

Date and Time: Friday, May 3, 2024 3:47:00PM EEST

Job Number: 223443891

Documents (100)

1. Realities, absurdities of Israel - U.S. policies

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. ISRAEL MISSILES KILL 10 IN GAZA

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

3. Mosque feels the pressure of prosecutions

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

4. DIGEST

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

5. Israelis kill Islamic Jihad leader in West Bank: Hani Awijan's group blamed for attacks that have killed 71

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. Captured Israeli 'in Egypt for swap'

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

7. No more of behind-closed-doors dealings with Hicks Letters to the

Editor>letters.editor@canberratimes.com.au

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. Israeli forces kill Islamic Jihad head: Playing soccer. Died in firefight with undercover troops

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. Muslims responsible for lack of democracy: Yaseen

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

10. Conflict likely to top G-8 talks

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

11. In Focus

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. Kidnappers in call for prison releases

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. My Middle East mission a success, declares Blair

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. For those about to die

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. Israeli Police Investigating Sex Case Take Items From President's Home

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

16. 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

17. Captured soldier's father begs for crisis to end: 'What good will come of it?' Shalit pleads

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

18. Israeli tanks roll back into abandoned settlements

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

19. In Short

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

20. Payback time

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. CHRISTMAS CHARITY APPEAL: United by courage, Palestinian women seize opportunity to assert their rights

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. Sports Digest

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. Sunday Vent

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. Israeli strike on office pressures Palestinian PM

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

25. SPOTLIGHT ON: PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES

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. Offensive to continue in Gaza, Israel says Olmert describes fighting as a 'war' without a timetable



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

27. Health officials frustrated as bird flu deaths soar in Indonesia

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

28. 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

29. Dummies' guide to west asia

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

30. LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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. Spielberg's 'Munich' massacre

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. 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

33. Why chocolate and ice-cream should be taken off the Middle East menu

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. Iran restates intention to defend Syria in the event of any attack by 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

35. The Mideast and Ideas for Peace

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

36. Pro-Israel groups rally support for Lieberman Connecticut senator faces stiff opposition from Ned Lamont,

who is critical of Lieberman's support of the Iraq war

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. Air strike kills top Palestinian rocket launcher and aide: Deaths of two children and six other civilians provoke more anger in Gaza City

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. Medals ban is an absolute disgrace

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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Sep 30, 2006

39. In Focus

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

40. READERS WRITE

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. US dials back the volume on 'democracy'

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. In Focus

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. Palestinian youth frustrated by Arafat's old guard Anger is stirred up by privilege, reports Patrick Bishop in

<u>Gaza</u>

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. Incoming PM says he won't allow U.S. to be involved in Arctic issues

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

45. In Focus

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

46. After Sharon: In Israel: 'Fighting father' took unilateral steps to peace

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

47. 'Gaza is a jail. Nobody is allowed to leave. We are all starving now' FORGOTTEN PEOPLE

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. Towards war

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. 'Gaza is a jail. Nobody is allowed to leave. We are all starving now' FORGOTTEN PEOPLE

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. <u>Guardian Weekly: International news: Who really killed girl's family on Gaza beach?: Guardian investigation casts doubt on Israeli claim that army was not to blame for deadly explosion</u>

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. 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



52. LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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. Israeli air force pounds 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

54. Letters to the Editor

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

55. On the Beach

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

56. On bleak terrain, hope in a Palestinian school Letter from Gaza

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

57. In Ireland, a roadmap from terror to truce



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

58. Bombs targeted tourist strip

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

59. Bin Laden's bluff

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. Hate flows on Muslim 'day of anger': U.S. urges 'press responsibility'

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

61. Uproar grows on prophet images Gaza gunmen threaten EU headquarters

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. At least seven Canadians killed in 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

63. Muslim 'day of anger' targets embassies: Protesters burn Danish flag, goods at rallies

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. 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

65. Sisters win "Lion Sleeps Tonight' royalties

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. Reply Letters and emails: Rethinking relations with political Islam

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. MEANWHILE IN... JERUSALEM

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

68. Bourguiba's legacy

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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Sep 30, 2006

69. Israel 'might free Palestinians' in return for captured soldier

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

70. Guardian weekly: The roundup

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

71. Israel threatens to invade Gaza

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. Tories seem to understand the crisis

