pressure because of its nuclear programme. Nothing would benefit hardliners in Gaza, Lebanon, Damascus and Tehran more than a nasty and bloody war. 'It is a good thing for Damascus and Tehran,' said Spyer. 'They are largely behind what we are now seeing..'

However, experts point out that there is little history of contact between Hizbollah and the Sunni Muslim <u>Hamas</u>. And though a senior <u>Hamas</u> militant in Damascus is suspected of running the kidnapping of the Israeli soldier in Gaza, that does not mean, says one Western intelligence source, that the Hizbollah strike last week was part of a co-ordinated strategy. And the relationship between Iran and Hizbollah may be more nuanced than often thought. 'The Iranians are in trouble over the nuclear programme, and the Syrians are under pressure, too, and chaos and diversions benefit both,' said Nadim Shehadi, of London's Chatham House think tank. 'But Hizbollah is more linked to Tehran than Damascus.'

An axis may exist, but in a rougher, more informal form than the tight-knit institutional connections seen by the Israelis and their allies. 'If you ignore state borders, you can see a broad anti-American and anti-Israeli front, with Iran leading it. They are playing a clever game. The Iranians are playing chess: their opponents are playing poker.'

One critical question is the degree of support that Hizbollah, which has a well-armed militia and a large social programme, has among Lebanon's poor Shias. The consensus is that the militia had been losing support before the crisis. That may be one reason for Wednesday's attack, even if the reaction of the Israelis was greater than foreseen. 'Hizbollah was being squeezed,' said Steinberg. 'It was "use-it-or-lose-it" time.'

Initially, it looked as if those tactics might have worked. On Wednesday night, as news of the kidnapping broke, teenagers on motorbikes rode up and down Beirut seafront waving the party's yellow flag and honking horns. Even after bombardment chewed up the highway to Damascus and put the airport out of action, celebrants were setting off firecrackers. But as the extent of Israel's onslaught on Lebanon's infrastructure became clear, the atmosphere changed.

'In 1982, I was anti-Israel,' presidential candidate Chibli Mallat told The Observer . 'But this offensive has been provoked by a blatant violation of the demarcation line and the abduction of soldiers. I cannot put the blame on the Israelis. They did not start it.'

Few Lebanese accept Hizbollah's claim that its aim was to barter the release of the handful of Lebanese still held in Israeli jails: they blame Hizbollah for plunging Lebanon back into war. Everywhere there is widespread recognition that, even if the Lebanese government, with its pro-Syrian President and predominantly anti-Syrian administration and parliament, wanted to rein in Hizbollah, it could not. 'The Israelis blame the Lebanese government for not controlling Hizbollah,' said architect Simone Kosremelli. 'Is Italy able to control the Mafia? Could England control the IRA? Israel must know that 50 years of conflict have not brought a solution. There must be another way.'

If there is, it will almost certainly involve the international community. Vladimir Putin, Russia's leader, had hoped to use this weekend's G8 summit to showcase the economic progress in his nation. Officially, education and the fight against HIV head the agenda, but attention has focused on the Middle East - and divisions between the summiteers. The splits echoed those over Iraq three years ago, with France's Jacques Chirac leading condemnation of the Israelis, European Commission president Jose Manuel Barroso saying that the use of force by Israel was 'disproportionate', Putin calling for the Israeli response to be more 'balanced' and President Bush avoiding any condemnation of Israel, saying 'the best way to stop the violence is for Hizbollah to lay down its arms and to stop attacking.'

However, with a meeting this weekend of Arab foreign ministers in Cairo disintegrating in mutual recriminations, the EU lacking a clear strategy and the UN lacking credibility, the Americans may hold the real key. 'The Israelis tend to go as far as they can, as quickly as they can, to make their point and strengthen their negotiating position before the international pressure on them gets too much to bear,' said one Western diplomat. 'The US can bring 10 times as much pressure to bear as anyone else.'

Bush has so far largely left discussions with Israeli leaders to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and National Security Adviser Stephen Hadley. Rice, after conversations with UN secretary-general Kofi Annan, has backed the dispatch of a UN team to the region to attempt to negotiate a truce, but few believe it has much chance of immediate success.

A key question is whether Israel will escalate its military response to Hizbollah's continued provocation - yesterday rockets fell deeper and deeper inside Israel. A spokesman refused to rule out a ground offensive, though casualties would be high and the political fall-out of a botched operation potentially devastating. However it may be that a negotiated settlement - exchanging prisoners in Israeli jails as part of a more general agreement that would see the return of the captured Israeli troops and Hizbollah pulling back from the frontier - is possible. Though Israeli demands for the disarmament of Hizbollah may be unrealistic in the short term, they may not be in the long term.

However, it may be that a fuse has been lit. 'The nightmare scenario is war in Gaza, widespread war against the Israelis in Lebanon and between factions, Syria and Iran being dragged into the conflict and a steady escalation from there to who knows where, widespread conflict, oil prices through the ceiling, bombs going off all over the place' said the diplomat. 'You don't usually see the nightmare scenario evolve in the Middle East but, if it does, we are all in deep, deep trouble.'

Perhaps the most hopeful sign is that the vast bulk of the Lebanese and Israeli populations still do not wish harm on one another, though tensions have heightened antagonisms and, in Israel at least, provoked a strong pro-war solidarity.

During a rocket barrage on Friday afternoon, a missile landed in a kibbutz on the edge of the northern Israeli town of Nahariya. As the community had already been almost entirely evacuated, there were no casualties.

Avi Hever, a long-time resident, was one of just four men who chose to stay behind after the first missiles landed last week. 'I was watching TV when I heard the missile go over the house and explode,' he said. 'I went into a safe place between the two walls and the house was shaking all over. Its unpleasant, shocking; it makes you freeze.'

Pointing to empty rooms, he explained that he has sent his wife and two children to his family in Tel Aviv, an exodus mirroring that of Lebanese civilians further north. The Observer asked if he sympathised with those caught up in the same conflict living just a few miles away over the border.

'It's quite hard to feel empathy at the moment, when just 10 minutes ago a rocket hit here and I was in danger. But empathy will come,' he said, glancing across the neat houses, with their groomed front lawns, the Star of David flags flapping defiantly from the rooftops. 'We do want peace and the Lebanese want the same as us. But it's up to them now; they have to choose which way they want to organise their life, with Hizbollah or without it.'

Outside the village of Damour on Lebanon's coast, holes that are dozens of feet wide have shattered a key highway overpass that connects Beirut to the south of the country. It is also the only way out of the war zone for many of south Lebanon's residents, who have been clambering over the piles of rubble and around the craters on their way to Beirut or the northern Bekaa Valley and safety.

'This is a fight between Hizbollah and Israel,' said Umm Mohammed, 36, a Shia woman from outside Tyre. 'Why must they hurt civilians? I have small children.' And she looked nervously to the sky.

Load-Date: July 17, 2006



Blair admits to cabinet splits over his support for Bush on Israel

Belfast Telegraph August 4, 2006 Friday

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Length: 1091 words

Byline: By Colin Brown

Body

Battered by criticism, Tony Blair last night prepared for a holiday, leaving behind a cabinet torn by dissent, a party in turmoil, and a country dismayed by his handling of the Middle East crisis.

The Prime Minister robustly defended his decision to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with President George Bush in refusing to call for a ceasefire while Lebanon burns. His defence came amid claims in the New Statesman that there was a conspiracy between the US, Israel and Britain to launch a war on Lebanon.

Speaking at his monthly press conference, he said that events in Lebanon had to be seen as part of a wider picture and that a stand had to be made against the "arc of extremism" that links Palestine, Syria, Iran and Iraq.

Five years ago, days after the 11 September attacks, Mr Blair told a Labour party conference: "This is a moment to seize. The pieces are in flux. Soon they will settle again. Before they do, let us re-order this world..."

Since then, Mr Blair has joined Mr Bush in waging a world-wide "war against terror" in Afghanistan, Iraq, and at home in British cities. The two leaders are now accused of standing by as Israel attempts to eliminate Hizbollah in southern Lebanon, at the cost of at least 900 civilian lives.

Yesterday Mr Blair called for an "alliance of moderation to take on those people with such extreme views..." But apparent one-sided support for America and the Israelis has lost allies in the Middle East and support at home.

Resurgent Taliban fighters this week killed three more British soldiers in Helmand province. Suicide bombings kill dozens daily in Iraq, and yesterday it emerged that the respected outgoing British ambassador William Patey, in a leaked memorandum to Mr Blair, had told the Prime Minister that Iraq was facing "a descent into civil war and anarchy". Israel's apparent disregard for the lives of Lebanese civilians, and Mr Blair's refusal to call for a halt to the fighting, has further diminished his standing in the Arab world.

Mr Blair is leaving Britain resigned to the fact that he appears isolated within his cabinet. Yesterday, Mr Blair admitted some cabinet ministers had shown "anxiety" about his refusal to press President Bush to condemn the Israeli bombing. They include Jack Straw, the former foreign secretary - but he denied being at odds with Margaret Beckett, the Foreign Secretary.

He said: "I don't doubt that there are cabinet ministers who have doubts about aspects of the policy. But reports about Margaret [Beckett] and myself, and that my officials have been telling me to do different things, it's not the case."

Blair admits to cabinet splits over his support for Bush on Israel

Ministers are also uneasy that Britain and the US appeared to be allowing the Israelis time to redraw the map of the Middle East by bombing Hizbollah in a proxy war against Iran. Some fear it gives the extremists the opportunity to claim that the West is waging a holy war.

Mr Blair dismissed such fears, saying: "How can there possibly be a religious war when actually what we want is for Jews and Muslims and Christians to live in peace with each other as they do here in our country?

"Our vision of the future is a vision in which diversity of faith and culture and race is a strength not a weakness. The only ones engaged in a war voluntarily are those who committed the atrocities of 7 July, 11 September and 3 November in Madrid."

A UN resolution calling for a ceasefire could be published within the next 24 hours and Mr Blair signalled that Israel might be ready to accept one agreed by the UN security council.

It will be linked to the deployment of a multilateral force, but details over its composition, terms of engagement, and precise role will be the subject of tough negotiations over the weekend. The Prime Minister said the remaining differences to a resolution were "very slight".

Richard Burden, the Labour chairman of the all-party Parliamentary Britain-Palestine group, said: "I think his argument that *Hamas*, al-Qa'ida and Hizbollah can be lumped together is wrong."

Sir Menzies Campbell, the Liberal Democrat leader, accused Mr Blair of a "gross oversimplification", adding: "Mr Blair's determination not to be parted from Mr Bush has deeply damaged Britain's influence."

Mr Blair said that he would continuetalks while on holiday to secure agreement for a UN resolution that could end the bloodshed "within days".

'No one sees policy as credible'

"While I condemn the hostage taking of Israeli soldiers and rocket attacks on Israel, I believe the response was disproportionate and appalling.

As a Labour MP, I say with sadness and a heavy heart that the Prime Minister's press conference did not inspire me at all. He needs to take a much more even-handed approach.

He refused to endorse Jack Straw's comments that the Israeli response was disproportionate. He refused to condemn Israel, even over the massacre at Qana.

How can he say this Government's policy is independent when we have provided logistical support in a British airport for the transport of bombs that are being used against innocent men, **women** and children in Lebanon?

Tony Blair talked about wanting to see the spread of democracy in the Middle East and yet at the same time he refuses to talk to <u>Hamas</u>, which was democratically elected, and he stands by while the democratic government of Lebanon is attacked.

He mentioned the creation of a viable Palestinian state and yet he didn't mention the need for the full implementation of UN resolutions 242 and 338, which call on Israel to withdraw its forces to the pre-1967 borders.

He didn't mention the apartheid wall that has caused misery and hardship for many Palestinians. He didn't mention the illegal settlements in the West Bank. There is immense anger among rank-and-file members of the Labour Party and backbench MPs.

He refused again to call for an immediate ceasefire - on both sides. The level of civilian casualties in Lebanon has helped build support for Hizbollah. Yet if George Bush and Mr Blair had called for an immediate ceasefire and Hizbollah had refused to comply, Hizbollah would have faced wide anger, including in the Muslim world.

Blair admits to cabinet splits over his support for Bush on Israel

I was against the Iraq war, I voted against it, but I still believed at the time that at least something good could come out of it and that our Prime Minister would work day and night to bring a peace to the Middle East. This peace now looks distant.

I believe that the Prime Minister's response is not representative of our country's feelings and this is why I have requested, with 15 other Labour MPs, a recalling of Parliament."

Mohammad Sarwar, Labour MP for Glasgow Central

Load-Date: August 4, 2006



One Last Thing | Democracy, of itself, not solution to all problems

The Philadelphia Inquirer August 6, 2006 Sunday

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The Philadelphia Inquirer

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Length: 1046 words **Byline:** Jonathan Last

Body

Of the many deaths already reaped by the Hezbollah-Israeli conflict, perhaps the quietest befell the hopeful policy outlook expressed in President Bush's second inaugural address.

"It is the policy of the United States to seek and support the growth of democratic movements and institutions in every nation and culture," the president said. "... And when the soul of a nation finally speaks, the institutions that arise may reflect customs and traditions very different from our own." This multicultural truism is no longer reassuring.

Democracy is a powerful force that often is an engine for liberalism. As Natan Sharansky argues in *The Case for Democracy*, democratic societies are mostly peaceful and, in relation to other systems of government, have a good track record in avoiding wars of belligerence.

But pace Bush and Sharansky, democracy is not a universal solvent. Not all democracies are created equal. The customs and traditions of a society matter as much as its mode of government. It may be true that all people yearn for freedom, but history shows that some people yearn for the freedom to go forth and kill their neighbors.

Until a few weeks ago, Lebanon was regarded as one of the successes of the Bush Doctrine. Even in June 2005, there was trouble on the horizon, when the Lebanese held their free elections: The terrorist group Hezbollah won 14 seats in the 128-member parliament. More worrisome, Hezbollah fared best where turnout was *highest*.

At the time, all that could be hoped was that democracy might reshape Hezbollah. Now it is clear that, having hijacked Lebanon's foreign policy, Hezbollah has reshaped Lebanese democracy.

In an instructive essay in a recent New Republic, Annia Ciezadlo writes, "I live in a mixed Beirut neighborhood, not heavily Shia or even exclusively Muslim." But when Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah spoke on TV announcing a Hezbollah attack on Israeli ships, she heard from all around the neighborhood "a surround-sound rustle of cheers and applause. Outside, caravans of cars rolled through the abandoned streets, and the drivers honked their horns." It will come as little surprise if Hezbollah gains strength in the next election.

One Last Thing | Democracy, of itself, not solution to all problems

Throughout the Middle East, elections have produced gains for Islamists, whose vision of democracy is at least a challenge for and perhaps antithetical to liberalism, tolerance or peace. In the Palestinian territories, the terrorist group <u>Hamas</u> swept to power last January. It, too, shows no signs of having been subdued by the burdens of democratic responsibility. In June 2005, 17 million Iranians cast their ballots for Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, a man who has declared that "Israel must be wiped off the map."

Some Middle East elections have been less catastrophic, but no more hopeful. In February 2005, Saudi Arabia held mostly symbolic municipal elections. Nonetheless, as the Middle East Forum's Daniel Pipes observed, these "proved a boon for the Islamist candidates." In Egypt, the Islamist Muslim Brotherhood has been gaining support for decades. In Egypt's most recent (and highly imperfect) election, the brotherhood led all opposition groups, winning 88 parliamentary seats - up from 17 seats in 2000. Should Hosni Mubarak lose power, Egypt could become an Islamist state.

Even Turkey and Kuwait, two of the great hopes for Middle Eastern liberalism and toleration, have had problems. Turkish voters elected Tayyip Erdogan's religious AKP Party in 2002, which might be the beginning of a shift away from secular society. And Kuwait's Islamists have been gaining in popularity since the end of the Gulf War. Kuwait's most recent election, on June 29, was the first in which <u>women</u> were allowed to vote; when the ballots were tallied, the Islamist party further increased its base in the National Assembly. As Abdul Razak Shuyji, one of Kuwait's Islamic fundamentalist leaders, boasted to the Washington Post three years ago, "Whenever there is true democracy, the Islamists will prevail."

Even the Iraqi elections, which America gallantly labored to bring about, gave a 41 percent plurality to the Dawa Party and its partner, the Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq. Part of their platform is that all laws must flow from Islam. This theocratic precept has proved problematic in the past.

Writing in the National Interest (and in their book *Electing to Fight*), professors Edward D. Mansfield and Jack Snyder note that "unfettered electoral politics often gives rise to nationalism and violence at home and abroad." There is a whole list of democracies that have turned to war: In 1995, Bosnia fought Serbia after nationalist parties won elections. Peru and Ecuador, two other young democracies, went to war in the Amazon.

In other words, democracy isn't bulletproof. Instances of disastrous democracy extend back to ancient times. Athens voted to attack Syracuse in 415 B.C. It was a grinding, terrible defeat that spelled the beginning of the end for Athens in the Peloponnesian War. And, to leap to the 20th century, let's remember that the Germans voted the Nazi Party into power; we all know how that turned out. (I'm drawing no parallel between contemporary political movements and Nazism - simply giving one more instance of free popular elections', meaning democracy, getting the wrong answer.)

Surveying the problems of democracy in the Middle East, Mansfield and Snyder speculate that "although democratization in the Islamic world might contribute to peace in the very long run, Islamic public opinion in the short run is generally hostile to the United States, ambivalent about terrorism and unwilling to renounce the use of force to regain disputed territories... . Per capita incomes, literacy rates and citizen skills in most Muslim Middle Eastern states are below the levels normally needed to sustain democracy."

Certainly, the benefits of democracy should not be minimized. Witness the transformation of Eastern Europe and much of South and Central America. But after <u>Hamas</u> came to power, President Bush quipped that "when you give people the vote, you give people a chance to express themselves at the polls - and if they're unhappy with the status quo, they'll let you know. That's the great thing about democracy, it provides a look into society."

The experience of the last few weeks suggests that the president may be more right than he knows.

Contact Jonathan V. Last at <u>ilast@phillynews.com</u>.

Load-Date: August 6, 2006



democracy tide has turned

The Gazette (Montreal)
July 8, 2006 Saturday
Final Edition

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Byline: The Economist

Body

Two years ago, Ali Abdullah Saleh, Yemen's president, told fellow Arab leaders to reform, or risk being swept away in a global tide of democratization. "Trim your hair now," he warned them, "or someone will shave it for you."

Turning words into deeds, Saleh, who has ruled since 1978, promised to retire at the end of his current term. Last week he changed his mind. Bowing to what he called "the people's pressure," orchestrated in nationwide mass rallies, he declared his candidacy for elections in September that are likely to prolong his tenure until the end of 2013.

Saleh has a better flair for theatrics than most of the region's other rulers-for-life, but their survival instincts are just as keen.

A few years back, and especially in the wake of America's invasion of Iraq, many of them also found it politic to sound responsive to mounting pressure for reform. It was partly internal, inspired by factors such as demography, the fading potency of long-ruling ideologies and the impact of harder-to-control new media such as satellite television.

External forces helped, too, most notably the Bush administration's loud championing, echoed by other Western governments, of political freedom as the ultimate foil for extremism.

Responses across the region varied. The leaders of Algeria, Tunisia and Egypt all went to the bother of getting themselves re-elected in contested votes, and Saudi Arabia ran its first-ever municipal polls.

The legal status of <u>women</u> improved nearly everywhere: Qatar and Kuwait joined most Arab countries by inviting them to vote and run for office. Press freedoms widened notably in some countries, while others, such as Bahrain and Morocco, empowered judicial bodies to look into past human-rights abuses.

With Iraqis and Palestinians voting enthusiastically before the world's cameras, even laggards such as Oman and Syria felt obliged to embrace the rhetoric, if not the practice, of political reform.

But now the tide appears to have turned. Syria's leader, Bashar Assad, no longer bothers with any talk of reform; his police have lately arrested dozens of dissidents.

democracy tide has turned

Since last year's parliamentary and presidential elections, Egypt's government has backtracked, too. Among other measures, it has cancelled some municipal polls, imprisoned the runner-up to President Hosni Mubarak in last year's vote, arrested 600-odd members of the main opposition group, the Muslim Brotherhood, sent police goons to beat up peaceful protesters, passed laws enshrining executive authority over the judiciary and banned two Washington-based institutes that promote democracy from working in the country.

The kingdom of Bahrain, once touted as a model reformer, also recently expelled the representative of one of these, the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs.

Police in Jordan, another relatively open country, last month summarily jailed four MPs. They had given condolences to the family of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the slain leader of Al-Qa'ida in Iraq, a provocative but hardly criminal act.

Morocco, also a star reformer, has lately slapped heavy fines on critical journals. Stiffened rules in Algeria, too, are restricting press freedom. Its president, Abdelaziz Bouteflika, fired his prime minister in May in what was seen as a move to bolster support for changes to the constitution that would let him run for a third five-year term.

Though polls were held in Saudi Arabia last year to elect town councils, these have yet to meet. Hints by senior princes at further reform have yet to be translated into action.

Kuwait, where an exuberant general election was held last month, seems an exception. Yet the polls were called only after the country's emir, Sheik Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah, dissolved his legislature in a fit of pique after it threatened to alter districting rules that have long favoured government-backed candidates.

With its similar tradition of democracy and openness, Lebanon is another apparent exception. Yet while last year's so-called "cedar revolution" shook up politics, and shook off much of neighbouring Syria's influence, it has not reduced the crippling dominance of sectarian and clan leaders.

Several factors explain the waning of reform momentum. One is the high price of oil. Exporters, from Algeria and Libya to the monarchies of the Persian Gulf, find themselves so flush with cash that they can again buy off dissent.

But a bigger factor is the advance of Islamist opposition groups. In the past year, religious parties have crushed secular rivals in Iraq, <u>Hamas</u> has captured the shaky government of Palestine, Islamists have performed strongly in Saudi Arabia's polls, and Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood has won an unprecedented fifth of parliament's seats.

More stunning yet, though without any recourse so far to the ballot box, the nascent Islamist movement in Somalia (a non-Arab member of the Arab League) appears close to uniting much of that chaotic country.

The Islamist surge has frightened not only the region's governments, but also foreign promoters of democracy. In particular, the quandary posed by *Hamas* has chilled American enthusiasm for change.

Amr Hamzawy, who assesses Arab political reform at the Carnegie Endowment in Washington, describes with dismay how Western officials and academics at a recent conference appeared to "wash their hands of supporting democracy in the Arab world."

During debates in America's Congress over proposals to slash aid to Egypt as a penalty for failing to reform, numerous speakers cited the danger of empowering Islamists and undermining a government which, though distasteful, has served American interests.

Similar signs of a return to realpolitik have been noted with relief by Arab governments. Concerns over Iran's nuclear plans have restrained Western criticism of democracy-shy but pro-Western neighbours like Azerbaijan and the countries of Central Asia.

The United States restored ties with Libya, rewarding its government for scrapping weapons programs while for the most part overlooking its appalling treatment of its own people. Even Syria, forced out of Lebanon and diplomatically isolated, has escaped severe punishment for defying a long list of Western demands.

Graphic

Photo: ZOHRA BENSEMRA, REUTERS; <u>Women</u> wait for their turn to vote at a polling station in Kuwait City in June. The election in Kuwait has bucked the trend in Arab countries, where the zeal for democracy has definitely cooled.

Load-Date: July 8, 2006



EGYPTIAN BLAST 23 killed, Aussies hurt in triple attack; Bombing suspects held

The Advertiser (Australia)
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Byline: NICOLETTE BURKE, CANBERRA

Body

EGYPTIAN police arrested 10 people last night over a triple bomb attack in the Sinai beach resort of Dahab that killed at least 23 people and injured more than 80, many of them foreigners.

Twenty Egyptians, a Swiss, a Russian and another unidentified foreigner were killed. Two Australian <u>women</u> were among the seriously injured.

It is the third terror strike on a Sinai resort in less than two years and, once again, it happened as Egyptians were enjoying a national holiday. It also seemed to open a rift between hardline al-Qaida sympathizers and other radical Muslim groups, like *Hamas*, which immediately moved to condemn the bombing.

Security police said they had detained 10 people for questioning - three of whom arrived in Dahab a day before the attack and tried to leave 15 minutes after the explosions.

The police said they did not yet know if the explosions - timed for maximum destruction in a promenade of bars, restaurants and shops - were caused by suicide bombers or bombs on timers.

The injured Australians, a 27-year-old from NSW and a 36-year-old from Melbourne, were on the busy shopping strip when three bombs were detonated almost simultaneously.

They were being evacuated to Cairo for treatment late yesterday. It is understood they suffered serious cuts to the face and body and required surgery.

A third Australian required treatment for severe shock.

Prime Minister John Howard condemned the attacks and said the death toll was sure to rise.

"It is plainly another inexcusable terrorist attack which deserves universal condemnation," he said.

"It's a reminder to all of us, to nations Islamic and non-Islamic, all nations, that terrorism doesn't respect national identity. It doesn't respect religion, it doesn't respect national borders and it plainly doesn't respect human life. And the nature of the challenge remains immense."

EGYPTIAN BLAST 23 killed, Aussies hurt in triple attack Bombing suspects held

The Federal Government has stepped up its travel warnings for people planning to go to Egypt. While the Government was aware of a high risk of a terrorist attack, its previous travel advice failed to mention the Sinai region.

Sydney woman Liz Cush told the ABC she had walked past one of the sites shortly before the blasts.

"I'd walked through there on the way to (the) restaurant probably an hour before it happened," she said.

"I imagine Egyptian people working in that shop were probably killed."

Australian tourist Owen Norris was at a beachfront restaurant just two doors down from where one bomb exploded.

"There was sort of chaos everywhere and there were bodies on the ground and people running off screaming, blood coming out of faces," he said.

Load-Date: April 26, 2006



Debate on the crisis in the Middle East

The Irish Times

August 9, 2006 Wednesday

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Section: LETTERS; Pg. 15

Length: 1805 words

Body

Madam, - Innocent Lebanese citizens - the old, the poor, men, <u>women</u> and children - continue to be killed in large numbers every day. A million Lebanese civilians have been displaced. Humanitarian laws and the Geneva Conventions are broken with impunity. The aggressive and relentless destruction of Lebanon's infrastructure intensifies by the day.

Israel has also suffered the tragic loss of innocent civilian life, each needless death equally devastating.

What is needed are strong diplomatic efforts, international involvement in the resolution of the conflict, strengthening of the UN peacekeeping forces and a multilateral force in southern Lebanon, political and economic stability for the region and a long-term political settlement. For all, or any, of these to take place, an immediate ceasefire is necessary.

Then, the underlying causes can be dealt with using all the international resources and international involvement that is needed to shift the focus of this conflict from military action and military rhetoric to forging a region where there is political and economic stability and, ultimately, no war. - Yours, etc,

CAROLINE GILL, Brighton Avenue, Foxrock, Dublin 18.

Madam, - Chris Ó Rálaigh (August 7th) writes: "If Israel's aim is to end support for Hizbullah, it would be better off withdrawing from all of Lebanon, all of Palestine and all of Syria."

It is truly hard to imagine how Mr Ó Rálaigh has come to this erroneous conclusion. Has he not seen for himself the devastating consequences of Israel's withdrawal from lands which serve as a buffer against attack from its terrorist neighbours? In 2000 Israel withdrew from Lebanon to internationally recognised borders, relying on United Nations guarantees as embodied in Security Council resolution 1559 which calls for the disbanding and disarmament of all Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias. In return it got the terrorist Hizbullah firmly ensconced on its northern border, resulting in the situation today where hundreds of murderous rocket attacks are launched against Israeli civilian targets daily.

A year ago Israel withdrew from Gaza, naively hoping for a peaceful agreement with the Palestinian Authority, only to be confronted with the rise to power of *Hamas*, which also engages in daily rocket attacks against Israeli towns.

Mr Ó Rálaigh goes on to claim that "without this occupation, support for Hizbullah, and indeed <u>Hamas</u>, Islamic Jihad and other groupings would evaporate." In fact, the history of the region proves exactly the opposite: Israeli withdrawal from any territory is interpreted as a sign of weakness and encourages the terrorist groups <u>Hamas</u> and Hizbullah to make the new borders the front line in their malicious war against the Jewish state. - Yours, etc,

BRIAN SMITH, (TCD alumnus), Montreal, Canada.

Madam, - The creation of a new generation of alienated Lebanese will ensure many more insurgents in the future. Israel will have to accept that only a political and not a military solution can provide a lasting peace.

Israel's current invasion of Lebanon - let's dispense with the weasel word "incursion" - is its third, after the previous episodes of 1978 and 1982 as well as the ruthless bombardments of 1996 (Operation "Grapes of Wrath2). The 1978 invasion came in the middle of US-brokered Middle Eastern peace talks and Unifil was created as a way to get the Israelis off the hook and enable them to withdraw, while providing some kind of security to the local population and extending the authority of the Lebanese state down to the border. Unfortunately, the Israelis chose not to leave, setting up their own enclave, arming and equipping a proxy militia and continuing to terrorise the population for over 20 further years. They also instigated attacks, directly and indirectly, on UN forces, while biased pro-Israeli reports in the US media simultaneously derided Unifil in a carefully calibrated propaganda campaign.

The results of the Israelis' actions was negative in every way. Security for their own country was not attained. Their refusal to withdraw fatally weakened the moderate Shia political party Amal, led by secularist lawyer Nabih Berri (from Tibnin, where Irish troops were located) and effectively led to the creation of Hizbullah, which adopted a much harder line. This may have been aided, but was not inspired by, Syria and Iran. Israel found itself, as an unwelcome force of occupation, fighting an increasingly immoral and unacceptable war until it was eventually forced out in 2000.

Thousands died unnecessarily, the vast majority at Israeli hands. Most were Lebanese civilians.

In all of this, there was one oasis of relative peace. Unifil made its area of South Lebanon relatively safe for its inhabitants. The number of attacks on Israel from inside the Unifil area was insignificant and would have been zero if the Israelis had left sooner. Ireland can be proud of its role during these years. Unifil's critics, whether on the left or the right, often spoke from ignorance or malice.

The UN approach then, whatever its flaws, is very different from what is now being proposed. After nearly a month of aggression visited on the civilian population of Lebanon by Israel, there are nearly a million refugees, more than on any previous occasion, and yet more dead and wounded.

All parts of Lebanon have been hit, every community has suffered and the infrastructure of the country has been set back for decades, after a painful campaign of reconstruction. This is not to excuse the actions of Hizbullah in shelling civilians in Israel, but there is simply no comparison in scale or numbers, nor can there be any excuse for the perpetration of war crimes by a sovereign state recognised in international law. Yet it is now proposed that the UN should call for a cessation of hostilities without calling for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Israel's occupying forces, and that a UN force should be deployed to attempt what an unrestrained Israeli military, with all its weaponry, could not achieve: disarming Hizbullah.

While the US and UK have no credibility left to lose among open-minded people of all nations, the UN risks dealing itself a mortal blow at the hands of its own Security Council. Why should oppressed peoples anywhere in the world look for justice and fair treatment to a body which now proposes to reward the oppressor? And why should a country with an honourable record of peacekeeping, such as Ireland, risk the lives of its own soldiers and risk its even-handed reputation for the sake of a deal that can only unravel in the one country in the Middle East which is capable of operating as a successful multi-confessional democracy? Unless firm guarantees of immediate departure are offered by the occupying forces, we should have no part in this.

I lived in Lebanon for a number of years in the 1980s and have returned since that time. - Yours, etc,

PIARAS MAC EINRI, Model Farm Road, Cork.

Madam, - I read with great interest your report on the exchange of views between Michael D Higgins TD and Labour councillors John McManus and Aidan Culhane on the conflict in the Lebanon (The Irish Times, August 5th).

Debate on the crisis in the Middle East

As the PRO of the UCD Labour Party, the largest Labour branch in Aidan Culhane's Dublin South constituency, I call on him to support the Labour Party position so ably articulated by Michael D Higgins.

Now is the time for an all-out effort to build an alliance for peace and tackle the causes of the conflict that have had such appalling consequences for the civilian population in Lebanon. Theories about clashes of civilisations are a distraction at best and deserve to be exposed and rejected. - Yours, etc,

PAUL DILLON, Milltown, Dublin 6.

Madam, - The term "war", to describe terror and conflict in the Middle East is in many cases not a neutral description. Both sides employ it, not just as a description, but often as a way to excuse the killing of civilians.

The killing of civilians during war is held to be an "unfortunate side effect" (though much less so by Hizbullah). Still, in a war situation, fighting parties are bound by the "rules of war" (unless you happen to win). Inadequate attempts to avoid targeting non-combatants are often explained along the lines of: "well it's a war; what do you expect?".

Still, in the modern world we have come to expect that military action (justified or not) adheres to standards. The Israeli defence forces argue that they do take all necessary precautions to avoid killing civilians. However, the organisation Human Rights Watch begs to differ. In a recent report it states the following: "Since the start of the conflict, Israeli forces have consistently launched artillery and air attacks with limited or dubious military gain but excessive civilian cost. In dozens of attacks, Israeli forces struck an area with no apparent military target. In some cases, the timing and intensity of the attack, the absence of a military target, as well as return strikes on rescuers, suggest that Israeli forces deliberately targeted civilians."

Doubtless, the IDF would reject these claims. Nonetheless, it is evident that we should not take at face value Israel's claims that it is doing its utmost to avoid civilian death and hardship (least of all when it bombs the exit routes). - Yours, etc,

DAVID O'GORMAN, Delgany, Co Wicklow.

Madam, - In this era, with GPS, laser, high-speed data transmission, unmanned aerial vehicles, and high-resolution aircraft photo-reconnaissance, in addition to radio, communications are better than ever, and the tragic incidents of civilian dead in Lebanon are not due to inaccurate Israeli weapons, carelessness, or malice, but to the genocidal Hizbullah engaging in the war crime of locating its weapons among civilians. It is quite clear in international law that Israel is entitled to attack the rocket-firing areas, even if in civilian locations. Some of your correspondents show no recognition of these considerations.

If the Israelis really wanted to cause civilian deaths, with over 1,000 artillery and 14 fighter squadrons they have the capability to do so on a massive scale comparable to the second World War, where Hamburg saw 45,000 dead in one week from July 22nd, 1943. Israel clearly does not do so.

In addition to this issue of "discriminate" force, the issue of "proportionality" has been mentioned by many people. Even if you use the much higher recent Lebanese government claim of 925 dead in Lebanon, quoted on Sky News (giving no breakdown if the Hizbullah element which must be a significant part of any such total), that still equals one person dead for every 9.3 Israeli air force sorties, one dead for every five targets hit, and one dead for every 14 Hizbullah-held Irano-Syrian rockets.

Is that either "indiscriminate", or "disproportionate"? - Yours, etc,

TOM CAREW, Ranelagh, Dublin 6.

Load-Date: August 9, 2006



Keeping Memory Alive; ON THE GO

The Forward May 12, 2006

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Section: Fast Forward; Pg. 14

Length: 1113 words

Byline: Masha Leon

Body

'In some paradoxical way, we each have come here to be alone - with our thoughts, with the last distant memory of loved ones long gone," said David Marwell, director of the Museum of Jewish Heritage - A Living Memorial to the Holocaust, at a Holocaust Remembrance Day event held April 23 at Hunter College. Noting the "responsibility to the past, to remember, mourn and honor those who perished," Marwell touted the museum's "garden of 18 stones - with a tree growing from each one - a tree that represents life and the promise of the future." The event was cosponsored by the Warsaw Ghetto Resistance Organization, the Anti-Defamation League, the American Gathering of Jewish Holocaust Survivors, the American Jewish Congress-Council for World Jewry, the Consulate General of Israel in New York, the New York Board of Rabbis, UJA-Federation of New York and the Jewish Community Relations Council of New York.

"I learned what can happen when Jews have no power," said New York County District Attorney Robert Morgenthau, museum chairman. "Although I was blessed to be born in this great country, the Holocaust has played a significant role in my life. Along with other veterans, [I] helped defeat Hitler and his henchmen. Following the vision of mayor [Ed] Koch, I helped establish the Museum of Jewish Heritage, where memory is preserved and where education is our most important mission." Ambassador John Bolton, U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations, paid tribute to his Israeli counterpart, Dan Gillerman, and cheered the monumental January 17 U.N. Resolution that instituted worldwide commemoration of the Holocaust. "We cannot depend on occasional movies [to remind us] of the Holocaust," New York State Senator Charles Schumer said. Alluding to Iran and <u>Hamas</u>, he explained: "In every generation, there are those who would try to destroy us." Israel's consul general in New York, Arye Mekel, mused: "You'd have thought the world would have learned a lesson. All they want to do is destroy the Jews and Israel." Citing "the crazy leader of Iran, [as well as] <u>Hamas</u> and Hezbollah," he said: "This is not an Israeli problem. The world has to stop Iran."

Sam Bloch, president of the World Federation of Bergen-Belsen Survivors Association, delivered what he defined as "a symbolic speech" in Yiddish, "the language of [most of the victims] and survivors." Block later told me that when he was asked to speak at the 1995 anniversary of the liberation of Bergen-Belsen, the then-president of Germany insisted, "You must deliver your speech in Yiddish, because that's what most of the victims spoke." After a rather lengthy narrative of how and where the victims died, he concluded his talk: "Now, flowers and grass cover the shame of the world." Survivor Robert Donat recalled: "It was Passover 1947. We had recently come to America. My mother put a few potato peelings on the Seder plate to remember [concentration camps] Majdanek, Radom, Dachau and Auschwitz. My wife and I have kept up this tradition. Later, my father wrote the story of our family's journey through 'The Kingdom of the Holocaust' [Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1963]. He wrote it for my children and their children and for all people, so they would [know] what this generation suffered in civilized Europe." (On the

Keeping Memory Alive ON THE GO

jacket of my copy of Donat's book, Elie Wiesel notes: "I have read hundreds of eye-witness accounts on the holocaust-kingdom...: I know of few other books of this kind that I could recommend without reservation.") As the Temple Emanu-El choir sang, a procession of *female* survivors - Ruth Westheimer among them - and their children and grandchildren mounted the stage to light three sets of six candles, symbolizing the 6 million lives lost. Interweaving pain with anger, the Fifth Avenue Synagogue's cantor, Joseph Malovany, sang a wrenching version of the prayer "El Ma'ale Rachamim" and then led the audience in singing the Partisan hymn "Zog Nit Keyn Mol" (Never say you are on your final road/Our step beats out the message - we are here!")

* * *

Anything negative that I say about ThinkFilm's 2005 movie "When Do We Eat? Sex, Drugs & Matzoh Ball Soup" probably will have little effect on ticket sales. There is an audience of Jews and gentiles who will find hilarious the film's pathologically dysfunctional family's attempt at a Passover Seder. What kind of rite were these people celebrating? Meant to bring together the family, their Seder turns into a battlefield of old hurts, clashes of ego and unsavory revelations. The bizarre gathering includes Ethan (Max Greenfield), who has left his father's business to become a Torah-quoting baal teshuvah and yet still has the hots for his cousin, who seduces him at the Seder. Jack Klugman, of "Odd Couple" fame, is pigeonholed as Artur, the family's grandfather. A Holocaust survivor, his fear of unpacking - a well-founded survivor trauma - should not have been an object of insensitive humor. Born in Santiago, Chile, the film's writer-director-producer's Salvador Litvak, has a name that suggests Litvak provenance. Though Litvaks are noted for their irreverence, by the time the film begins to reverse its vulgar spiral, I, a Warsawborn Litvak, found that the taste of bitter herbs had become irreversible.

* * *

Last week I ran into comedy king Freddy Roman on Madison Avenue. After a hug and a couple of air kisses, I asked him, "Have you seen Jake Ehrenreich in 'A Jew Grows in Brooklyn'?" "Is it good?" he asked. "Would I be going to see it again if it wasn't?" I answered. This time I went with my Bronx-born husband, Joseph, who, during intermission, earned points from former stickball-playing Brooklynites when he told them that he had been a "three-sewer" stickball hitter on Tiffany Street. Ehren-reich's delicious, nostalgic, poignant and, at times, hilarious two-hour-marathon autobiographical retrospective of growing up in Brooklyn is pure joy. The son of Holocaust survivors, Ehrenreich presents an odyssey from Brooklyn to worldwide globetrotting musician, with rest stops in the Catskills as a multitalented tummler-musician. He had the audience roaring. I won't give away the jokes or the stories, but Forward readers will get a kick out of the exposé about Joe and Paul, that haberdashery store whose jingle was a staple on the Forward's WEVD radio hour. If you remember when the beginning of phone numbers had names (like Kingsbridge-8), and you have warm memories of Catskill kochaleins, or classy hotels, you need not be from Brooklyn to relish the show. Just brush up your Simon Sez - you will be tested! After May 28, the show will be moving to Broadway's charming Lambs Theatre, on West 44th Street.

Graphic

IMAGE

IMAGE

Load-Date: June 14, 2006



Bush must abandon failed security policy, presidential hopeful says

University Wire

February 24, 2006 Friday

Copyright 2006 Daily Texan via U-Wire

Length: 448 words

Byline: By Behnaz Abolmaali, Daily Texan; SOURCE: U. Texas

Dateline: AUSTIN, Texas

Body

The United States must adopt a broader preventative foreign policy to fight terrorism and spread democracy, said 2008 presidential hopeful Sen. Joseph Biden, D-Del., in a speech on national security at the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library and Museum Thursday.

"The national security strategy of this administration has been a failure," said Biden, a top-ranking Democrat on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. "There is a better way to secure America."

The "axis of evil" countries -- Iran, Iraq and North Korea -- which President Bush identified in his 2002 State of the Union address, now pose an even greater risk to U.S. security, said Biden, who in October of 2002 supported the resolution to invade Iraq.

The Bush administration's hyped-up intelligence on weapons of mass destruction in Iraq and short-sighted plans for securing the peace have diverted resources and eroded American trust, Biden said.

Biden stressed the need to build more effective alliances with countries and to work with moderate voices within the Middle East to instill democracy from the inside. He pointed to recent electoral gains by the <u>Hamas</u> party in the Palestinian territories and religious party victories in Egypt, Iraq and Lebanon as proof that elections are a necessary, albeit insufficient, step in advancing democracy.

The senator said he questions the president's judgement regarding the recent domestic spying controversy. Biden added he is supportive of expanding overall military efforts and said the U.S. should take the leadership role in ending genocide in Darfur.

Biden was in Austin, Texas, Thursday to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the National Domestic Violence Hotline, which was founded as part of the Violence Against <u>Women</u> Act which Biden drafted in 1994, said Anne Wheeler, communications director for the LBJ Library and Museum. Earlier Thursday, he met with a smaller group of students in a lunch at the LBJ School of Public Affairs. Lewis Leff, a public affairs graduate student, said the evening's speech was more politicized than the lunch.

"I thought it was effective. He was pushing the message of being more straight-forward and transparent," Leff said.

Biden took a few questions from students after his speech. John Grube, an SEC presidential candidate, asked Biden what the office of the presidency means to him. Biden said the next administration must level with the American people and work to unite a country which is deeply divided.

Bush must abandon failed security policy, presidential hopeful says

"I've seen him on a lot of talk shows and have been impressed with him," said Grube, a government and history senior.

The event was sponsored by the LBJ School of Public Affairs and the LBJ Library and Museum.

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Load-Date: February 24, 2006



Tale of Two Hostages

New York Sun (Archive) January 26, 2006 Thursday

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Section: EDITORIAL & OPINION; Pg. 6

Length: 1105 words **Byline:** Daniel Johnson

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Body

Here is a tale of two hostages, one British, one German: both attractive, highly educated, high-powered modern European <u>women</u>. Both are Arabic-speaking and Islamophile, both on self-appointed missions to "help" the Palestinians and the Iraqis respectively. Both were initially treated as heroines by the British and German media; both ended by colluding with their kidnappers, and both gave Islamism a propaganda coup.

Kate Burton, the British hostage, had worked in Gaza for the United Nations. A few months ago she attached herself to al Mezan, a Palestinian "human rights" organization that seems to devote most of its energy to denouncing Israel, while doing nothing to counteract the self-inflicted evils of Palestinian society.

Ms. Burton was not a field worker but a fundraiser for al Mezan. Such groups are largely Western-financed and wholly parasitical on Western guilt. That guilt complex in turn is fed by institutions such as London University's School of Oriental and African Studies, or SOAS, where Ms. Burton studied. Despite its high academic reputation in the past - the greatest living Middle Eastern historian, Bernard Lewis, taught there many years ago - SOAS has lately become a source of anti-Americanism, academic boycotts of Israel and support for jihad.

Ms. Burton was kidnapped with her elderly parents in December, while on a tour of Gaza. Western anti-Zionists can now gloat over wrecked former Israeli settlements. But Ms. Burton risked her own and her parents' lives to gratify her schadenfreude: Several visitors have been kidnapped in Gaza in the last year.

The kidnappers held the Burtons for only four days, but in a quiet holiday period the story led the British news agenda. This gave various terrorist groups, including <u>Hamas</u>, an opportunity to pose as moderates by calling for their release. Public figures in Britain appealed on behalf of the Burtons, prayer vigils were held and great emphasis was laid on the fact that Ms. Burton was a committed pro-Palestinian activist.

The shadowy group holding the Burtons, the Brigades of the Mujahidin, demanded that Britain and the European Union put pressure on Israel over various grievances. No ransom seems to have been demanded or paid, but the kidnappers apparently received assurances that a protest would be lodged about the "nogo" zone along the Gaza border. This is designed to protect Israelis against the terrorist incursions, which still continue and are likely to increase, assuming that *Hamas* does well in yesterday's Palestinian election.

No pressure, on the other hand, was exerted by the Europeans on the Palestinian Authority to arrest the culprits. Gaza is a terrorist fieldom in which nobody expects the rule of law to be enforced - least of all since the Israelis washed their hands of the place.

Tale of Two Hostages

Once Ms. Burton was released, she praised her kidnappers for being "kind," adding that they had "a sensitive side." She would return to Gaza as soon as possible. The British Foreign Office has apparently made no objection to Ms. Burton's insouciant attitude, but many people were irritated to find their prayers and good offices exploited by a woman who made common cause with the culprits.

The case of Susanne Osthoff, the German archaeologist who was kidnapped in Iraq last November and held for about three weeks, is even more disturbing. Ms. Osthoff, who had lived in Iraq for many years, appeared in a video while she was in captivity, blindfolded, and flanked by armed terrorists. She claimed that her captors were working for Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the leader of Al Qaeda in Iraq.

Ms. Osthoff was presented by the German media as an intrepid guardian of Iraq's archaeological heritage against tomb-raiders; the fact that she was a critic of the United States helped to make her into a cause celebre. A nationwide campaign for her release was launched, with torchlit vigils and appeals from across the entire political spectrum, including Muslim leaders. The former chancellor, Gerhard Schroder, was particularly vociferous.

Faced with this hullabaloo, the new coalition government of Chancellor Angela Merkel panicked. A ransom, believed to be as much as \$5 million, was paid, thereby rewarding blackmail and offering an incentive for future abductions.

But the kidnappers wanted more - and they got it. One of the most notorious terrorists in German custody, Mohammed Ali Hamadi, was given early release from his life sentence and flown immediately to his native Labanon. This broke solemn undertakings given to the United States after Hamadi was convicted of the murder of U.S. Navy diver Robert Dean Stethem in 1985 during the hijacking of a TWA airliner by Hezbollah. This act of appearsement has set a disgraceful precedent and leaves an indelible stain on the reputation of Ms. Merkel and the honor of the German Federal Republic.

While Ms. Osthoff was taking a shower at the German embassy in Baghdad after her release, intelligence officers found that she was secretly carrying "several thousand dollars" concealed in her clothes. The serial numbers on the banknotes matched those on the ransom money. Despite her claims that the money was compensation for cash that the kidnappers had taken from her, the impression remained that the "victim" seemed to have a share of the loot.

Worse was to come. Ms. Osthoff let it be known that she would return to Iraq as soon as possible and failed to thank her benefactors. Then she appeared on al-Jazeera, dressed as a fundamentalist Muslim in a burka, with only her eyes visible, expressing sympathy for her kidnappers' aims. Either Ms. Osthoff had become a fanatic or she had duped everybody. Her credibility has collapsed.

For Ms. Merkel, the Osthoff affair has been a disaster. Germany's first <u>female</u> leader has emerged from the first serious test of her resolve looking not only cowardly but also naive and gullible. When I last saw her in London, before her election, she was at pains to insist that she was not "the German Frau Thatcher."

We can now see just what Ms. Merkel meant by that. Margaret Thatcher always refused to negotiate with terrorists or to give them what she called "the oxygen of publicity." Her decision to storm the Libyan embassy in London in 1984, after gunmen inside shot demonstrators and killed a policewoman, proved that she meant it.

As for the hostages who identify with their kidnappers: This is not only a psychological phenomenon (the "Stockholm syndrome"), but a political one, too. Europe is being held hostage by the Islamists in its midst. If our leaders are not yet ready to stand up to them, the **women** of Europe might as well buy their burkas now.

Load-Date: January 26, 2006



Denmark faces international boycott over Muslim cartoons

The Times (London)

January 31, 2006, Tuesday

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Section: OVERSEAS NEWS; Pg. 29

Length: 1091 words

Byline: Anthony Browne

Body

Denmark faced the full fury of the Muslim world yesterday as a long-simmering row over newspaper cartoons depicting the Prophet Muhammad finally erupted.

There were street demonstrations and flag-burnings in the Middle East. Libya joined Saudi Arabia in withdrawing its ambassador from Copenhagen. Islamic governments and organisations, including the Muslim Council of Britain, issued denunciations and a boycott of Danish goods took hold across the Muslim world.

The Danish Government warned its citizens about travelling to Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Syria, and withdrew aid workers from the Gaza Strip.

Last night EU foreign ministers issued a statement in support of Denmark, and the European Commission threatened to report any government backing the boycott to the World Trade Organisation.

The fury echoed the outcry that followed the publication in 1988 of the Salman Rushdie novel The Satanic Verses. The trigger for the latest clash of cultures was the publication by the Danish newspaper Jyllends-Posten on September 30 of 12 cartoons of Muhammad. A biographer of the prophet had complained that no one would dare to illustrate his book, and the newspaper challenged cartoonists to draw pictures of the prophet in a self-declared battle for freedom of speech.

One submission showed Muhammad wearing a bomb-shaped turban; in another he tells dead suicide bombers that he has run out of virgins with which to reward them. Any portrayal of Muhammad is blasphemous in Islam, lest it encourages idolatry.

In October ambassadors from ten Muslim countries complained to Anders Fogh Rasmussen, the Danish Prime Minister, who refused to interfere with the press's freedom.

But the issue began to boil this month after the cartoons appeared in Magazinet, a Christian newspaper in Norway, and on the website of the Norwegian newspaper Dagbladet.

Imams denounced Denmark from their pulpits, the Arab press inflamed pent-up Muslim anger at the West and last Friday the Saudi Government recalled its ambassador, but still Mr Rasmussen refused to apologise. He condemned attempts to "demonise people because of religious beliefs", but argued: "The Government can in no way influence the media."

By yesterday governments across the Arab world were responding to public outrage.

Denmark faces international boycott over Muslim cartoons

Libya closed its embassy in Denmark and the Egyptian parliament demanded that its Government follow suit. The Kuwaiti and Jordanian governments called for explanations from their Danish ambassadors. President Lahoud of Lebanon condemned the cartoons, saying his country "cannot accept any insult to any religion". The Justice Minister of the United Arab Emirates said: "This is cultural terrorism, not freedom of expression." In Gaza, gunmen briefly occupied the EU office in Gaza and warned Danes and Norwegians to stay away. Palestinians in the West Bank burnt Danish flags. The Islamic groups <u>Hamas</u> and Hezbollah and the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood demanded an apology.

Supermarkets in Algeria, Bahrain, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, Qatar, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen all removed Danish produce from their shelves. Arla Foods, a Danish company with annual sales of about \$430 million in the Middle East, said that the boycott was almost total and suspended production in Saudi Arabia.

The Muslim Council of Britain, whose leaders are to meet the Danish ambassador tomorrow, deplored the newspapers' refusal to apologise for printing "sacrilegious cartoons vilifying the Prophet Muhammad".

Bill Clinton, the former US President, added his voice, telling a conference in Qatar that he feared anti-Semitism would be replaced with anti-Islamic prejudice.

He condemned "these totally outrageous cartoons against Islam".

Per Stig Moeller, Denmark's Foreign Minister, insisted in Brussels last night: "We condemn blasphemy. We want respect for religions. But we cannot intervene. We have sent explanations but, as we have said before, freedom of expression is a matter for the courts, not for the Government."

A spokesman for Peter Mandelson, the EU Trade Commissioner, said that if the Saudi Government had encouraged the boycott of Danish goods, Mr Mandelson would take the matter to the WTO.

Carsten Juste, editor-in-chief of Jyllends-Posten, said that the drawings "were not in violation of Danish law but have offended many Muslims, which we would like to apologise for".

However, a spokesman for the newspaper said: "We do not apologize for printing the cartoons, it was our right to do so. We stand by our decision to print them."

www.timesonline.co.uk

Lastest news www.dagbladet.no/kultur/2006/01/10/454375.html

FROM NEWSPAPER CHALLENGE TO DIPLOMATIC INCIDENT

September 30, 2005 Danish newspaper Jyllands-Posten publishes 12 cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad

October 20 Ambassadors of ten Muslim countries complain to Danish Prime Minister.

Jyllands-Posten reports that illustrators have received death threats

November 14 Jamaat-e-Islami, a Pakistan-based group, protests in Islamabad

January 10, 2006 Cartoons reprinted by Magazinet, a Norwegian newspaper

January 26 Saudi Arabia recalls its ambassador and initiates boycott of Danish goods

January 27 Thousands denounce the cartoons during Friday prayers in Iraq

January 28 Danish company Arla places adverts in Middle Eastern newspapers to try to stop boycott of its produce

January 29 Jyllands-Posten prints a statement in Arabic saying the drawings were published in line with freedom of expression and not a campaign against Islam.

Denmark faces international boycott over Muslim cartoons

Palestinians burn Danish flags and Libya announces it will close its embassy in Denmark

January 30 EU says it will take World Trade Organisation action if boycott persists. Several Islamic groups, including <u>Hamas</u> and the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, call for worldwide boycott of Danish products. Masked gunmen in storm EU office in Gaza

ISLAMIC CONFLICT

- * 1988 Ayatollah Khomeini issues fatwa against Salman Rushdie after publication of The Satanic Verses
- * 2001 The author Khalid Duran faces mass condemnation from Muslims for his book which sought to explain Islam to Jews, culminating in alleged death threats for his apostasy
- * 2002 Fatwa issued against the Nigerian journalist Isioma Daniel after she suggested that Muhammad might approve of the Miss World contest
- * 2004 Extremist kills the Dutch director Theo van Gogh after he made Submission, a ten-minute film about the abuse of Muslim **women** featuring Koranic verses written on **female** bodies
- * 2005 Swedish museum is forced to remove a painting depicting a couple making love while covered in verses from the Koran

Load-Date: January 31, 2006



All eyes on the Middle East

University Wire

January 24, 2006 Tuesday

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Section: COLUMN Length: 1001 words

Byline: By Daniel P. Rubenstein, Daily Texan; SOURCE: U. Texas

Dateline: AUSTIN, Texas

Body

2005 was a busy year in the Middle East, and 2006 promises to be no different. President Bush outlined U.S. foreign policy objectives for various Middle Eastern states in last year's State of the Union address. This week, let's take a look back at some of Bush's points in his Feb. 2, 2005 speech, propose some suggestions and predict U.S. policy for 2006.

In last year's State of the Union address, Bush raised the bar for Egypt by saying, "[T]he great and proud nation of Egypt, which showed the way toward peace in the Middle East, can now show the way toward democracy in the Middle East." Egypt answered Bush's expectations with sham elections. Ayman Nour, leader of the liberal opposition, was thrown in jail. If Bush is sincere about promoting democracy in the Arab world, he will highlight Nour's plight at every opportunity.

The U.S.-Egypt relationship will attract public scrutiny in 2006. Egypt is seeking a free-trade agreement with the United States, but will not succeed unless Congress, which gives Egypt \$2 billion a year in aid, believes that Egypt is moving forward on the path of liberalization. Also, President Hosni Mubarak is not getting any younger. He is going to tell Washington that his replacement will either be his son Gamal (affectionately known as Jimmy) or a member of the Muslim Brotherhood. Bush needs to convince Mubarak that allowing liberal opposition groups to mobilize without fear is a preferred alternative to corrupt authoritarianism or Muslim theocracy.

Regarding the Palestinian Authority, Bush said last year, "The beginnings of reform and democracy in the Palestinian territories are now showing the power of freedom to break old patterns of violence and failure. ... The goal of two democratic states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace, is within reach."

The Jan. 25 Palestinian parliamentary elections are a laudable step toward a democratic society, but no candidate is running on a platform of peace. One candidate, a leader of the al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade named Jamal Abu Roub, answers to the nickname "Hitler." Islamic terrorist group *Hamas* is expected to make a strong showing in the elections. Israel's policy is that no terrorist can use an election campaign to receive immunity from attack. Therefore, in 2006, *Hamas* will try to morph into a legitimate political movement - much like the Palestine Liberation Organization did over a decade ago - in order to achieve international and Israeli recognition.

"The government of Saudi Arabia," Bush said in last year's speech, "can demonstrate its leadership in the region by expanding the role of its people in determining their future." Our so-called ally in the war-on-terrorism, Saudi Arabia has not yet taken any steps to expand the role of its people in determining their future. For example, <u>women</u> are

All eyes on the Middle East

still banned from driving. Saudi men who believe in a strict Islamic lifestyle say that allowing a woman to drive means that she will be able to leave home at will, thus providing her with more opportunity to violate Islamic law. Bush must be more specific in his call for Saudi Arabia to respect human rights by encouraging the monarchy to empower its **women**.

Saudi Arabia's King Fahd died in 2005, but now-King Abdullah had been effectively ruling the kingdom since Fahd's stroke in 1995. The Saudi monarchy's future remains unpredictable, but in 2006, expect to see more photo-ops of the royal family at the Bush ranch.

About Iraq, Bush said last February, "We will succeed because the Iraqi people value their own liberty." For all the talk about not being able to impose democracy, voter turnout was high for the Dec. 15 parliamentary election. Now the Iraqi political parties will have to negotiate with each other in order to form a coalition government. The Iraqis will do all of this as they struggle to fight the terrorists among them. In 2006, the U.S. troop level in Iraq will go down, and every politician will take credit for the reduction.

Regarding Syria, Bush said, "Syria still allows its territory, and parts of Lebanon, to be used by terrorists who seek to destroy every chance of peace in the region." Two weeks after Bush's speech, former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Harari was assassinated. The murder was likely orchestrated by the Syrian regime of President Assad. Syria continues to abet the terrorist insurgency in Iraq, and continues to serve as a gateway for Iranian arms for Hizballah in southern Lebanon. Expect Bush to increase pressure on Assad in 2006 because the road to defeating the Iranian regime passes through Damascus.

On Iran, Bush said, "Iran remains the world's primary state sponsor of terror - pursuing nuclear weapons while depriving its people of the freedom they seek and deserve. ... And to the Iranian people, I say tonight: As you stand for your own liberty, America stands with you."

Bush needs to give more help to Iranian dissidents, both moral support and financial aid. Also, if the United States says that it refuses to live with a nuclear Iran, and if Iran is determined to become a nuclear power, somebody is going to blink. Iranian air defenses will be on high alert in 2006. Even without United Nations action, Iran is already becoming isolated - Iran already has begun to remove its foreign currency accounts out of European banks in order to protect its assets from possible sanctions.

President Bush is preparing to deliver his 2006 State of the Union address. Expect to hear the latest edition of the Bush Doctrine, which says that the expansion of freedom in the Middle East will make the region and the rest of the world safer and more prosperous. The U.S. will continue to have a major role to play in the Middle East by leading the democratic revolution on all fronts. The people of the Middle East are no exception to the human desire to live without fear.

Let's hope that Bush continues to move confidently in the direction of his vision, and let's hold him accountable when he wavers from it.

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Load-Date: January 24, 2006



Israeli onslaught continues

The Nation (AsiaNet)
July 9, 2006 Sunday

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Section: NATIONWIDE INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 476 words

Body

ISRAEL's murderous incursion into the Gaza Strip, which began nearly two weeks ago to express its outrage at the abduction of its soldier during a Palestinian group's raid into Israel, continues unabated. The Jewish state demands his release as well as an end to rocket fire across the border as a quid pro quo for calling off the operation. Compared to the daily incidents of ruthless killings of Palestinians, men, <u>women</u> and children, large-scale devastation of their property and appropriation of their lands and orchards by the state apparatus of Israel, the loss it sustained in the June 25 raid conducted by a resistance group pales into insignificance.

The present attack was launched despite President Abbas' appeal for restraint since, as he said, the raid "violated the national consensus". The consequences have been disastrous for the people of Gaza. With tanks stalking them at every corner and helicopter gunships pounding their homes and offices, theirs is an extremely miserable and insecure life. The Israelis have abducted their two Ministers and 20 Members of Parliament, threatening Prime Minster Ismail Haniya with murder. Scores, irrespective of age and gender, have been killed.

They stand deprived of the day-to-day essential needs: water, electricity, food and medicines. Hundreds have been stranded since the Israeli forces have blocked points of entry and exit. Commerce has come to a standstill. It is a veritable human tragedy. Instead of stepping in to check the Israeli madness, the apathetic international community has turned a blind eye and let the calamity worsen and perpetuate. The Palestinian people are fighting for a legitimate cause, to drive foreign occupiers out of their homeland.

The distressing circumstances have compelled them to make one concession after the other in the hope of a peaceful existence. Yet Israel has contemptuously dumped agreements it had reached with them, with the guarantor, the US, blatantly siding with their violator. *Hamas*, known for its 'destruction of Israel' mandate, had made a historic shift and struck a deal with Fatah that contained an implicit recognition of Israel, which somehow termed it as a "purely internal matter". As a latest show of arrogance, Tel Aviv has rejected Mr Haniya's offer of ceasefire, squashing the possibility of "return to a situation of calm" and finding a solution through diplomatic means.

The US Ambassador to the UN has fiercely opposed the draft Security Council resolution Qatar has submitted, though it merely demanded Israel to end its aggression and release the Palestinian officials it had taken into custody. The US, under the Bush administration, has thrown all pretence of striving for a fair deal in Palestine out of the window. One really wonders how much longer the Palestinian people have to suffer before the world conscience wakes up.

Load-Date: July 10, 2006



Hill protesters slam Harper for response to crisis: PM showed 'immaturity' by not denouncing

Ottawa Citizen

July 17, 2006 Monday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A2

Length: 463 words

Byline: Alexandra Zabjek, The Ottawa Citizen

Dateline: HEZBOLLAH, Israel

Body

HEZBOLLAH, Israel - Deriding Prime Minister Stephen Harper as a carbon copy of U.S. President George W. Bush, angry Lebanese-Canadians and their supporters marched on Parliament Hill yesterday to condemn recent Israeli attacks on Lebanon and Mr. Harper's reaction to the crisis.

About 200 protesters, many carrying Lebanese and Palestinian flags, circled in front of the Peace Tower in the afternoon and demanded an end to the bombings.

The protesters also sharply criticized Mr. Harper, who said Thursday that "Israel has the right to defend itself" after Hezbollah captured two Israeli soldiers a day earlier. Israel's response to the kidnappings was "reserved," said Mr. Harper on the eve of the G8 summit.

"The Harper response was not at all nuanced," said protester Wassim Garzouzi, 22. "The last government was a bit more diplomatic."

Mr. Garzouzi, whose parents are stuck in Lebanon after going there for holidays, said the Harper government showed "immaturity" when it did not condemn both sides in the crisis as other countries had done.

Mr. Harper joined Mr. Bush last week in placing sole blame for the crisis on Hezbollah, while Russia and France criticized Israel's attacks as being a disproportionate response to the kidnappings.

Yesterday, Mr. Harper joined G8 leaders to produce a strongly worded statement, demanding that Hezbollah and <u>Hamas</u> free kidnapped Israeli soldiers and calling on Israel to "exercise utmost restraint."

Many protesters noted Mr. Harper's reaction differed from what they might have expected from former prime minister Jean Chretien.

"I think he is trying to improve the image of the country with the United States," said George Shammas, 77, of Ottawa. "Chretien wouldn't say this. I prefer my country to have a more balanced humanitarian attitude."

Protesters said they did not attend yesterday's rally to support Hezbollah, but many appeared at least mildly sympathetic to the group, which is banned as a terrorist organization in Canada.

Hill protesters slam Harper for response to crisis: PM showed 'immaturity' by not denouncing

"What about Gaza and Lebanon and Hezbollah? They don't have the right to defend themselves?" asked Walid Darwish, saying the Hezbollah kidnappings were a response to earlier Israeli incursions into the Gaza strip.

Yesterday's protest ended abruptly when a scheduled speaker was interrupted by a man who took control of the microphone and decried Zionism and the "occupation of Palestine." The <u>female</u> speaker apologized for the man's remarks before ending the rally.

At a rally Montreal, organized by a group called the Montreal Lebanese Committee, some marchers carried signs with photos of Mr. Harper that read, "We were stupid for voting for you."

About a dozen children headed the march for a period, shouting along with their parents, "Israel assassin, Canada complice" (Israel murderer, Canada accomplice).

Graphic

Photo: Jean Levac, The Ottawa Citizen; Demonstrators gathered on Parliament Hill yesterday to demand an end to Israeli attacks on Lebanon.

Load-Date: July 17, 2006



WHAT A WEEK

Echo (Australia)

May 25, 2006 Thursday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 4

Length: 462 words

Body

CLOSE TO HOME

GEELONG swimmers will be doing laps in a 50m pool year-round when the new Waurn Ponds water park opens at the end of 2008.

A NEW report has revealed that one in 50 people in the Barwon region has acquired brain injury and is cared for by family with little or no outside support. The report highlighted that most carers had barely any help from outside services.

THE State Government will push for duplication of the Princes Highway to Colac and has promised extra V/Line services as part of a wide-sweeping 10-year public transport upgrade.

A CORIO man has been jailed for four years after a violent home invasion in which an elderly man was threatened, beaten and robbed of more than \$18,000.

VICTORIA

A MELBOURNE gay community spokesman has hailed new Victoria Police guidelines for policing public space beats where men seek sex with other men. Pride March representative Garrett Teters said a new police policy and beats manual would help ensure people were treated equally.

AUSTRALIA

FIVE-YEAR-OLD Sophie Delezio has given the thumbs up to doctors who say she should be out of hospital and back at school within weeks. Sophie was being pushed in a stroller across a pedestrian crossing on May 5 when she was struck by a car.

JACK the Ripper could well be a Jill. In a bid to crack the identity of one of the greatest murder mysteries of all time, technology developed in Australia has tested 118-year-old DNA the notorious serial killer may have left behind and built a partial *female* profile.

HEALTH Minister Tony Abbott says he has begun formal talks with the pharmaceutical industry over plans to reform the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme. The Federal Government's aim reportedly is to find \$1 billion in savings from the taxpayer-funded scheme through promotion of generic-brand drugs.

FIRST they lost Private Jake Kovco's body, then the military admitted it had also lost a draft report into his bungled repatriation. Defence force chief Angus Houston was forced into another embarrassing apology after revealing a

WHAT A WEEK

senior officer left a CD containing the report at Melbourne Airport, where it was found and handed to broadcaster Derryn Hinch.

THE WORLD

<u>HAMAS</u> and Fatah paramilitaries have staged mass shows of strength amid warnings the Islamists' decision to deploy its gunmen on the streets of Gaza could trigger a Palestinian civil war.

IN one of the most intensive searches for Jimmy Hoffa in decades, the FBI summoned archeologists and anthropologists and brought in heavy equipment to scour a horse farm for the body of the former labour leader, who vanished in 1975.

OUT OF THIS WORLD

A CHINESE high school student has invented a computer where the operator just moves their eyes to make it work. Zhou Chen, from Nanjing, named his invention the eyeball mouse.

Load-Date: May 25, 2006



National Briefs

Telegraph Herald (Dubuque, IA)
January 28, 2006 Saturday

Copyright 2006 Woodward Communications, Inc.

Section: National/World; Pg. a6

Length: 505 words

Byline: ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dateline: JAKARTA, Indonesia

Body

Major quake hits off Indonesian coast

A magnitude-7.7 undersea earthquake rocked eastern Indonesia early today, the U.S. Geological Survey said. There was no danger of a tsunami, and no injuries were reported.

The earthquake occurred in the Banda Sea about 120 miles south of Ambon city, the USGS said. It occurred at a depth of 212 miles.

The Pacific Tsunami Warning Center said no destructive tsunami threat existed.

Amran, an official at Indonesia's meteorological agency in the capital, Jakarta, said there were no immediate reports of damages or injuries. Like many Indonesians, he goes by only one name.

The Internet news portal Detik.com reported from Ambon that people fled their houses in panic when the earthquake, which lasted about two minutes, struck.

Japanese university to discipline chemist

TOKYO - Japan's most prestigious university will discipline a chemistry professor after finding that 12 of his experiments could not be reproduced, raising questions about their veracity, a university spokesman said Friday.

The finding by an investigative panel at the University of Tokyo comes just weeks after the scientific world was rocked by a South Korean university's declaration that a professor's claims of cloning human stem cells was fraudulent.

The investigation in Japan now raised doubts about genetic research experiments conducted by professor Kazunari Taira, 53.

In papers published in the British journal Nature and elsewhere between 1998 and 2004, Taira said his research team successfully coaxed E. coli bacteria to produce the human enzyme Dicer, the Kyodo news agency reported.

Colombia: Al-Qaida, passport ring linked

National Briefs

BOGOTA, Colombia - Colombia insisted Friday that a false-passport ring it dismantled might have links to al-Qaida and *Hamas*, despite U.S. doubts about the counterfeiters' connection to the terrorist groups.

Colombian officials said Thursday the gang supplied citizens from Pakistan, Jordan, Iraq, Egypt and other countries with false passports and Colombian nationality without them ever setting foot in the country.

Acting Attorney General Jorge Armando Otalora said some of the 19 people arrested were wanted for working with al-Qaida and the militant Palestinian group.

Police describe alleged serial killer's motive

MEXICO CITY - A <u>female</u> wrestler suspected of killing at least 10 elderly <u>women</u> in Mexico City said she acted out of anger at being abandoned by her mother and sexually abused by the man who took care of her, police said Friday.

Juana Barraza, 48, was arrested Wednesday while fleeing a house where an 82-year-old woman had been strangled with a stethoscope. Barraza has admitted to four killings, but police said evidence linked her to a total of 10, implicating her as the notorious "Mataviejitas," or "Little Old Lady Killer."

Police had suspected the killer was a man dressed as a woman and spent months detaining, questioning and fingerprinting transvestites. *Female* serial killers are rare in any country, making up only 8 percent of all serial assassins in the United States.

Load-Date: January 28, 2006



'Islamic fascism' is not a new term

Lancaster New Era (Pennsylvania) September 2, 2006 Saturday

Copyright 2006 Lancaster Newspapers, Inc.

Section: A; Pg. 8 Length: 519 words Byline: Editorials

Dateline: Lancaster, PA

Body

In recent days, President Bush, Sen. Rick Santorum and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld have criticized "Islamic fascists" for waging a war of terrorism on the West.

Some close listeners have directed their criticism not at Islamic fascists but at the administration and its friends who supposedly have minted this "new buzz word for Republicans."

Not only is the phrase new, they say, but it slanders Islam and, in calling radical Muslims "fascists," is historically inaccurate.

These critics are wrong.

"Islamic fascism',' or "Islamofascism," is hardly a new description if radical Muslims. It apparently first appeared in an article in the Sept. 8, 1990, issue of The Independent.

The article's author, Malise Ruthven, wrote: "Authoritarian government, not to say Islamo-fascism, is the rule rather than the exception from Morocco to Pakistan."

The term came into general usage, particularly among conservatives, but also among some Mideast scholars, following the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on the United States by al-Qaida operatives.

The columnist Christopher Hitchens condemned "fascism with an Islamic face" three days after the attacks.

Neither have George Bush and Rick Santorum suddenly adopted the terminology this week.

Santorum compared the threat of Islamic fundamentalism to fascism and communism in a speech to Lancaster County ACTION in February 2002.

Bush used the phrase as early as October of last year in a speech before the National Endowment for Democracy.

"Some call this evil Islamic radicalism; others, militant Jihadism; still others, Islamo-fascism," he said. "Whatever it's called, this ideology is very different from the religion of Islam."

That brings us to the supposed slam on Islam that critics say the term suggests.

'Islamic fascism' is not a new term

Bush and other administrative spokesmen have said repeatedly since 9/11 that they have no quarrel with Islam or Muslims in general, only radical Muslims, or Islamic fascists. Nothing they have said or done contradicts that.

Neither is the phrase inaccurate simply because it was first applied to Italian fascism - a political, not religious, movement.

Those who use the term "Islamic fascists" are not referring to one group of religious fanatics, but to several organized bands of Muslim terrorists who, together, present a threat to Western civilization.

Robert S. Wistrich, who discussed "the new Islamic fascism" in The Jerusalem Post on Nov, 16, 2001, describes it this way: a totalitarian mind-set, hatred of the West, fanatical extremism, repression of <u>women</u>, loathing of Jews and dreams taking over the world.

Osama bin Laden is not the only Islamic fascist who has called for Muslims to overrun the West and reclaim the glory Muslim countries have lost.

Islamic fascism also extends to groups of Muslim fundamentalists such as <u>Hamas</u> and Hezbollah, as well as the Taliban in Afghanistan.

Instead of arguing that the term Islamic fascist is new and wrong, critics of the Bush administration should pay closer attention to what these religious zealots are planning for the rest of us.

By whatever name they are called, Muslim terrorists are bad news for free people.

Load-Date: September 3, 2006



DIGEST

St. Louis Post-Dispatch (Missouri)
September 17, 2006 Sunday
FOURTH EDITION

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A6

Length: 462 words

Byline: FROM NEWS SERVICES

Body

HAVANA

Sudan's president says no to U.N.

Sudan's president again rejected the deployment of U.N. peacekeeping troops in the war-ravaged Darfur region, in a meeting Saturday with U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan in Cuba, at the Nonaligned Movement summit meeting.

Annan urged the government of Sudan in an editorial distributed Saturday to accept the U.N. Security Council's decision to replace the African Union peacekeeping force in Darfur with better-equipped U.N. troops.

Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir rejected his appeal.

TOKYO

Typhoon slams into Japanese island chain

A strong typhoon tore through Japan's southern Okinawa island chain Sunday, unleashing heavy rains and fierce winds that have killed three people, injured scores and triggered landslides.

Typhoon Shanshan had weakened overnight, but it still was lashing the region with maximum sustained winds of 100 mph. It was forecast to continue churning northeast and hit Japan's southwestern island of Kyushu as early as Sunday evening, Japan's Meteorological Agency said.

Heavy rain warnings were issued for much of western Japan, but the storm has so far killed three people before even making landfall.

A father and teenage daughter died Saturday when their car was hit by a flash flood in Kyushu, Kyodo News agency and national broadcaster NHK said. Another man was separately swept away in high waters elsewhere, Kyodo said.

BAIKONUR, KAZAKHSTAN

Russian rocket to take tourist to space station

DIGEST

Engineers mounted a Russian Soyuz rocket on top of its launch pad in the middle of the Kazakh steppe Saturday and began final preparations for blastoff to the international space station in two days.

Joining Russian cosmonaut Mikhail Tyurin and U.S. astronaut Michael Lopez-Alegria on Monday will be the world's first <u>female</u> space tourist, Anousheh Ansari. Ansari is an Iranian-American entrepreneur who is paying an estimated \$20 million to be the fourth amateur astronaut to visit the orbiting station.

BANGKOK, THAILAND

Blasts in south follow peace rally

A series of bomb blasts ripped through three department stores Saturday night in Thailand's restive south, killing four people and wounding dozens, police said.

The attacks in the region's main commercial center of Hat Yai came hours after the military staged a peace rally in the south, the site of a Muslim insurgency.

Authorities blamed separatist insurgents for the attacks.

RAMALLAH, WEST BANK

Abbas to meet with Bush, Palestinian says

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas will meet President George W. Bush in New York this week and will probably seek to promote his planned coalition with *Hamas*, a Palestinian official said Saturday.

Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat said the meeting with Bush would take place Wednesday on the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly.

Notes

World

Graphic

PHOTO

PHOTO - River water gushes over a levee after a typhoon brought heavy rainfall in Karatsu, in southwestern Japan, on Saturday. The storm forced the suspension of dozens of flights and disrupted shipping in the region, according to reports. Kyodo News/The Associated Press

Load-Date: September 17, 2006



ISLAMIC CULTURE OF PAKISTAN WOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO BE CHANGED: QAZI

The Frontier Star
September 9, 2006 Saturday

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Length: 500 words

Body

LAHORE, Sept. 9: Jamaat-e-Islami Amir Qazi Hussain Ahmad Saturday accused General Pervez Musharraf of using political turncoats to further his so called enlightened moderation agenda in the country through amendments in the Hudood laws which are based on Quranic revelations.

"The people of Pakistan will not allow the army generals to change Islamic culture of Pakistan as there is no room for legislation on secular basis in a country which came into being in the name of Islam. Constitution of Pakistan provides ample guidance in respect of democracy to federation in line with the Islamic teachings therefore its restoration in the original form can only steer the country out from the prevalent crisis," the JI ameer added.

Qazi Hussain Ahmad expressed these views while addressing central training workshop for the JI <u>women</u> office bearers here at Mansoora. The workshop is organized by <u>Women</u> Wing of Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan, which is attended, by large number of JI office bearers from across the country. Addressing participants of the workshop Qazi Hussain Ahmad highlighted role of <u>women</u> in the ongoing drive against the government. He pointed out that <u>women</u> in Palestine and Lebanon have changed the political scene in their respective areas by participating in the political and Jihadi struggle from the platform of <u>Hamas</u> and Hizbullah.

The JI <u>women</u> wing, he urged, can play important role in making the drive against Musharraf regime by mobilizing the masses. Replying a question about MQM the JI Ameer revealed a dangerous ploy seeking to enable Karachibased parochial group to make inroad in the political arena of Punjab under official patronage. Islamabad, he said, is using an American think tank International Republican Institute to affect its agenda.

A recent public opinion poll conducted by the IRI has shown an upward change in the mass support to MQM. Contrary to factual position, the IRI survey puts MQM public support at 12 per cent, which, Qazi said, is enough to prove the pre-poll ringing plans under official patronage.

He said the MMA will thwart this official plan to make win MQM in the general elections by boycotting the elections being held with Musharraf in the power and tendering resignations from the assemblies if the military dictator tired to re-elect himself as president through them.

Earlier, in his address to training workshop the JI secretary general Syed Munawwar Hassan urged the <u>women</u> leaders not to be pessimistic in the wake of western media trial of the Islamic movements across the globe. To a question, Syed Munawwar Hassan said ironically all the resources and forces of Muslim countries are being used to extend logistic support to enemies of Islam. He said such rulers should be ousted from the corridors of power so that resources of Ummah could be utilized for the betterment of Muslims. The lauded the JI <u>women</u> wing for organizing a national level training moot to polish the organizational skill and moral faculty of its office bearers.

ISLAMIC CULTURE OF PAKISTAN WOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO BE CHANGED: QAZI

Load-Date: December 6, 2006



The Independent (London)
August 19, 2006 Saturday
Second Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 27

Length: 464 words

Byline: By Karin Laub in Jerusalem

Body

In the face of plummeting approval ratings in the wake of the war in Lebanon, Ehud Olmert, the Israeli Prime Minister, has been forced to shelve plans to pull out of the West Bank and is struggling to ride out a growing public storm over the government's wartime bungles.

At the start of his term three months ago, Mr Olmert had been confident he could draw Israel's final borders by 2010 by pulling out of much of the West Bank unilaterally. He would turn Israel into a "fun place to live", he promised.

After 34 days of fighting Hizbollah, Mr Olmert, known for his rapid-fire decision-making, is more subdued, turning increasingly to others for advice, members of his inner circle say.

On the domestic front, the fighting in Lebanon, along with Israel's ongoing offensive against militants in Gaza, appears to have discredited the idea of unilateralism. Israeli troops left Lebanon in 2000 and Gaza in 2005, in both cases without a peace deal.

At the height of the war, Mr Olmert still asserted that the fighting in Lebanon could create momentum for a West Bank pull-out, prompting angry accusations that he was trying to hijack the war for a divisive political agenda. However, in meetings this week, Mr Olmert told cabinet ministers and key legislators that the West Bank plan was being shelved.

A top Olmert aide, Asaf Shariv, confirmed the policy shift. "Right now, we will deal with other issues," said Mr Shariv. "It's not that it [the pull-out] was cancelled, but it is not on the agenda."

That strips Mr Olmert's coalition of its main reason for being - making another attempt to resolve the Palestinian conflict. Mr Olmert would be hard-pressed to find an alternative to the West Bank plan, since peace talks are expected to remain frozen as long as the Islamic militant group *Hamas* is in charge in the West Bank and Gaza.

Bereft of a program, Mr Olmert's government - an uneasy alliance of his centrist Kadima and the centre-left Labour - is increasingly vulnerable to political attack, especially as complaints mount about his handling of the war.

Mr Olmert's troubles could be further compounded by legal entanglements. Haim Ramon, his close ally and the chief ideologue of the West Bank pull-out, said yesterday that he would resign as Justice Minister next week because of a pending indictment on a charge of "indecent assault" of an 18-year-old <u>female</u> soldier at a government office. Mr Ramon's departure would further weaken the Olmert camp in Kadima. The next election is not scheduled until 2010, but, in the past decade, no Israeli government has survived a full four-year term.

Polls suggest that a majority of Israelis are not demanding Mr Olmert's resignation, for now.

"But he is definitely in trouble," said the analyst Yosef Alpher. "His situation does not look good." ap

Load-Date: August 19, 2006



UK Newsquest Regional Press - This is The NorthEast August 31, 2006 Thursday

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Section: FEATURES; Hearallsides

Length: 1125 words

Dateline: The North East

Body

ID CARDS: UNDER a last-minute shabby compromise agreed between the Government and Tories in the House of Lords, anyone renewing their passport or any other "designated" document will be compulsorily entered onto the National Identity Register.

Individuals will merely be able to opt not to receive a card until January 1, 2010 - but will still have to pay for it.

The problem has always been the database, not the card, and the comprehensive destruction of privacy it will bring.

In Parliament, round one may have gone to the Government by misdirection, but in the country it's a different story.

Millions are already vehemently opposed. What's the Home Office going to do? Round them up and force them to be fingerprinted or iris scanned? The coercion they will have to use will bring home to the public the true nature of the scheme.

The Government may think it has won, but our group NEsaysNO2ID has only just begun to fight. - Robin Ashby, NEsaysNo2ID, Newcastle.

FOLIC ACID

SO what is new about folic acid in pregnancy? Nothing.

Forty years ago, I was in general practice and we routinely gave Pregaday (folic acid plus iron) to <u>women</u> who wished to conceive or who were in the early months of pregnancy. We knew then that it would help in the prevention of nervous system defects in babies. - Dr Ann E Carr, Middleton St George.

SHAME OVER SHOOTINGS

IN the space of a week two coroner's juries in London, investigating separate incidents in the Gaza strip, have found that the Israeli armed forces have murdered two British citizens by deliberately shooting them in the head.

On both occasions, despite the evidence of murder, the Israeli government has refused to co-operate with the coroner.

Imagine if the Palestinian organisation <u>Hamas</u> had targeted an innocent British journalist and an equally innocent aid worker. The Foreign Secretary, Jack Straw, would have denounced <u>Hamas</u> and in doing so he would have called for EU and UN sanctions against them.

Yet when Israel murders British citizens, the families of the deceased find that the UK government has been totally uncooperative. One can only assume they don't really care. Just as they don't care when Palestinian boys of nine and ten years old are shot by Israeli snipers, or old people have their houses bulldozed to make way for illegal Jewish settlers.

As far as the UK government is concerned, the state of Israel can kill who it wants to kill. It can ethnically cleanse Palestinian Arabs from their land if it chooses and it can break every international law that it wants to break.

There will be no condemnation, no sanctions, no UN resolutions. One can only judge that the UK government is morally bankrupt. - John Gilmore, Bishop Auckland.

KNIGHTLY GIGGLES

ACCUSE me of sour grapes if you must, but the very mention of knighthoods amuses me, seeing how I find them ridiculous, along with the fancy dress which goes with them.

I remember former Labour Chancellor Denis Healey ridiculing his fancy regalia - "Don't we look silly?" he asked while all dressed up to appear in the House of Lords.

And while titles prevail, so will the Us and Them scenario. Let's get shot of them, in the name of democracy. - Alfred H Lister, Guisborough.

SAD PLACE

RETURNING to England on vacation after many years away I have been struck by the changes, and must admit very few of them are positive

I was so looking forward to coming home, having been born and raised in No Place, near Beamish, in County Durham. I live in Canada now, but have always been, and always will be proud of who I am and where I come from, so imagine the dismay I felt when I set eyes on the village of my childhood.

It was just a small coal mining village, but it was special in my eyes. However, today it looks like something from a Charles Dickens novel - filth and squalor, an all-over look of desolation. I could not get over the crumbling walls and streets, the boarded-up houses. A far cry from what it used to be.

Have the people of this country got no pride any more? Where are the members of the local council, the landlords who own these homes, that they should allow such decay?

I speak highly to Canadians and my family of the country and the county of my birth, but there will be no photographs of No Place going back to show my children or grandchildren.

I am embarrassed at the state of a place I dearly loved. I would have rather come home and found it levelled to the ground. - Margaret Laing (nee Moore), now of Medicine Hat, near Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

ROAD CONGESTION

T KELLY is too late with his call (HAS, Apr 12) for restoration of our pre-Beeching railway network. The endless growth in our population has aggravated the shortage of housing to the point where building land is becoming very scarce (and expensive) and much of the land formerly covered by railways and their buildings has already disappeared under bricks and concrete, especially in urban and suburban areas.

Transport advisors to the Government are keenly aware of how much time is left before traffic increase brings gridlock to our road system, but their remedy is very different.

Transport Minister Alastair Darling is already considering proposals to charge motorists for using the roads, and obviously the level of charge can be adjusted to regulate the traffic density to any desired figure.

One hundred years ago, most Britons were priced off the roads by their inability to find the cost of a motor car. Soon it will be their inability to find the road tolls. Another illustration of how overpopulation of a small island deprives its citizens of their liberties. - Bob Jarratt, Caldwell, Richmond.

MARK THE OCCASION

ST GEORGE'S DAY - April 23 - is nearly upon us, and I would like to encourage my fellow Englishmen and <u>women</u> to go out and celebrate our patron saint's day.

As usual, I will start the day off by singing the national anthem to my children, and then tuck in to a full English breakfast before joining fellow patriots in Darlington town centre to drink some fine English beer.

After visiting various watering holes, I will head off home to enjoy a meal consisting of British beef, potatoes and vegetables, before I raise my small glass of rum to Her Majesty the Queen before retiring to bed.

April 23 is a big day for England, and I urge all English people to celebrate it in style and join me as I say: "God Save the Queen." - Christopher Wardell, Darlington.

POLICE COVER

I HAVE just been on a short visit to Bishop Auckland, and I found one thing very remarkable. During the six days I spent in the town I became very aware that I had seen only two police cars, and not one bobby on the beat. Is this due to the low crime rate of the area, or are all the police working under cover? Intrigued. - R Dixon, Enniskillen, Co Fermanagh, N Ireland.

Load-Date: August 31, 2006



Should Canada seek talks with Hezbollah?

The Toronto Star

August 27, 2006 Sunday

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Section: EDITORIAL; Pg. A16

Length: 498 words

Body

If Canada were to seek talks with Hezbollah, why not, in the name of consistency, extend a hand to <u>Hamas</u> and Al Qaeda? Better yet, we could remove all three from our terror list. No, we should not negotiate with terrorists, no matter what Kofi Annan, or other proponents of the recent ceasefire in the Middle East might like to believe. A ceasefire, by the way, which offers nothing toward fixing any of Lebanon's domestic dilemmas.

Were we to engage in such fecklessness, what would we discuss with Hezbollah? Its stated desire is the eradication of the state of Israel, with a promise that Jewish and Western targets be attacked the world over.

So would we, say, negotiate a reasonable number of attacks per year?

Or, would we talk about allowing Hezbollah to eradicate a certain percentage of Israelis? They are also fans of Islamic law. Would we negotiate an acceptable number of rights **women** could give up?

But, say some, Hezbollah helps seniors and orphans. It is a safe bet they kill more of the former and create more of the latter than anything else. Yes, Hezbollah has a political wing. But it remains a terror organization. Inside Lebanon, criticizing Hezbollah and its sponsors, Syria and Iran, puts one in danger. What are we telling the moderate Lebanese, who fear speaking out, if we negotiate with Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah?

Hezbollah has, over decades, consistently shown us who it is, with attacks in South America, Europe, Asia and Africa. Hezbollah terrorists were famous hostage-takers in the 1980s, suicide bombers (including the truck bomb that killed 241 U.S. Marines), and hijackers (the group that hijacked TWA Flight 847 was linked to Hezbollah).

Even were one to romanticize Hezbollah as a "resistance" movement, born of Israel's ill-advised invasion of Lebanon, what "justifications" can currently be given? Israel has not occupied a centimetre of Lebanon since 2000. What, exactly, is Hezbollah resisting? Oh right. I forgot. The continued existence of that pesky Jewish state. Let us not give its goals legitimacy by talking with Nasrallah, or his acolytes.

This past week, Liberal MP Borys Wrzesnewskyj amassed his share of headlines.

But the words of one of his travelling companions on the trip to Lebanon, sponsored by the National Council on Canada-Arab Relations, deserve attention. New Democrat Peggy Nash was quoted as saying, "If the political parties in Lebanon who may disagree with Hezbollah, and be opposed to them and their philosophy, can figure out a way to work with Hezbollah and try to get along internally, then perhaps we should take a cue from that."

We should take cues from Lebanese politics? Okay. How about Canada emulate Lebanon's Chronic Political Assassination Syndrome? Or its sectarian violence? Or its civil war?

Should Canada seek talks with Hezbollah?

Instead, let us take a cue from common sense, and not talk with Hezbollah, or remove it from any terror list. It took us far too long to put it there.

Rondi Adamson is a Toronto-based writer. (rondi.adamson @ gmail.com)

Load-Date: August 27, 2006



Belfast Telegraph

August 19, 2006 Saturday

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Length: 484 words

Byline: By Karin Laub in Jerusalem

Body

In the face of plummeting approval ratings in the wake of the war in Lebanon, Ehud Olmert, the Israeli Prime Minister, has been forced to shelve plans to pull out of the West Bank and is struggling to ride out a growing public storm over the government's wartime bungles.

At the start of his term three months ago, Mr Olmert had been confident he could draw Israel's final borders by 2010 by pulling out of much of the West Bank unilaterally. He would turn Israel into a "fun place to live", he promised.

After 34 days of fighting Hizbollah, Mr Olmert, known for his rapid-fire decision-making, is more subdued, turning increasingly to others for advice, members of his inner circle say.

On the domestic front, the fighting in Lebanon, along with Israel's ongoing offensive against militants in Gaza, appears to have discredited the idea of unilateralism. Israeli troops left Lebanon in 2000 and Gaza in 2005, in both cases without a peace deal.

At the height of the war, Mr Olmert still asserted that the fighting in Lebanon could create momentum for a West Bank pull-out, prompting angry accusations that he was trying to hijack the war for a divisive political agenda. However, in meetings this week, Mr Olmert told cabinet ministers and key legislators that the West Bank plan was being shelved.

A top Olmert aide, Asaf Shariv, confirmed the policy shift. "Right now, we will deal with other issues," said Mr Shariv. "It's not that it [the pull-out] was cancelled, but it is not on the agenda."

That strips Mr Olmert's coalition of its main reason for being - making another attempt to resolve the Palestinian conflict. Mr Olmert would be hard-pressed to find an alternative to the West Bank plan, since peace talks are expected to remain frozen as long as the Islamic militant group <u>Hamas</u> is in charge in the West Bank and Gaza.

Bereft of a program, Mr Olmert's government - an uneasy alliance of his centrist Kadima and the centre-left Labour - is increasingly vulnerable to political attack, especially as complaints mount about his handling of the war.

Mr Olmert's troubles could be further compounded by legal entanglements. Haim Ramon, his close ally and the chief ideologue of the West Bank pull-out, said yesterday that he would resign as Justice Minister next week because of a pending indictment on a charge of "indecent assault" of an 18-year-old <u>female</u> soldier at a government office. Mr Ramon's departure would further weaken the Olmert camp in Kadima. The next election is not scheduled until 2010, but, in the past decade, no Israeli government has survived a full four-year term.

Polls suggest that a majority of Israelis are not demanding Mr Olmert's resignation, for now.

"But he is definitely in trouble," said the analyst Yosef Alpher. " His situation does not look good."

* Israeli warplanes flew over Lebanon's Bekaa Valley and the nroth of the country yesterday but did not launch an attack.

Load-Date: August 19, 2006



The Independent (London)
August 19, 2006 Saturday
Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 27

Length: 468 words

Byline: By Karin Laub in Jerusalem

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Polls suggest a majority of Israelis are not demanding Mr Olmerfs resignation, for now. "But he is definitely in trouble," said the analyst Yosef Alpher. "His situation does not look good." Israeli warplanes flew over Lebanon's Bekaa Valley and the north of the country yesterday but did not launch an attack. Reuters said jets, helicopters and drones had circled the area, 35 miles east of Beirut, and had come under anti-aircraft fire but were not hit and did not open fire, AP/REUTERS

Load-Date: August 19, 2006



Canada praised for fighting Taliban: Clinton weighs in on Mideast troubles

Ottawa Citizen
July 27, 2006 Thursday
Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A4

Length: 426 words

Byline: Richard Foot, The Ottawa Citizen

Dateline: HALIFAX

Body

HALIFAX - Canada is "absolutely" right to be fighting in Afghanistan, and the consequence of abandoning the war against the Taliban would turn out to be far more serious than the continued loss of Canadian lives if we stay, says former U.S. president Bill Clinton.

"I think your people have done an astounding job there," he said during a speech last night in downtown Halifax.

Mr. Clinton acknowledged the war in Afghanistan is "becoming less popular" in Canada, partly because of the stream of dead and injured soldiers coming home from Kandahar.

"But you can't go there without casualties," he said.

If Canada and other NATO nations pull their armies out, he said, "the price we'll pay in the long run, including the lives of our military personnel, would be greater. As awful as this is, it's not nearly as awful as things would become if we left."

Mr. Clinton was brought to Halifax by Frank McKenna, the former New Brunswick premier and former Canadian ambassador to Washington.

Following his speech, Mr. Clinton sat in a leather armchair on an expansive stage, answering at length questions put to him by Mr. McKenna.

Asked if Canada should continue its mission in Kandahar, Mr. Clinton said because of the dangerous work of U.S., Canadian and other forces -- including special forces and intelligence agents and "people you don't know" -- al-Qaeda has "nowhere near the operational solidity it did at the time of 9/11.

"Afghanistan is tough," he added. "But it would be a travesty if a genuine Muslim democracy were allowed to collapse and the Taliban were allowed to re-establish its control, particularly over <u>women</u> and girls, and al-Qaeda were allowed to come back in.

"We don't have enough bodies there. There are 40,000 (U.S. and NATO) troops in Afghanistan and about 120,000 in Iraq. That's the fundamental problem there."

Canada praised for fighting Taliban: Clinton weighs in on Mideast troubles

Asked what he makes of Israel's military strikes on Lebanon and Hezbollah, Mr. Clinton reminded the audience that many Arab and Persian Gulf states have not criticized Israeli military action in recent days, because they, too, fear Hezbollah and Shia extremism in the region.

Mr. Clinton echoed calls for a ceasefire, and an international force to be brought into the area. But he made it clear that he believes the fault of the current crisis lies with Hezbollah.

"We've got to get these forces -- Hezbollah and *Hamas* --to decide if they're going to play politics, or play war.

"The Israelis aren't perfect, but they're in a tough neighbourhood," he said. "They gave up the Golan and Gaza, and every time they give, they get bashed."

Graphic

Photo: Christian LaForce, The Halifax Chronicle Herald; Former U.S. president Bill Clinton told an audience in Halifax last night that if coalition troops were to leave Afghanistan before completing their mission 'the price we'll pay in the long run, including the lives of our military personnel, would be greater.'

Load-Date: July 27, 2006



Why won't Israel just exchange prisoners?; THE CRISIS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

The Independent (London)

July 20, 2006 Thursday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 31

Length: 1169 words

Byline: JOHANN HARI

Body

Lenin once said, "There are decades when nothing happens, and weeks when decades happen." As decades pass in the Middle East this week, does anybody still believe this is about saving three Israeli soldiers - a piece of Hollywood schmaltz called "Saving Corporal Shalit" and its two sequels? Are Beirut, Haifa and Gaza City burning for them?

Only a dwindling band of people now believe this, the official pretext for the twin-set of wars Israel is fighting on its northern and southern fronts. If it had been true, there was an obvious solution - swapping prisoners. Israel is currently holding 8,200 Palestinian fighters, as well as at least three Lebanese fighters who were seized in Lebanon itself during the long 18 years when Israel was occupying its entire southern region. Both <u>Hamas</u> and Hizbollah have said the Israeli soldiers will head home as soon as there is a fair swap.

This is such a wacky, left-wing idea that it was pursued by Ariel Sharon just two years ago, when he gave Hizbollah 429 prisoners in exchange for an Israeli businessman and three corpses. The people who scoff at this proposal now are implicitly saying that Sharon was a flower-power hippie - one of the few insults he has never earned in his long life. The opponents of a prisoner-swap also warn gravely that it would fire the starting gun for an open season on Israeli soldiers, with dozens being snatched. But previous prisoner-swaps have not been followed by a spate of kidnappings' indeed, they have led to a period of calm.

So what is the real reason for the bombing of Lebanon? The most obvious is a desire permanently to remove the Hizbollah militia from its place nestling on Israel's borders, where it has amassed 13,000 rockets. This was a grievance just waiting for a casus belli.

But is this aim of disarming Hizbollah reasonable? The Islamic fundamentalist group is indeed revolting. In their early days Hizbollah imposed a savage code of "Islamic behaviour" on the Muslims of South Lebanon, imprisoning <u>women</u> in their homes and murdering gays. Since then, they have endorsed the suicide-murder of Israeli children as they sit in pizzerias, and even in 1994 bombed a synagogue in Buenos Aires, Argentina, killing 85 civilians totally unconnected to this conflict.

Yet if being ideologically repugnant, snatching fighters and owning rockets were a reason for a war, then Lebanon would have an even greater right to invade Israel. After all, it holds their snatched fighters, owns far more than 13,000 rockets (some nuclear) and has a history of invading their territory and committing mass slaughter on dishonest pretexts. One Israeli general de-manded this week, "Howlongcan we live with a knife to our throats?" But the far bigger knife belongs to Israel. Are they really saying the right to self-defence and a buffer-zone of security belongs to them alone?

Hizbollah is at its core a self-defence organisation, however ugly, and its recent operations have been limited largely to this function. It was formed to expel Israeli troops who mounted an unprovoked invasion of Lebanon in 1982 in order to crush the Palestinian groups operating there. By the time the Israeli forces finally left in 2000, they had killed an estimated 17,000 Lebanese citizens and Palestinian refugees.

Since the end of the occupation, Hizbollah had only fired across the border once, until Israel began its aerial bombardment last week. This was when the Israelis blew up Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, the spiritual leader of <u>Hamas</u>, outraging the world. (It is also worth remembering that half a million people in Lebanon get their drinking water from tanks provided by Hizbollah. At least 100,000 people depend on the hospitals and health clinics they run.)

There was always a way for Israel to put Hizbollah's rockets beyond use without a single innocent Lebanese child being bombed, and without anyone being deprived of safe drinking water. Hasan Nasrallah, the head of Hizbollah, has been asked repeatedly if he would accept a two-state solution. He always replies that he will never sabotage "an internal Palestinian matter", and that if Israeli and Palestinian leaders negotiate a settlement both sides can accept, Hizbollah's missiles will never be used across the border again. Hizbollah will be reduced to a local Lebanese problem. Revolting though he is, Nasrallah has always kept his word on these matters: he even explained to Sharon back in 2004 that at some point in the future he would kidnap more soldiers in a bid to reclaim the remaining fighters Sharon clung onto.

But a real negotiated two-state solution is precisely what Ehud Olmert does not want. Here we get to the central reason why Olmert has chosen a violent non-solution to Hizbollah over a peaceful authentic solution. Uri Avnery, the veteran Israeli peace campaigner, explains, "[In Israel] we have an ongoing, partly hidden debate about what's really the main thing - achieve peace or create a bigger Israel? The people in power today still believe that a greater Israel is more important. They got away from the idea that all of the country of Palestine should become Israel, but they would still like to annex significant parts of the West Bank. That's their priority. As long as this is apriority... they think peace is a bad thing." Peace would create momentum towards negotiations with the Palestinians' democratically elected leaders - and that cannot be allowed to happen.

The Israeli newspaper Ha'aretz has just published a long, authoritative study of Olmert's motives, drawing on sources very close to the Prime Minister. It reveals that "Olmert has another consideration, of which he is not speaking [in public]. He wants to set a precedent for the convergence plan in the West Bank, to show that Israel won't accept terror from beyond the fence after it withdraws."

He knows the deal he plans to impose on the West Bank will be unacceptable to Palestinians. Not just to Islamic Jihad, but the vast majority. He has been proposing to seize strategically valuable chunks of the West Bank by annexing them to Israel since as long ago as 1978, after all. So he is trying pre-emptively to terrify them now so they will not dare fight back.

So here it is, the kernel of emotional truth behind this war. Its clearest expression can be found in the speeches of Ze'ev Jabotin-sky, figurehead for the right-wing of Zionism, the man Olmert was raised to revere. Talking of the Arabs in 1923, Jabotinsky insisted, "A living people makes enormous concessions... only when there is no hope left."

That is the true purpose of the wars in Gaza and Lebanon - to ensure, at last, there is no hope left for the Arabs. But the Palestinians and Lebanese will not slump away. They will become gripped with a nihilistic hate, and long after Ehud Olmert is nothing more than a skeleton and a statue, the hate will still burn. Does he imagine this is good for the children of Israel?

Why won't Israel just exchange prisoners? THE CRISIS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

This is such a wacky, left-wing ideal that it was pursued by Ariel Sharon two years ago

j.hari@independent.co.uk

Load-Date: July 20, 2006



Cruel, corrupt and full of hatred - it's Iran's mullahs who are to blame

Daily Mail (London)
July 18, 2006 Tuesday

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Section: ED 1ST; Pg. 12

Length: 1216 words **Byline:** ANN LESLIE

Body

OH GOD. Oh Allah. Oh whoever you may, or may not, worship - how long must this go on? The crisis and bloodshed in the Middle East seems endless, and insoluble.

In decades of covering the region, I have seen 'hopeful' peace plans come and go.

But every time these plans fail - as they always have done - blame is variously attributed to Zionism, Islamo-fascism, the Americans, Jews in general, corrupt Arab dictators and, of course, Britain for having been the imperialist power that divided up the Muslim 'caliphate' after the defeat of the Turkish Ottoman Empire.

And did I mention Uncle Tom Cobley?

So often, the blame game in the Middle East seems to be the only game in town.

Now, Bush and Blair are playing it - not only (correctly) accusing Hezbollah, the heavilyarmed and disciplined Islamist paramilitary group in Lebanon, of provoking the latest conflict, but also Iran and Syria, a secular dictatorship run by the Alawites, a small Shia sect.

Syria doesn't mind murdering its own fellow Muslims if it deems them to be threatening the brutal, stupid and corrupt Assad regime.

After all, the father of the present hereditary ruler of allegedly republican Syria cheerfully flattened an entire neighbourhood of the city of Hama which housed Islamic opponents, including their <u>women</u> and children. The Arab world scarcely shrugged.

But, of course, if militant Islamists - who wouldn't be tolerated in Syria - set about killing Israelis, well that's fine by the Syrian regime: Ah, dear Arab brothers, do you want some money, offices, transport facilities, the odd rocket or two?

No problem! We want to get rid of the 'Zionist entity' too! As you know, we (unlike those U.S-toadying Arab regimes such as Jordan and Egypt) don't even recognise the 'Zionist entity' as a legitimate nation.

But it is Iran, a martyrdomobsessed Shia theocracy, run by corrupt and relentlessly cruel mullahs (one of whom, under Sharia law, strangled to death with his own hands a teenage girl for 'immorality') which is largely responsible for what is going on now on the shores of the Mediterranean.

The thousands of rockets which Hezbollah claims to possess come from Iran, via Syria.

The abolition of Israel has been a formal part of Iran's constitution since the 1979 revolution (when the Ayatollah Khomeini, who later condemned Salman Rushdie to death for publishing a novel which he found offensive, despite never having read it).

When I last went to Friday prayers in the Iranian capital Tehran, a sleek, fat, deeply corrupt ayatollah, swathed in a white turban and wielding a Kalashnikov, gave the sermon.

He was the mullah whom the West had fooled itself into thinking was 'pragmatic' and 'moderate'.

And what did he preach? It was the usual bloodthirsty rant: 'Death to Israel!' 'Death to America!' 'Death to Britain!'.

(To the Iranian regime, America is the 'Great Satan'; Britain is the 'Little Satan').

Recently, that same ayatollah declared that Iran didn't have to go to the trouble of 'wiping Israel off the face of the map' (which the loopily fundamentalist Iranian president declares to be his aim).

This 'moderate', 'pragmatic' mullah confidently predicted that the two terrorist groups Hezbollah and <u>Hamas</u> would - thanks to Allah, the most merciful, most compassionate - do the job instead.

Hezbollah was set up in the Eighties by Iran's Revolutionary Guard in response to the long and bloody occupation of Southern Lebanon by Israel.

Years ago, I was told by a Hezbollah spokesman in Beirut that 'we are here to drive the Israelis out of Lebanon'. But the Israelis left Lebanon six years ago.

So why does Hezbollah remain in place? Because it is dedicated not to freeing Lebanon from foreign forces, but to destroying Israel.

Its manifesto includes the Russian tsarist forgery The Protocols Of Zion, which alleges a plot by Jews to conquer the world, as well as one of the ahadith (the sayings of the Prophet), which declares that Paradise can only be attained if all Jews are destroyed.

It is horrifying now to witness the fact that, between them, the implacable Hezbollah and the implacable Israel are destroying Lebanon piece by piece.

When I first went to Beirut, it was dubbed the 'Paris of the East': sophisticated, cosmopolitan, laid-back, seductive, louche, smelling of coffee, croissants, intrigue, and good red wine - of which the Sunni Muslims as well as the Christians were very fond.

I would stay in the achingly glamorous St George hotel (still in ruins) on the coastal corniche; it used to be full of spies (such as Kim Philby) and 'businessmen', and all-round chancers, wheelerdealing effortlessly in several languages, surrounded by glittering shoals of heavily madeup, bejewelled wives, girlfriends and high-class tarts.

That seductive, open-hearted, open-minded, witty and glamorous Lebanon was gradually beginning to emerge again after 15 years of civil war.

Last year, I went there after the so-called 'Cedar Revolution' which, thanks to massive popular and peaceful demonstrations, drove the hated Syrian occupation forces out of the country.

But then I went to the southern suburbs of Beirut - now being bombed by the Israelis - to interview a member of the Hezbollah 'politburo'.

This was a totally different Beirut; it resembled the poorest neighbourhoods in Tehran. The broken-down streets were full of black-veiled <u>women</u> and Hezbollah flags - pale yellow and green, adorned with a fist bearing a Kalashnikov.

Cruel, corrupt and full of hatred - it's Iran 's mullahs who are to blame

Portraits of the grim, beetlebrowed Iranian Ayatollah Khomeini and the current Iranian Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Khamenei, adorned the lampposts.

And posters saying 'No to 1559' were everywhere. The UN Security Council's Resolution 1559 demanded that foreign forces (i.e. Syria) leave Lebanon and that all militias be disbanded. Syria left, the various militias were disbanded - but not Hezbollah.

The bearded, turbaned Sheikh Abdul Majid Ammar informed me that Hezbollah would never disarm, 'because, otherwise, Lebanon cannot defend itself against Israel'. But Israel is not attacking Lebanon, I pointed out. 'But it might,' he answered levelly.

And now, of course, it has - largely because Hezbollah in Lebanon is a fully-armed statewithina-state, bent on Israel's destruction. The Lebanese Government is too weak to destroy Hezbollah (besides, many of its military men are, like Hezbollah, Shia Muslims and therefore unwilling to fight their 'brothers').

So what can the world do, apart from wring its hands?

It could perhaps assemble an international force (including Arabs) to create a demilitarised zone on the Lebanese/Israeli border. And call for a ceasefire.

And pressure Hezbollah and *Hamas* to relinquish the Israeli soldiers they have kidnapped.

And, of course, pressure the Israelis to hold back and not dismantle hapless Lebanon for its failure to control its statewithin- a- state. Only the Americans - who keep Israel afloat with aid and weapons - can do the latter.

But both Syria and Iran must be willing to use their influence to rein in their terrorist surrogates.

If they don't, I'm afraid that beautiful, seductive Beirut will keep on burning: the smoke from its bombed buildings, the despairing cries of its people, will continue to bring back terrible memories of those long, murderous, civil-war years which, until the past few days, they believed they had finally left behind.

Graphic

LEADER OF A CRUEL REGIME: IRAN'S AYATOLLAH KHAMENEI

Load-Date: July 18, 2006



UK Newsquest Regional Press - This is The NorthEast July 12, 2006 Wednesday

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Section: FEATURES; Hearallsides

Length: 1125 words

Dateline: The North East

Body

ID CARDS: UNDER a last-minute shabby compromise agreed between the Government and Tories in the House of Lords, anyone renewing their passport or any other "designated" document will be compulsorily entered onto the National Identity Register.

Individuals will merely be able to opt not to receive a card until January 1, 2010 - but will still have to pay for it.

The problem has always been the database, not the card, and the comprehensive destruction of privacy it will bring.

In Parliament, round one may have gone to the Government by misdirection, but in the country it's a different story.

Millions are already vehemently opposed. What's the Home Office going to do? Round them up and force them to be fingerprinted or iris scanned? The coercion they will have to use will bring home to the public the true nature of the scheme.

The Government may think it has won, but our group NEsaysNO2ID has only just begun to fight. - Robin Ashby, NEsaysNo2ID, Newcastle.

FOLIC ACID

SO what is new about folic acid in pregnancy? Nothing.

Forty years ago, I was in general practice and we routinely gave Pregaday (folic acid plus iron) to <u>women</u> who wished to conceive or who were in the early months of pregnancy. We knew then that it would help in the prevention of nervous system defects in babies. - Dr Ann E Carr, Middleton St George.

SHAME OVER SHOOTINGS

IN the space of a week two coroner's juries in London, investigating separate incidents in the Gaza strip, have found that the Israeli armed forces have murdered two British citizens by deliberately shooting them in the head.

On both occasions, despite the evidence of murder, the Israeli government has refused to co-operate with the coroner.

Imagine if the Palestinian organisation <u>Hamas</u> had targeted an innocent British journalist and an equally innocent aid worker. The Foreign Secretary, Jack Straw, would have denounced <u>Hamas</u> and in doing so he would have called for EU and UN sanctions against them.

Yet when Israel murders British citizens, the families of the deceased find that the UK government has been totally uncooperative. One can only assume they don't really care. Just as they don't care when Palestinian boys of nine and ten years old are shot by Israeli snipers, or old people have their houses bulldozed to make way for illegal Jewish settlers.

As far as the UK government is concerned, the state of Israel can kill who it wants to kill. It can ethnically cleanse Palestinian Arabs from their land if it chooses and it can break every international law that it wants to break.

There will be no condemnation, no sanctions, no UN resolutions. One can only judge that the UK government is morally bankrupt. - John Gilmore, Bishop Auckland.

KNIGHTLY GIGGLES

ACCUSE me of sour grapes if you must, but the very mention of knighthoods amuses me, seeing how I find them ridiculous, along with the fancy dress which goes with them.

I remember former Labour Chancellor Denis Healey ridiculing his fancy regalia - "Don't we look silly?" he asked while all dressed up to appear in the House of Lords.

And while titles prevail, so will the Us and Them scenario. Let's get shot of them, in the name of democracy. - Alfred H Lister, Guisborough.

SAD PLACE

RETURNING to England on vacation after many years away I have been struck by the changes, and must admit very few of them are positive

I was so looking forward to coming home, having been born and raised in No Place, near Beamish, in County Durham. I live in Canada now, but have always been, and always will be proud of who I am and where I come from, so imagine the dismay I felt when I set eyes on the village of my childhood.

It was just a small coal mining village, but it was special in my eyes. However, today it looks like something from a Charles Dickens novel - filth and squalor, an all-over look of desolation. I could not get over the crumbling walls and streets, the boarded-up houses. A far cry from what it used to be.

Have the people of this country got no pride any more? Where are the members of the local council, the landlords who own these homes, that they should allow such decay?

I speak highly to Canadians and my family of the country and the county of my birth, but there will be no photographs of No Place going back to show my children or grandchildren.

I am embarrassed at the state of a place I dearly loved. I would have rather come home and found it levelled to the ground. - Margaret Laing (nee Moore), now of Medicine Hat, near Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

ROAD CONGESTION

T KELLY is too late with his call (HAS, Apr 12) for restoration of our pre-Beeching railway network. The endless growth in our population has aggravated the shortage of housing to the point where building land is becoming very scarce (and expensive) and much of the land formerly covered by railways and their buildings has already disappeared under bricks and concrete, especially in urban and suburban areas.

Transport advisors to the Government are keenly aware of how much time is left before traffic increase brings gridlock to our road system, but their remedy is very different.

Transport Minister Alastair Darling is already considering proposals to charge motorists for using the roads, and obviously the level of charge can be adjusted to regulate the traffic density to any desired figure.

One hundred years ago, most Britons were priced off the roads by their inability to find the cost of a motor car. Soon it will be their inability to find the road tolls. Another illustration of how overpopulation of a small island deprives its citizens of their liberties. - Bob Jarratt, Caldwell, Richmond.

MARK THE OCCASION

ST GEORGE'S DAY - April 23 - is nearly upon us, and I would like to encourage my fellow Englishmen and <u>women</u> to go out and celebrate our patron saint's day.

As usual, I will start the day off by singing the national anthem to my children, and then tuck in to a full English breakfast before joining fellow patriots in Darlington town centre to drink some fine English beer.

After visiting various watering holes, I will head off home to enjoy a meal consisting of British beef, potatoes and vegetables, before I raise my small glass of rum to Her Majesty the Queen before retiring to bed.

April 23 is a big day for England, and I urge all English people to celebrate it in style and join me as I say: "God Save the Queen." - Christopher Wardell, Darlington.

POLICE COVER

I HAVE just been on a short visit to Bishop Auckland, and I found one thing very remarkable. During the six days I spent in the town I became very aware that I had seen only two police cars, and not one bobby on the beat. Is this due to the low crime rate of the area, or are all the police working under cover? Intrigued. - R Dixon, Enniskillen, Co Fermanagh, N Ireland.

Load-Date: July 12, 2006



Israel strike kills dozens in Lebanon; 20 children among dead; Rice cancels Beirut trip

The International Herald Tribune
July 31, 2006 Monday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 1

Length: 1161 words

Byline: Steven Erlanger and Hassan Fattah

Dateline: JERUSALEM

Body

Hassan Fattah reported from Beirut and Helene Cooper contributed from Jerusalem.

*

An Israeli air raid on the southern Lebanese town of Qana killed at least 28 civilians, including 20 children, on Sunday, the bloodiest day of this conflict, putting enormous pressure on Israel and the United States to move rapidly toward a cease-fire.

Israel said that the Qana strike had been aimed at Hezbollah fighters firing rockets into Israel from the area, but the result was the collapse of a residential apartment building and the crushing of civilians who were spending the night in the basement, where they believed they were safe.

Accounts of the death toll differed. A New York Times reporter counted 28 bodies at local morgues. Some officials said that at least 57 civilians had been killed, including 37 children.

Whatever the final number, the deaths in Qana set off a chain reaction, with protests in Beirut against the United States, Israel, the United Nations and moderate Arab countries. Hezbollah and the Palestinian group *Hamas* vowed revenge. There were new calls for an immediate end to the fighting and condemnations worldwide of Israel's tactics in this war against the radical Shiite militia group, which set off the hostilities with a raid into Israel across the Lebanese border.

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice canceled a planned trip to Beirut and decided to return to Washington on Monday to hammer out a speedy resolution to the conflict that could be brought before the United Nations this week.

"I will continue to work and work and work that is what we can do," said a visibly shaken Rice. "If there is a way humanly to accelerate our efforts, I would do it."

The Israeli prime minister, Ehud Olmert, expressed sorrow for the Qana attack but told Rice that Israel needed another 10 to 14 days to complete its war aims against Hezbollah, according to a senior Israeli official.

The Lebanese prime minister, Fouad Siniora, demanded an immediate cease-fire and made it clear that Rice would not be welcome in Beirut on Sunday.

"There is no place on this sad day for any discussion other than an immediate and unconditional cease-fire, as well as an international investigation into the Israeli massacres in Lebanon now," Siniora said.

For the Lebanese, Qana is synonymous with the killing of civilians. Ten years ago there, in an eerily similar attack, Israel responded to mortar fire by shelling a UN post where refugees were sheltering, killing 100 people and wounding another 100. That attack, on April 18, 1996, shocked the world and helped bring an end to that conflict with Hezbollah after an eight-day diplomatic shuttle by Warren Christopher, the secretary of state at the time.

In a speech to the diplomatic corps, Siniora accused Israel of war crimes and asked, "Why, we wonder, did they choose Qana yet again?" He asked the diplomats to work at the United Nations for a cease-fire, saying: "We cannot be expected to negotiate or discuss anything else while the ruthless, pitiless sword of the Israeli war machine continues to drip with the blood of innocent <u>women</u> and children."

At the United Nations, Secretary General Kofi Annan urged the Security Council, meeting Sunday in emergency session, to condemn the Qana attack and to call for an immediate cease-fire.

"I am deeply dismayed that my earlier calls for an immediate cessation of hostilities were not heeded," he told the council.

Rice said Sunday that she called Siniora to express her condolences and to cancel her planned visit to Beirut. She met with Olmert on Sunday evening.

"We are also pushing for an urgent end" to the fighting, Rice said. "But the views of the parties on how to achieve that are different." She did not call for an immediate cease-fire, arguing that a long-term resolution required a political package deal, which would include a cessation of hostilities.

"We want a cease-fire as soon as possible," she said. "I would have wanted a cease-fire yesterday if possible, but the parties have to agree to a cease-fire and there have to be certain conditions in place."

Rice decided to return to Washington to work on a Security Council resolution that would try to codify a political resolution to the conflict including the insertion of a new international peace-keeping force along the border, the resolution of a disputed border area called Shabaa Farms and the return of captured Israeli soldiers and bring an end to this war in northern Israel and Lebanon, now in its 19th day.

Israeli forces also have been fighting in Gaza since June 28 after another Israeli soldier was captured by <u>Hamas</u> and other Palestinian militants in a raid on June 25.

Olmert said that Israel would investigate what had happened in Qana. But he and the Israeli Army blamed Hezbollah fighters for firing hundreds of rockets from the area, which is a stronghold for the militia group.

In a statement, the Israeli Army said it had warned residents of the region and of Qana "several days in advance" to leave their homes, and said: "The responsibility for any civilian casualties rests with the Hezbollah who have turned the suburbs of Lebanon into a war front by firing missiles from within civilian areas."

The army said that it was investigating Qana, but that it was puzzled that the strike happened between midnight and 1 a.m., and hit next to the building, while the building collapsed around 7 a.m. Brigadier General Amir Eshel said it was at least possible that the explosion was caused by munitions inside the building.

"It is possible that various things were stored inside the house, things that ultimately caused an explosion," Eshel said. "Perhaps things we were unable to blow up in the strike, that could have been left behind. I say this very carefully, but at the current time I haven't got the slightest clue what could explain this time difference."

Israel strike kills dozens in Lebanon 20 children among dead Rice cancels Beirut trip

Olmert told his cabinet on Sunday: "We will not blink in front of Hezbollah and we will not stop the offensive despite the difficult circumstances."

He said that "Israel is in no rush to reach a cease-fire before we get to that point where we could say that we reached the main objectives we had set forth. This includes the ripening of the diplomatic process and preparing the multinational force."

On Sunday, Hezbollah fired more than 156 rockets into northern Israel, the Israeli Army said, the highest total so far in the fighting. Eight people were slightly wounded, including a reporter for the Haaretz newspaper.

So far, nearly 1,900 rockets have fallen in Israel. Nineteen civilians have been killed and more than 400 have been wounded. Thirty-three soldiers have been killed and 88 have been wounded.

Nearly 550 Lebanese have been killed in airstrikes, with as many as 200 more missing, according to the Lebanese Health Ministry. Nearly 2,000 people have been wounded, the ministry said. In addition, Israel estimated that 300 Hezbollah fighters had been killed in ground fighting with Israeli troops.

Load-Date: July 31, 2006



Comment & Debate: Tony Blair means only one thing when he talks about his values: He claims his aim is to spread democracy and the rule of law, but his true commitment is to the global market

The Guardian - Final Edition
August 4, 2006 Friday

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Section: GUARDIAN COMMENT AND DEBATE PAGES; Pg. 27

Length: 1174 words **Byline:** Peter Wilby

Body

So now we know. The purpose of intervention in Iraq and Afghanistan was not regime change, Tony Blair explained in Los Angeles on Monday, but "values change". By bombing and shooting their way into Baghdad and Kabul, he and President Bush wanted to convince the benighted locals of the benefits of democracy, free markets and the rule of law.

They think Israel can achieve the same ends by pulverising Lebanon, and thus dealing a blow to the "arc of extremism", successor to the still undefeated "axis of evil". And the reason extremism appears to be growing is that, in reality, we are winning. Iraqis, Afghans, Palestinians, Lebanese - they're all embracing democracy, and presumably voting for <u>Hamas</u> and Hizbullah only because of what the Marxists used to call false consciousness. The terrorists - who are all "the same thing" whether they are in Gaza, Baghdad, Kashmir, Indonesia, Africa, Madrid or London - are becoming more and more desperate because "reactionary Islam" now faces "existential battles" for its survival.

Well, it's good to have that straight. Many thought it unkind to compare the Blair-Bush policies in the Middle East to the medieval crusades. But it is hard to avoid the conclusion that Blair believes he is engaged in a holy war, even though he reckons this is true only of the other side. No wonder, with the stakes so high, he won't listen to Labour members, backbenchers, ministers or foreign-affairs advisers. Or even his own past words. "We could have chosen security as the battleground," he said in Los Angeles. "But we didn't. We chose values." Forget what he said about WMDs; strike it from the record.

Strike also from the record what was once the prime minister's favourite mantra: what matters is what works. Invasions of Iraq, Afghanistan and Lebanon clearly don't have to work in any conventional sense. Everything comes down to ideology after all.

So what is that ideology? What does Blair mean by values? Both in Los Angeles and, the previous day, in San Francisco, addressing the big cheeses from Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation, Blair tried to give some coherence to his political philosophy, and explicitly linked it to the Middle East. The "isms" that now dominate debate, he argued, are not socialism or capitalism. (Nor, we must assume, communitarianism, one of Blair's forgotten favourites.) They are "protectionism, isolationism, nativism". It is a battle between "open or closed" responses to globalisation, between "modern or traditional attitudes to a changing world".

Comment & Debate: Tony Blair means only one thing when he talks about his values: He claims his aim is to spread democracy and the rule of law, but his true com....

On one side stand free trade, open markets, investment in education, science and technology; on the other, protectionism, tariffs, tight labour market regulation, resistance to foreign takeovers. No prizes for guessing which side Blair thinks he is on.

The key word here is "modern". It comes up repeatedly when Blair speaks. The "global fight", he said in Los Angeles, is "about modernisation". "Everywhere," he said at his monthly press conference in London yesterday, "we support a process of modernisation." This modernity, in Blair's mind, is associated with the "competitive global market" that he wishes the whole world, including Muslims, to embrace. That is what gives his political thinking, domestically and internationally, a kind of unity.

If he believed wholeheartedly in the rule of law, he would have a greater care for civil liberties and international conventions about when and how to wage war. If he were as committed to democracy as he says he is, he would pay more respect to the British public's views on the Iraq war and on Israel's bombing of Lebanon and to the Palestinian and Lebanese votes for <u>Hamas</u> and Hizbullah respectively. But Blair's true commitment is to the global market.

As things stand, the global market is run by the rich in the interests of the rich. Two-thirds of global trade is controlled by just 500 firms. The competitive element is competition between nation-states for their favours - in terms of investment, jobs, sponsorship of public projects. This is the modern world that Blair wants Islamic countries to join. When he and Bush talk about an "open" Middle East, they mean open not just to different political views and religions but also to global capital, restlessly searching for new markets and assets.

Even to some moderate Muslims, this is a big step. They live, for the most part, in traditional societies. Yet they are invited to join a global market under which, as Marx and Engels warned, "all that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned". Some Gulf states contrive to allow Mammon to coexist with God, but Islam as a religious faith has developed no significant equivalent of Calvinism, which interpreted worldly commercial success as a sign of God's grace.

There lies the inadequacy of Blair's approach. As he acknowledges, we have to convince moderate Muslims that our values are preferable to those of reactionary Islam. But it is not, as he seems to think, enough just to find a settlement in Palestine. He also has to convince Muslims that our laws and political systems can better protect what they hold precious than can the fanatics and terrorists. This does not necessarily include sharia law and veiled <u>women</u>, but it does mean preserving a certain social and cultural integrity, and running their own economies as they wish.

What happened in Iraq immediately after the invasion - the wholesale privatisations, the grab for assets by US-based multinationals - justifies their scepticism.

But the modern world doesn't have to be under the thumb of global capital. We can be "open" to a global market but it need not be this one. The rules of global trade can be biased towards the poor, instead of being framed in the interests of the rich. They can encourage tariffs where they protect infant industries in developing countries, instead of allowing them only where they protect western interests. Crucially for Islamic countries, they can allow controls on capital movements, as well as on migration of people. They can nurture stronger trade unions, stricter health-and-safety regulation and improved environmental practices, instead of treating all these as market distortions. They can act against international monopolies and, again crucially for Islamic countries, in favour of local ownership. They can favour investment in public goods over private consumption.

In that kind of global market many poor Muslims might see something for them. In the global market we have now they see benefits only for rich westerners. Blair talks about liberty and tolerance. But the global market is highly illiberal and intolerant. It allows only one form of economic organisation and it is relentlessly hostile towards the traditional, as anyone who surveys British retailing or recalls what happened to mining communities will understand. Muslims might be persuaded of the merits of democracy and legality, but the merits of modernity, as defined by Blair, are a harder call.

Comment & Debate: Tony Blair means only one thing when he talks about his values: He claims his aim is to spread democracy and the rule of law, but his true com....

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Load-Date: August 4, 2006



We can't bear pictures of the dead. Hezbollah want to see nothing else

The Times (London)
August 1, 2006, Tuesday

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Section: FEATURES; Pg. 17

Length: 1184 words

Byline: David Aaronovitch

Body

AT 6.30am on Sunday, from a two-tree hillock on Hampstead Heath, I stood looking out over London -me, a few feral parakeets and a little black dog. The city was mauve and placid; no sirens, no explosions, no dead children. I had just heard the overnight news from Qana, and I wasn't imagining that I loved my three children any more than the Lebanese man who that night had lost his three.

They'd been given warning to leave their homes, but it seems that the Shalhoubs and the Hashems -the two large families who were wiped out in the bombing just didn't have the money or the ability to make the journey. Even before the events at Qana, David Miliband is said to have asked at a meeting of the Cabinet: "Where will this all end?" On Monday a moderate member of the Lebanese Cabinet told the BBC that the violence was putting Lebanon back years. Ann Clwyd MP -a woman I greatly admire -lent her voice to the call for a quick ceasefire.

How, after all, can this be borne? We should stop it now. There should be no more killing. We should stop it even before Israel has secured its border, even while Hezbollah's military force is still intact. How can you argue with the impulse to save innocent life?

"Asymmetrical warfare" is a term usually employed to describe the deployment of insurgent and terrorist techniques against a massively better-armed adversary. It almost suggests that such an approach is defensible. But there is a second sense in which the phrase might be used. We weedy democrats and life-loving liberals cannot bear what the ideologues of *Hamas* and Hezbollah find all too bearable. We argue about whether we even want to see the pictures of the dead. They seem to want to look at nothing else.

We understand the problem. Israeli violence may damage the democratic and reform movements in Lebanon and Syria. But Hezbollah's violence, apparently, serves only to strengthen the forces of religious ecstasy. To us, hitting a UN force is a humanitarian outrage. To Hezbollah it's a tactic. To Hezbollah every civilian is a warrior.

Take the Israeli killing of four UN soldiers last week, condemned by Kofi Annan as "deliberate". On July 18 one of the doomed officers e-mailed home to say that Israeli ordnance was landing nearby and that, "this has not been deliberate targeting, but has rather been due to tactical necessity". A retired Canadian general interpreted this for Canadian television. "What he was telling us was Hezbollah soldiers were all over his position and the IDF were targeting them. And that's a favourite trick by people who don't have representation in the UN. They use the UN as shields, knowing that they can't be punished for it."

Reporters from Qana said that, the day after the Israeli attack, "there was little evidence of fighters". But the Israelis have released footage claiming to show rockets being fired at Israel from within the village. Other aerial sequences

clearly depict rocket launchers being fired from behind apartment blocks and launcher trucks being driven to hiding places in garages and under houses. It was this kind of action that prompted Jan Egelund, of the UN, to call upon Hezbollah to stop this "cowardly blending...among <u>women</u> and children". He added: "I don't think anyone should be proud of having many more children and **women** dead than armed men."

Today, on the website of Hezbollah's own propaganda agency, al-Manar, you can find the boast that on one day at the end of last week: "Islamic resistance fighters launched barrages of rockets at northern Israeli settlements...According to Israeli media, some 20 settlers were injured in today's attacks." "Settlements" is Hezbollah for towns and villages, and "settlers" is Hezbollah for civilians. So when a 240lb Hezbollah rocket slammed into the Israeli countryside last week, it should have prompted the thought that when the Israelis miss their targets they hit civilians and when Hezbollah misses, they don't.

Getting in among the UN positions and the civilians, firing at "settlers" while seeing the other side condemned for its inhumanity, is part of the new asymmetry.

Unfortunately, Hezbollah is pretty good at hitting the soldiers too. If you recall those TV pictures in the 1980s of chaps in keffiyehs blindly firing off their RPGs and Kalashnikovs round a corner and then running like buggery, that has all gone.

Some clue as to how things have changed was offered on Sunday night's Panorama.

Though it was incidental to its story, what the programme showed is how organisations such as <u>Hamas</u> propagandise the children and adults in their care, exulting martyrdom and teaching them to embrace death. We saw schools that celebrate suicide bombers and school computers full of jihadoporn. Had you been watching the evening drama on al-Manar recently you could have seen a Syrian drama series on the Jewish plot to take over the world. One scene was set in a brothel where a Jewish prostitute thinks she is dying from some disease. "I implore you," she tells the Madam, "send me only Christian clients. I don't want any Jew to be infected by me." It's The Forsyte Saga as scripted by Heinrich Himmler.

If that's the cultural you can imagine the political. But just in case you can't, let me help you. Hassan Nasrallah, the leader of Hezbollah (thinks, how exactly did he become leader of Hezbollah?) is a prolific speaker, but is credited with meaning what he says. Nasrallah believes that the Jews "invented the legend of the Nazi atrocities". That Israel "is a cancerous body in the region" that "must be uprooted". More magnanimously: "Let us spare bloodshed. Let the Yemenite Jews return to Yemen, the Moroccan Jews to Morocco, the Ethiopian Jews to Ethiopia, the European Jews to Europe, and the American Jews to America." Though even that is generous because: "Anyone who reads the Koran...sees what acts of madness and slaughter the Jews carried out throughout history...Anyone who reads these texts cannot think of co-existence with them, of peace with them, or about accepting their presence, not only in Palestine of 1948 but even in a small village in Palestine, because they are a cancer."

This is the chap with the long-range missiles (getting longer range) sitting on Israel's northern border. And while Hezbollah might bring out the Lebanese flags for the press in Beirut, in their southern fastnesses the only banners are theirs.

And what do we say, knowing this? That Bad Blair should lean on Worse Bush who should put the squeeze on Murdering Olmert and it'd all be over. That's the new orthodoxy.

God alone knows, the Israelis have, in their history, committed crimes and terrible errors. Sabra and Chatilla, the refusal to recognise for many years that Palestinians actually existed, the brutalities of the occupation, the settling on the West Bank and in Gaza and so on. The Palestinian organisations have their own track record of deceit and murder. Consequently, each slow step towards a peace has been agonising, and now the new asymmetry makes progress almost impossible. As of today, I have no answer.

Read David Aaronovitch's blog: timesonline.co.uk/davidaaronovitch

Load-Date: August 1, 2006



Israeli missiles pound Gaza into new P Dark Age in 'collective punishment'

The Independent (London)
June 29, 2006 Thursday
First Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 22

Length: 1123 words

Byline: By Donald Macintyre in southern Gaza

Body

As a textbook example of hi-tech precision bombardment it could hardly be improved. Smoke was still rising yesterday from the scorched wreckage of the six transformers at Gaza's only power station, each destroyed by a single missile fired by an Israeli warplane some 10 hours earlier.

Had they hit the huge cylindrical diesel tank 100 metres away they would have set the whole power station alight. But the strike was clinically effective, cutting all the electricity to 700,000 Gaza consumers, threatening water supplies and depriving its public of light, cooking, broadcast news, and - a crucial issue in scorching summer temperatures - fans.

"I'm so surprised that they did this," said Dr Derar Abu Sisi, the operations manager at the Al Nusirat power station. "We have been right through the worst of the intifada but this didn't happen." It would, Dr Abu Sisi said, take a "minimum of three to six months" to restore supplies at a cost between \$5m (pounds 2.8m) and \$7m. "The Geneva Convention says it is not allowed to attack infrastructure for the civilian people," he added. "You might expect that economic infrastructure could be a target in the last stages of a war. But this is not like that."

The damage to Gaza's power supply was condemned as "unacceptable and barbaric collective punishment of civilians, including <u>women</u>, children and old people" by the office of Mah-moud Abbas, which complained it was intensifying what it says are the difficulties he already faces in try-ingto secure the safe release of Gilad Shalit, the 19-year-old Israeli army corporal ab-ducted by militants - including members of <u>Hamas</u>'s military wing - on Sunday.

The crisis escalated yesterday as <u>Hamas</u> called for the prisoner swap Israel has so far refused to entertain' another faction responsible for Cpl Shalit's abduction, the Popular Resistance Committees, threatened to kill a settler it says it is holding if Israel does not end its military campaign in Gaza, and a third, the Al Aqsa Martyrs, claimed to have seized a 62-year-old man from the central Israeli City ofRishonLezion.

Last night the army prepared to issue leaflets telling Beit Hanoun residents to leave their homes in preparation for a concerted move by armoured troops into north Gaza to attack Qas-sam rocket-launching units. Ehud Olmert, the Israeli Prime Minister, said that the army would not hesitate to carry out "extreme action" in the coming days to bring the abducted soldier back to his family.

The aerial attack on the power station was one of four conducted early yesterday. The other three were on bridges in central Gaza, which the Israel Defence Forces said were intended to hamper attempts by Cpl Shalit's captors to move him from the south to the north. Yesterday, however, a side road alongside the most easterly of these, which fords the currently dried-up river running through the Wadi Gaza on the main north-south Sala-hadin road, was busy with traffic which had turned off to avoid the wrecked bridge to continue its journey unimpeded towards Gaza City from the south.

Another target was an old railway bridge 200 metres to the west, which the army says can be used by vehicles but which carried a now-broken water pipeline to two refugee camps.

Zakri al-Ouh, 62, a construction worker who lives nearby and helped to build the two-lane road bridge under Egyptian supervision in 1965 and 1966, said: "When it rains, maybe in September, then it will be impossible to use the road, but at the moment I can't see how this can help the soldier." He added: "At first I was in favour of handing back the soldier as quickly as possible. We have to consider the power of Israel against our own weakness.

"But now they have done this I think there should be an exchange of prisoners before he is handed back." The southernmost town of Rafah - to which roads were notably less crowded than usual yesterday - still has power because it takes its electricity from Israel. But Rafah, which had most to gain from Israel's withdrawal last August because it had been the most ravaged in all of the occupied territories during four years of the intifada, now fears a return of conflict.

Yesterday morning, with Israeli troops and tanks now occupying the disused airport two kilometres from the town centre, Maher Abu Ermana 21, was doing a brisk trade in sacks of flour, oil sugar and beans provided by aid agencies, sold to him by impoverished refugee recipients trying to make a few extra shekels, and invariably labelled "not for resale". Such is Gaza's dysfunctional economic cycle that Mr Abu Ermana is now selling his wares to customers stocking up in fear of war shortages. Up to two days ago, after Cpl Gilad Shalit was abducted by Palestinian militants, he said: "I was selling two sacks a day. Now I am selling 20 to 40."

"We are all worried," said Zakia Mahmoud, 40, who has 10 children. "I hope it will not return to what it was before. If it does, we will lose half of our sons."

The most audible element of the "message" Israel says it is delivering to Gaza in the hope of securing the safe release of Cpl Shalit - in the event of which it says it will pull back its forces from the Strip - are the sonic booms produced by warplanes deliberately travelling faster than the speed of sound over Gaza.

Yesterday's booms -which produce the shattering sound of a heavy explosion in the immediate vicinity - started at about 5am and were for the first for sev-eral months, after two human rights groups filed a High Court petition saying that they constituted an illegal "collective punishment", particularly traumatising children.

At the time Eyad Sarraj, the director of the Gaza community mental health programme, said they were causing **women** to miscarry and inducing panic, anxiety and low academic performance among children.

But the most powerful impact of Israel's - so far - "specific and limited" military campaign is likely to be the cuts in power. Gaza City's main Shifa hospital said its generator was working 24 hours a day but because of fuel shortages could keep going for only two weeks.

Mark Regev, the Israeli foreign ministry spokesman, insisted the attacks on power stations and bridges was justified by the need to bring out Cpl Shalit alive.

The Israeli human rights agency Btselem warned that the power cuts would jepoardise water supplies and health care. It stressed that Israel had the right to enact "all legal measures" to secure the release of Cpl Shalit but not those which conflict with international humanitarian law prohibitions against "objects indispensable to the survival of the civilian population".

'I hope the conflict will not return to what it was. If it does, we will lose half our sons'

LEADING ARTICLE, PAGE28

ADRIAN HAMILTON, PAGE 29

Graphic

An Israeli mobile artillery unit shelling targets in the Gaza Strip yesterday as the conflict continued DAVID FURST/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Load-Date: June 29, 2006



The price of saving Shalit

Canberra Times (Australia)

July 21, 2006 Friday

Final Edition

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Section: A; Pg. 13 Length: 1143 words

Byline: The Canberra Times

Body

LENIN once said, "There are decades when nothing happens, and weeks when decades happen." As decades pass in the Middle East this week, does anybody still believe this is about saving three Israeli soldiers - a piece of Hollywood schmaltz called "Saving Corporal Shalit" and its two sequels? Are Beirut, Haifa and Gaza City burning for them?

Only a dwindling band of people now believe this, the official pretext for the twin-set of wars Israel is fighting on its northern and southern fronts. If it had been true, there was an obvious solution - swapping prisoners. Israel is currently holding 8200 Palestinian fighters, as well as at least three Lebanese fighters who were seized in Lebanon itself during the long 18 years when Israel was occupying its entire southern region.

Both *Hamas* and Hezbollah have said the Israeli soldiers will head home as soon as there is a fair swap.

This is such a wacky, left-wing idea that it was pursued by Ariel Sharon just two years ago, when he gave Hezbollah 429 prisoners in exchange for an Israeli businessman and three corpses. The people who scoff at this proposal now are implicitly saying that Sharon was a flower-power hippie - one of the few insults he has never earned in his long life.

The opponents of a prisoner-swap also warn gravely that it would fire the starting gun for an open season on Israeli soldiers, dozens facing snatching. But previous prisoner- swaps have not been followed by a spate of kidnappings; indeed, they have led to a period of calm.

So what is the real reason for the bombing of Lebanon? The most obvious is a desire permanently to remove the Hezbollah militia from its place nestling on Israel's borders, where it has amassed 13,000 rockets.

This was a grievance just waiting for a casus belli.

But is this aim of disarming Hezbollah reasonable? The Islamic fundamentalist group is indeed revolting. In their early days Hezbollah imposed a savage code of "Islamic behaviour" on the Muslims of South Lebanon, imprisoning <u>women</u> in their homes and murdering gays. Since then they have endorsed the suicide-murder of Israeli children as they sit in pizzerias, and even in 1994 bombed a synagogue in Buenos Aires, Argentina, killing 85 civilians totally unconnected to this conflict.

The price of saving Shalit

Yet if being ideologically repugnant, snatching fighters and owning rockets were a reason for a war, then Lebanon would have an even greater right to invade Israel. After all, it holds their snatched fighters, owns far more than 13,000 rockets (some nuclear) and has a history of invading their territory and committing mass slaughter on dishonest pretexts. One Israeli general demanded this week, "How long can we live with a knife to our throats?"

But the far bigger knife belongs to Israel. Are they really saying the right to self-defence and a buffer-zone of security belongs to them alone?

Hezbollah is at its core a self- defence organisation, however ugly, and its recent operations have been limited largely to this function. It was formed to expel Israeli troops who mounted an unprovoked invasion of Lebanon in 1982 in order to crush the Palestinian groups operating there.

By the time the Israeli forces finally left in 2000, they had killed an estimated 17,000 Lebanese citizens and Palestinian refugees.

Since the end of the occupation, Hezbollah had fired across the border only once, until Israel began its aerial bombardment last week. This was when the Israelis blew up Sheik Ahmed Yassin, the spiritual leader of <u>Hamas</u>, outraging the world. (It is also worth remembering that half a million people in Lebanon get their drinking water from tanks provided by Hezbollah. At least 100,000 people depend on the hospitals and health clinics they run.)

There was always a way for Israel to put Hezbollah's rockets beyond use without a single innocent Lebanese child being bombed, and without anyone being deprived of safe drinking water. Hasan Nasrallah, the head of Hezbollah, has been asked repeatedly if he would accept a two-state solution. He always replies that he will never sabotage "an internal Palestinian matter", and that if Israeli and Palestinian leaders negotiate a settlement both sides can accept, Hezbollah's missiles will never be used across the border again. Hezbollah will be reduced to a local Lebanese problem. Revolting though he is, Nasrallah has always kept his word on these matters: he even explained to Sharon back in 2004 that at some point in the future he would kidnap more soldiers in a bid to reclaim the remaining fighters Sharon clung on to.

But a real negotiated two-state solution is precisely what Ehud Olmert does not want. Here we get to the central reason why Olmert has chosen a violent non-solution to Hezbollah over a peaceful authentic solution. Veteran Israeli peace campaigner Uri Avnery explains, "[In Israel] we have an ongoing, partly hidden debate about what's really the main thing - achieve peace or create a bigger Israel. The people in power today still believe that a greater Israel is more important.

They got away from the idea that all of the country of Palestine should become Israel, but they would still like to annex significant parts of the West Bank. That's their priority. As long as this is a priority ... they think peace is a bad thing."

Peace would create momentum towards negotiations with the Palestinians' democratically elected leaders - and that cannot be allowed to happen.

The Israeli newspaper Ha'aretz has just published a long, authoritative study of Olmert's motives, drawing on sources very close to the prime minister. It reveals that "Olmert has another consideration, of which he is not speaking [in public]. He wants to set a precedent for the convergence plan in the West Bank, to show that Israel won't accept terror from beyond the fence after it withdraws."

He knows the deal he plans to impose on the West Bank will be unacceptable to Palestinians. Not just to Islamic Jihad, but the vast majority. He has been proposing to seize strategically valuable chunks of the West Bank by annexing them to Israel since as long ago as 1978. So he is trying pre-emptively to terrify them now so they will not dare fight back.

So here it is, the kernel of emotional truth behind this war. Its clearest expression can be found in the speeches of Ze'ev Jabotinsky, figurehead for the right-wing of Zionism, the man Olmert was raised to revere.

The price of saving Shalit

Talking of the Arabs in 1923, Jabotinsky insisted, "A living people make enormous concessions ... only when there is no hope left."

That is the true purpose of the wars in Gaza and Lebanon - to ensure, at last, there is no hope left for the Arabs. But the Palestinians and Lebanese will not slump away.

They will become gripped with a nihilistic hate, and long after Olmert is nothing more than a skeleton and a statue, the hate will still burn.

Johann Hari is a columnist with The Independent.

Load-Date: July 20, 2006



Work is worth the risk of arrest

Prince George Citizen (British Columbia)

June 16, 2006 Friday

Final Edition

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Section: LIFESTYLES; Pg. 37

Length: 391 words

Byline: Associated Press

Dateline: BETHLEHEM, West Bank

Body

BETHLEHEM, West Bank (AP) -- Hana Saleh's commute to work is on a rocky path that would be a picture of serenity -- except for the Israeli border guards lurking among the olive trees.

At least once a week the 19-year-old Palestinian cleaning woman is caught, detained for two hours and sent back home. But as the main breadwinner for a family of 13, she's willing to take the risk for the other four paydays.

With jobs scarce in the Palestinian areas, Saleh and thousands of others have little choice but to sneak into Israel. It's a journey becoming more necessary and more difficult each day, as the Palestinian economy sinks and Israel builds its controversial barrier.

"I was caught yesterday by the border police and detained for two hours. But I had to come back again today," said Saleh. Her pay -- \$33 US a day -- is five times what her brother makes, when he can find a job near Bethlehem, their West Bank hometown eight kilometres from Jerusalem.

Jobs and money in the West Bank are increasingly scarce because of a Western economic boycott and tightened Israeli travel restrictions, both in reaction to the recent election that put the militant group *Hamas* in power.

Meanwhile, Israel is accelerating construction of its barrier -- a complex of fences, walls and barbed wire -- determined to keep out Palestinian militants but also illegal workers. The barrier will eventually encircle Jerusalem. So far only about 30 kilometres of the 88-kilometre ring has been built.

These days, Israel issues only about 11,000 work permits to Palestinians, about 15 per cent of the 80,000 granted before the Palestinian uprising broke out six years ago, said Shlomo Dror, an Israeli military spokesman on Palestinian affairs.

Tens of thousands more enter Israel illegally, mostly from the West Bank, Dror said. Sneaking into Israel from the sealed-off Gaza Strip is much harder.

Israeli border patrols catch about 4,000 undocumented Palestinians every week and the number is growing, said Border Police commander Hasin Fares. Some Palestinians have complained of beating at the hands of the police, even after an Israeli crackdown on such behaviour.

Work is worth the risk of arrest

But the flow doesn't stop, in part because Israeli businesses remain dependent on the cheap labour they get from the Palestinians. "There is demand and there is supply so they are coming to work," Fares said.

Graphic

Photo: Associated Press; Palestinian <u>women</u> climb up rocks on their way from the West Bank town of Bethlehem to work in Jerusalem. With few jobs in the Palestinian areas, tens of thousands of West Bank Palestinians are forced to climb clandestinely around Israel's separation barrier to find work.;

Photo: Associated Press; Palestinian workers who sneaked illegally from the West Bank through the village of Ni'alan to work in Israel prepare coffee at a temporary camp at the edge of the Jewish settlement of Kiryat Sefer.;

Photo: Associated Press; Hana Saleh, 19 covering her face, rides a bus after sneaking into Israel.;

Photo: Associated Press; A Palestinian man crosses into Jerusalem.

Load-Date: June 16, 2006



17/04/06

UK Newsquest Regional Press - This is The NorthEast April 17, 2006 Monday

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Section: FEATURES; Hearallsides

Length: 1125 words

Dateline: The North East

Body

ID CARDS: UNDER a last-minute shabby compromise agreed between the Government and Tories in the House of Lords, anyone renewing their passport or any other "designated" document will be compulsorily entered onto the National Identity Register.

Individuals will merely be able to opt not to receive a card until January 1, 2010 - but will still have to pay for it.

The problem has always been the database, not the card, and the comprehensive destruction of privacy it will bring.

In Parliament, round one may have gone to the Government by misdirection, but in the country it's a different story.

Millions are already vehemently opposed. What's the Home Office going to do? Round them up and force them to be fingerprinted or iris scanned? The coercion they will have to use will bring home to the public the true nature of the scheme.

The Government may think it has won, but our group NEsaysNO2ID has only just begun to fight. - Robin Ashby, NEsaysNo2ID, Newcastle.

FOLIC ACID

SO what is new about folic acid in pregnancy? Nothing.

Forty years ago, I was in general practice and we routinely gave Pregaday (folic acid plus iron) to <u>women</u> who wished to conceive or who were in the early months of pregnancy. We knew then that it would help in the prevention of nervous system defects in babies. - Dr Ann E Carr, Middleton St George.

SHAME OVER SHOOTINGS

IN the space of a week two coroner's juries in London, investigating separate incidents in the Gaza strip, have found that the Israeli armed forces have murdered two British citizens by deliberately shooting them in the head.

On both occasions, despite the evidence of murder, the Israeli government has refused to co-operate with the coroner.

17/04/06

Imagine if the Palestinian organisation <u>Hamas</u> had targeted an innocent British journalist and an equally innocent aid worker. The Foreign Secretary, Jack Straw, would have denounced <u>Hamas</u> and in doing so he would have called for EU and UN sanctions against them.

Yet when Israel murders British citizens, the families of the deceased find that the UK government has been totally uncooperative. One can only assume they don't really care. Just as they don't care when Palestinian boys of nine and ten years old are shot by Israeli snipers, or old people have their houses bulldozed to make way for illegal Jewish settlers.

As far as the UK government is concerned, the state of Israel can kill who it wants to kill. It can ethnically cleanse Palestinian Arabs from their land if it chooses and it can break every international law that it wants to break.

There will be no condemnation, no sanctions, no UN resolutions. One can only judge that the UK government is morally bankrupt. - John Gilmore, Bishop Auckland.

KNIGHTLY GIGGLES

ACCUSE me of sour grapes if you must, but the very mention of knighthoods amuses me, seeing how I find them ridiculous, along with the fancy dress which goes with them.

I remember former Labour Chancellor Denis Healey ridiculing his fancy regalia - "Don't we look silly?" he asked while all dressed up to appear in the House of Lords.

And while titles prevail, so will the Us and Them scenario. Let's get shot of them, in the name of democracy. - Alfred H Lister, Guisborough.

SAD PLACE

RETURNING to England on vacation after many years away I have been struck by the changes, and must admit very few of them are positive

I was so looking forward to coming home, having been born and raised in No Place, near Beamish, in County Durham. I live in Canada now, but have always been, and always will be proud of who I am and where I come from, so imagine the dismay I felt when I set eyes on the village of my childhood.

It was just a small coal mining village, but it was special in my eyes. However, today it looks like something from a Charles Dickens novel - filth and squalor, an all-over look of desolation. I could not get over the crumbling walls and streets, the boarded-up houses. A far cry from what it used to be.

Have the people of this country got no pride any more? Where are the members of the local council, the landlords who own these homes, that they should allow such decay?

I speak highly to Canadians and my family of the country and the county of my birth, but there will be no photographs of No Place going back to show my children or grandchildren.

I am embarrassed at the state of a place I dearly loved. I would have rather come home and found it levelled to the ground. - Margaret Laing (nee Moore), now of Medicine Hat, near Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

ROAD CONGESTION

T KELLY is too late with his call (HAS, Apr 12) for restoration of our pre-Beeching railway network. The endless growth in our population has aggravated the shortage of housing to the point where building land is becoming very scarce (and expensive) and much of the land formerly covered by railways and their buildings has already disappeared under bricks and concrete, especially in urban and suburban areas.

Transport advisors to the Government are keenly aware of how much time is left before traffic increase brings gridlock to our road system, but their remedy is very different.

17/04/06

Transport Minister Alastair Darling is already considering proposals to charge motorists for using the roads, and obviously the level of charge can be adjusted to regulate the traffic density to any desired figure.

One hundred years ago, most Britons were priced off the roads by their inability to find the cost of a motor car. Soon it will be their inability to find the road tolls. Another illustration of how overpopulation of a small island deprives its citizens of their liberties. - Bob Jarratt, Caldwell, Richmond.

MARK THE OCCASION

ST GEORGE'S DAY - April 23 - is nearly upon us, and I would like to encourage my fellow Englishmen and <u>women</u> to go out and celebrate our patron saint's day.

As usual, I will start the day off by singing the national anthem to my children, and then tuck in to a full English breakfast before joining fellow patriots in Darlington town centre to drink some fine English beer.

After visiting various watering holes, I will head off home to enjoy a meal consisting of British beef, potatoes and vegetables, before I raise my small glass of rum to Her Majesty the Queen before retiring to bed.

April 23 is a big day for England, and I urge all English people to celebrate it in style and join me as I say: "God Save the Queen." - Christopher Wardell, Darlington.

POLICE COVER

I HAVE just been on a short visit to Bishop Auckland, and I found one thing very remarkable. During the six days I spent in the town I became very aware that I had seen only two police cars, and not one bobby on the beat. Is this due to the low crime rate of the area, or are all the police working under cover? Intrigued. - R Dixon, Enniskillen, Co Fermanagh, N Ireland.

Load-Date: April 17, 2006



The next threat: extreme dolphins

The Times (London)
February 4, 2006, Saturday

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Section: FEATURES; Pg. 25

Length: 451 words **Byline:** Giles Coren

Body

WELL, THEY'RE BURNING flags again after someone thousands of miles away drew a couple of cartoons. They're issuing fatwas and burning effigies and mailing death threats to anyone with an opinion about anything at all. And, what, you thought I was going to make jokes about it? For a few lousy quid? You thought I was going to deliver my own personal thoughts on the matter in a forum that is available over the internet in countries where people sit reading The Times over their morning cornflakes with a rocket launcher lying on the table next to the toast rack? When hell freezes over, my friend.

Hell in the secular, metaphorical sense, of course. No disrespect to anything religious. I do not possess any pictures or sculptures or any other images of Hell, nor do I suggest that anybody ever had the wrong sort of sex there, or ate pork nearby or did anything disrespectful to **women** or...anyway, did you see where they rescued that dolphin?

I'm going to write about the dolphin because I think it is more or less safe to write about dolphins. So far as I know, there are no really extreme dolphins hiding out in the mountains anywhere who might take offence and start threatening to kill me, and also to kill anyone who publishes what I write, or even vaguely knows me. And if there are, then they will have to act fast, because dolphins do not last long in mountains.

Unfortunately, I do not have much to say about dolphins. I have a lot to say about the right of journalists and cartoonists to express themselves however the hell they want, but I am not going to say it, because I do not want to upset the strictly held religious beliefs of anybody who has a gun. So I will write about that bloody dolphin, and we will see what happens when writers are motivated purely by fear -whether the fear of causing offence, or the fear of being blown up on the bus.

My opinion about the rescue of the dolphin is that the vast amount of press coverage it got, hot on the heels, or should I say, hot on the fins, of the story about the Thames whale (see how, when we are afraid of inciting religious hatred, we have to make crap anthropomorphic puns), proves that the celebrity bubble has burst. Oh yes, Celebrity Big Brother was such a low point for humanity, largely because of George Galloway (who was by no means elected in 2005 because he pandered to local religious prejudices), that the media have completely lost interest in people, and are now interested only in fish.

That's my opinion about the dolphin. It's a load of balls, but it ain't going to get the Cross of St George burned on the streets of Gaza. Except by <u>Hamas</u> activists furious because whales and dolphins are not fish at all, but aquatic mammals.

The next threat: extreme dolphins

Load-Date: February 4, 2006



Envoys' fury as Straw approves secret talks with Arab terrorists

Mail on Sunday (London)
January 22, 2006 Sunday

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Section: FB S 04; Pg. 11

Length: 496 words

Byline: JASON LEWIS

Body

JACK STRAW is at the centre of a row with top diplomats after approving secret negotiations with banned terror groups.

The Foreign Secretary has given the go-ahead for 'engagement' with organisations having links to Osama Bin Laden and Middle East terror networks.

He has become convinced that only by talking to those on the fringe of terrorism can Britain be safeguarded. Now his advisers are attempting to forge links with organisations which are outlawed in parts of the Middle East.

But this has angered traditionalists in the Foreign Service who fear the department is being hijacked by officials too eager to ' understand' Muslim fundamentalism.

And The Mail on Sunday has learned that this fear has gone to the top of the diplomatic ladder.

Sir Derek Plumbly, ambassador to Cairo and one of Britain's most senior envoys, has warned the Foreign Office against its attempts to open negotiations with the Egyptian-based Muslim Brotherhood.

In a carefully worded but highly critical letter to senior officials in Whitehall entitled 'Engagement with political Islam', he urged the to reconsider the policy. He told superiors: 'I detect a tendency to be drawn to engagement for its own sake,' adding that by opening talks with the organisation Britain risked upsetting Egypt a key ally in the region and a major trading partner which is trying to combat the rise of fundamentalism.

He said such negotiations with the Muslim Brotherhood would further 'panic the horse'.

The Brotherhood has strong historic links to Al Qaeda and other Middle East terror groups, including <u>Hamas</u> and Islamic Jihad. Bin Laden and his deputy Ayman al-Zawahiri were members of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood.

Banned in Egypt and behind the assassination of President Anwar Sadat in 1981, the group has branches in 70 countries and has been accused of giving financial and logistical support to terrorists.

Sir Derek, ex-director of the Foreign Office's Middle East department, was first posted to the region in 1975 and has an Egyptian wife.

But Mr Straw is understood to have been persuaded that Britain should open a dialogue with the Muslim Brotherhood by Foreign Office advisers in the 'Engaging with the Islamic World Group'.

Envoys' fury as Straw approves secret talks with Arab terrorists

It includes Islamic issues adviser Mockbul Ali, 25, who has argued in internal Foreign Office memos that the Muslim Brotherhood is a 'reformist' and moderate group.

He is a former political editor of a Union of Muslim Students magazine which had sympathetic features on <u>women</u> suicide bombers.

After the September 11 attacks, he wrote warning against ' terrorism becoming synonymous with "Islamic fundamentalism",' adding: 'It is a paradox of the US system that the non-white world has been terrorised in the name of freedom.' A Foreign Office spokesman said: 'The position with regard to the Muslim Brotherhood of Egypt is that we have always had contacts with members of the People's Assembly, including members of political parties and independents, and will continue to do so.'

Load-Date: January 23, 2006



RALLIES IN MUSLIM WORLD SLAM POPE'S REMARKS

The Nation (AsiaNet)
September 22, 2006 Friday

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Length: 566 words

Body

ISLAMABAD- MMA staged countrywide protest to condemn the sacrilegious utterances of Pope Benedict against Islam and the Prophet (PBUH) on Friday. Protest rallies were also staged in many parts of the Muslim world against the Pope's remarks. The workers and leaders expressed their extreme resentment over the issue and resolved to join hands to put an end to continuous humiliation of Muslims world over.

Addressing a rally in Abpara MMA leader Hafiz Hussain Ahmad said," Musharraf government is an ally of the anti-Islam lobby. We can never forget the plight of Muslim brethren in Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, Lebanon and Palestine. And we can never forgive those who have caused the troubles to our brethren."

Another MMA leader Mian Muhammad Aslam also severely criticised the Pope's remarks and said that Islam was spread through the message and not through the sword. He suggested Pope to consult history books for his lack of knowledge might increase the chasm between the people of different faiths. "It is sad to listen to a statesman of a Muslim country saying that with the help of Indians we will fight the Mujahideen who have been fighting for the freedom of their Kashmiri brothers", said Maulana Abdul Malik. "The 22 thousand mujahideen who helped defeat godless communisms are now labelled as terrorists," he added.

All the speakers called the people to come out of their houses to protest against the un-Islamic policies pursued by the Musharraf government, ranging from the important foreign policy issues to the <u>women</u>'s protection bill. Speakers among others include Maulana Sharif Hazarvi, Maulana Zahoor Ahmad Alvi, Dr Muhammad Kamal, Shams-ur-Rehman Swati, Sufyan Abbasi and the Vice President MMA Maulana Abdul Hameed Qasmi.

AFP adds: Around 2,000 green flag-bearing <u>Hamas</u> followers swelled the streets of the West Bank town of Ramallah, haranguing Benedict whom they said "knows nothing about history" after his controversial remarks during a lecture on September 12. The Pope, meanwhile, has invited the ambassadors of Muslim countries to the Vatican for a meeting on Monday as part of a diplomatic offensive to repair rifts caused by his remarks.

In Iraq, an aide to revered Shia cleric Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani called for an apology for the "harmful and objectionable" remarks, calling also in a sermon for a dialogue among religions. "If the Pope was mistaken or his statement was a slip of the tongue, he should apologise," said Ahmed al-Safi. "Apology is a virtue. It is objectionable to keep the situation ambiguous.

Up to 300 demonstrators filed into Tehran's revolution square, burning US, British and Israeli flags that had been bound into a single cloth and chanting "Death to America" and "Death to Israel." Influential Qatari sheikh Yousuf al-Qaradawi accused the Pope of saying things "even a secondary school pupil shouldn't say," in a sermon that was partly broadcast by Qatar-based pan-Arab satellite channel Al-Jazira.

RALLIES IN MUSLIM WORLD SLAM POPE'S REMARKS

A gathering of around 300 angry scholars in Kabul called on religious leaders across the country to use Friday prayers to read to their congregations the words the Pope had used that linked Islam with violence. Former Malaysian premier Mahatir Mohammad, meanwhile, urged Muslims to refrain from violent protests similar to those held over the profane cartoons. "You can give your comments but do not be physical about it," Mahatir told reporters.

Load-Date: December 6, 2006



The New York Times

January 31, 2006 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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

Length: 1224 words

Body

INTERNATIONAL A3-13

Troops Wounded in Iraq Get New Model of Care

Special rehabilitation centers created to treat the Iraq war's most catastrophically wounded troops are developing a new model of advanced care, a response to the war's distinctive medical conundrum: the military is saving more of the wounded, yet the survivors are more damaged. A1

New Message by Qaeda Deputy

More than a week after the Al Qaeda deputy Ayman al-Zawahiri resurfaced in an audio tape posted on the Internet, Al Jazeera broadcast a video of Mr. Zawahiri berating the United States for a bombing attack on a remote village where he had been suspected of being, and threatening further attacks on the United States. A6

West Continues Palestinian Aid

The United States joined with Europe, Russia and the United Nations to rule out an immediate suspension of aid to the Palestinian Authority following the victory of <u>Hamas</u>, and American officials said international aid could continue until <u>Hamas</u> took office in two or three months. A8

Big Drop in Iraq Force Planned

The chairman of a high-level group planning the transfer of security responsibilities from American to Iraqi troops said that the number of American and other foreign soldiers in Iraq would fall to below 100,000 by year's end and that an overwhelming majority would be out in two years. A12

2nd Video of Seized Reporter

Al Jazeera broadcast a second videotape of a kidnapped American journalist, Jill Carroll, showing her dressed in a white Muslim head scarf and weeping as she spoke to the camera. A12

Iraq Audit Highlights Waste

An examination of thousands of contracts that the United States wrote committing billions of dollars of Iraqi oil money and seized assets has provided the most comprehensive look yet at the confusion, waste and lack of accountability in programs during the American-led occupation. A12

Iraqi Girl Dies of Bird Flu

A 15-year-old Iraqi girl has died of bird flu, Iraqi and international health officials said, indicating the arrival of the disease in another country -- one that, in its current war-torn state, may be ill prepared to control the flu's spread. A13

NATIONAL A14-19

Senate Clears Way for Vote To Confirm Court Nominee

Senators voted 72 to 25 to allow an up-or-down vote on the confirmation of Judge Samuel A. Alito Jr. as the 110th justice of the Supreme Court, ending a last-ditch Democratic effort to block the nominee. A1

Site Selected for Black Museum

After nearly a century of political infighting and delay, the Smithsonian Institution selected a prominent space on the Mall near the Washington Monument as the site of its National Museum of African-American History and Culture, its first dedicated to a comprehensive study of the black American experience. A16

Suit Challenges Kansas Law

A federal trial opened in Wichita over whether a Kansas law prohibiting virtually all sexual activity by people under age 16 means health-care professionals and educators must report such behavior to state authorities. Some say that requirement would stop many teenagers from seeking contraception, counseling, or treatment for sexually transmitted diseases. A14

Union to Help Fight Pollution

The effort to reduce smog stemming from seaports, among the biggest polluters in the nation, gained an ally when the union representing thousands of West Coast dockworkers promised to help significantly reduce toxic emissions. A14

G.O.P. Leader Criticizes NASA

The chairman of the House Science Committee sharply criticized NASA after the agency's top climate scientist and several public affairs officers complained of political pressure aimed at preventing public discussions of global warming. A15

National Guard Recruitment Up

National Guard officials said recruiting had grown so much in recent months that they expected to expand the Guard even as the Bush administration proposes to shrink it. A17

Bush to Urge Alternative Fuels

President Bush will renew a call for the development of alternative fuel for automobiles and promote the construction of new nuclear power plants in his State of the Union address, White House officials said. The issues have been part of Mr. Bush's agenda for years, but never a top priority. A19

NEW YORK/REGION B1-6

With Agency in Spotlight, Another Child Dies

A 4-year-old Bronx boy whose family was being investigated by child welfare officials died after suffering a fractured skull and severe lacerations to his liver in the messy, cold, two-bedroom apartment he shared with four siblings and two adults, officials said. A1

A preliminary review released by the city's Administration for Children's Services detailed a series of lapses by the agency's caseworkers that created a chain of missed opportunities to save 7-year-old Nixzmary Brown. B1

Homeless Health Crisis

The first extensive examination of the health of the city's homeless adults has found their health to be far worse than even the doctors who deal with them every day had thought. B1

Shooting Is Called Justified

A preliminary investigation has indicated that a police officer was justified in shooting an off-duty colleague who was pointing a gun at another man in the Bronx, Police Commissioner Raymond W. Kelly said. B1

Neediest Cases B5

SCIENCE TIMES F1-8

Health & Fitness F5

SPORTSTUESDAY D1-6

ARTS E1-10

Making Money Making Movies

Film schools like the University of Southern California's School of Cinema-Television are increasingly focused on the practical side of the movie business, with an emphasis on commercial awareness and skills that will make its graduates employable. E1

OBITUARIES B7-8

Wendy Wasserstein

A playwright who spoke for a generation of smart, driven but sometimes unsatisfied <u>women</u> in a series of popular plays that included the long-running Pulitzer Prize winner "The Heidi Chronicles," she was 55. A1

BUSINESS DAY C1-16

Exxon's Record Profits

Exxon Mobil disclosed that it set an all-time high in profits for any American company, reporting \$36 billion in annual income. But while most companies would be proud of record profits, Exxon did everything it could to play down the news. A1

Nominating a New Fed Chief

The nomination of Ben S. Bernanke to head the Federal Reserve Board is expected to come before the Senate today, but with attention focused on the nomination of Samuel A. Alito Jr. to the Supreme Court, many in Washington have taken little notice. A1

Enron Judge Picks Jury

In a single day, the federal judge presiding over the Enron trial defied skeptics by selecting a 12-person jury to decide whether former Enron executives Kenneth L. Lay and Jeffrey K. Skilling conspired to defraud investors in the biggest business collapse in history. C1

Kraft Announces Revamping

Kraft Foods, the world's second-largest food company, announced a major revamping in which it would eliminate 8,000 jobs, or 8 percent of the work force, and close 20 plants. C1

Wachovia Executive Retires

Wallace D. Malone Jr., who became Wachovia's vice chairman 15 months ago after selling it to SouthTrust bank, will receive a golden parachute worth about \$135 million when he steps down from the company. C1

Business Digest C2

EDITORIAL A20-21

Editorials: Wanted: a wary audience; the way forward for Turkey; Gail Collins on Wendy Wasserstein.

Columns: John Tierney, Nicholas D. Kristof.

Crossword E8 TV Listings E9 Weather D7

http://www.nytimes.com

Load-Date: January 31, 2006



ISRAELIS HAVE NO MONOPOLY ON PAIN

The Mirror
July 28, 2006 Friday
Eire Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 6 **Length:** 555 words

Byline: PAT FLANAGAN

Body

ISN'T it just as well Britain was never governed by people like the bunch of war criminals now in charge of Israel?

Otherwise we might still be rebuilding what was left of Dundalk and other Border towns after the IRA kidnap and murder of British Army captain Robert Nairac.

What if the Brits launched air raids on Dublin after the IRA killed police officers in a rocket attack on Newry?

The suggestion is madness. The United Kingdom is a civilised country and anyway, there is no way the rest of the world would have let them get away with it.

But that is exactly what Israel has done.

Three conscripts were kidnapped and they kill hundreds of innocent <u>women</u> and children and plunge the whole Middle East into chaos.

Yet the world stands idly by and watches the carnage.

The Israelis are using the same methods deployed by the Nazis during the Second World War.

If the French Resistance assassinated or kidnapped even a solitary German soldier, entire villages were razed and their populations massacred.

What Israel is doing in the Lebanon and Gaza is just as bad. If they can't get the perpetrators they punish the people.

Israel has shown itself to be a cruel rogue state with no conscience. It is every bit as bad as or even worse than Syria and Iran.

ISRAELIS HAVE NO MONOPOLY ON PAIN

The intentional killing - for that's what it was - of four UN peacekeepers shows the contempt that country has for the international community. Because of the appalling treatment of the Jewish people by western nations over the centuries, there is a marked reluctance to criticise Israeli actions.

Certainly there is no other race on earth that has had six million of their people murdered in less than a decade. The Holocaust is truly a stain on the soul of humanity. But no one has a monopoly on pain and suffering.

They say that people who have evil done to them do evil in return. The sickening sights in southern Lebanon is proof of that.

When the bombs and missiles rain down on the apartment blocks and hospitals in Lebanon, the people there suffer their own little holocausts.

But to the Israeli war machine, the lives of Arabs, be they <u>women</u> or children, or of UN personnel are of little consequence.

They have murdered international observers, journalists, peaceful protesters and targeted Palestinian children.

Their "Berlin Wall" in the West Bank is making life impossible for thousands of families.

They have an illegal nuclear weapons programme and have not the slightest qualm about breaking international law.

Our Government has behaved well so far and Foreign Minister Dermot Ahern has not been slow to condemn Israel's outrageous behaviour.

But Ireland must go further and expel the Israeli ambassador from Ireland. If the Israelis want to behave like barbarians they should not be accorded the trappings of a civilised state.

Killing 400 civilians in an illegal war is nothing short of criminal and the perpetrators should be in the dock at The Hague.

They have descended to the level of terrorists like <u>Hamas</u> and Hizbullah and, instead of defeating these organisations, have made them stronger.

The irony is that Israel has not the manpower to occupy Lebanon permanently and, when the dust settles, Hizbullah will be back stronger than ever.

All this bunch of child-killers has done is to condemn future generations of Israelis and their neighbours to the horror of perpetual war.

Graphic

HORROR: Aftermath of Israeli attack

Load-Date: July 28, 2006