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

73. Palestinians killed on Gaza beach by Israeli gunboats

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

74. Crooks work for carnival

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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Sep 30, 2006

75. The Fever Is Winning

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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Sep 30, 2006

76. Israel threatens to invade Gaza

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

77. Arab Majority May Not Stay Forever Silent

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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Sep 30, 2006

78. Tories seem to understand Middle East crisis



Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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Sep 30, 2006

79. World Digest

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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Sep 30, 2006

80. Harper gov't response to crisis strikes right tone

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. Fighting Surges and Deaths Rise As Israel Drives Deeper in Gaza

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

82. UNITY OF COMMAND

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

83. Mel Gibson isn't the only conspiracy theorist

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas



Search Type: Natural Language

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Sep 30, 2006

84. Deaths in the Mideast should be blamed on terror groups

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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Sep 30, 2006

85. NEWSDESK

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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86. Can fever cure the jihadi?

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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Sep 30, 2006

87. A Campus for 'Scholars, Not Fighters' on a Settlement Site

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

88. LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

89. G2: 'Most Israelis do not believe it is right to control Palestinians': Is it racist to worry about a Jewish

majority?

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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Sep 30, 2006

90. Canada in dangerous world

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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Sep 30, 2006

91. Here are some answers from a Muslim

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

92. Letters | Letters

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

93. Muslims and the media

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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94. Harper dismisses U.S. Arctic comments

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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Sep 30, 2006

95. Assumptions take their lumps as West meets Middle East

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

96. Picnic explosion: The battle of Huda Ghalia - who really killed girl's family on Gaza beach?: Guardian

investigation casts doubt on Israeli claim that army was not to blame

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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97. Letters - Israel / US policy has strengthened Hezbollah

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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Sep 30, 2006

98. World in crisis LETTERS

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

99. OLMERT HUGS ABBAS, SEZ 'SORRY'

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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100. NGOs flay Israeli attack on Gaza

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

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Sep 30, 2006



Realities, absurdities of Israel-U.S. policies

The Toronto Star July 30, 2006 Sunday

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Section: OPINION; Pg. A17

Length: 765 words

Body

The humanitarian and moral crises in Lebanon and the Gaza Strip are the inevitable outcome of Israeli-American exceptionalism elevated to dangerous levels under George W. Bush and now adopted holus bolus by Stephen Harper.

It was a given that Israel would respond to the abductions and killings of its soldiers in Gaza and Lebanon. But there are many theories about how and why its response became so disproportionate that it triggered worldwide condemnation.

A new cabinet got railroaded by the defence establishment.

Israel was taken aback by the range, payload and accuracy of Hezbollah's missiles and had no choice but to go in, guns blazing, to send a strong message.

The abductions provided the excuse to do what Israel was planning anyway - try and destroy Hezbollah and *Hamas*.

Israel and the U.S. are redrawing the map of the region, with a wink and a nod from Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Jordan. They are all spooked by the American disaster in Iraq, the growing influence of Iran, the failure to curb its nuclear program, and by the rise of Hezbollah, in particular.

Regardless, the crisis has brought to the fore some of the realities and absurdities of Israeli-American policies.

Arab lives are cheap.

"Is the value of human life less in Lebanon than that of citizens elsewhere?" asked a distraught Lebanese Prime Minister Fouad Siniora. "Are we children of a lesser God? Is an Israeli teardrop worth more than a drop of Lebanese blood?" Yes.

Bush wants an end to the conflict but he does not want a ceasefire. The U.S. sympathizes with the suffering of the Lebanese and the Palestinians but it won't stop the Israeli offensives that create the suffering.

The immediate causes of the twin wars in Gaza and Lebanon must be addressed but not the nearly four decadelong occupation and colonization of Palestinian and Syrian lands.

Israel won't negotiate a prisoner exchange - getting its soldiers back in return for four or five Lebanese prisoners and some of the 1,500 Palestinian prisoners, including <u>women</u> and children - even though it has swapped prisoners before.

Realities, absurdities of Israel - U.S. policies

The 2004 UN resolution on Lebanon, calling for Hezbollah to be disarmed, must be enforced - but not the 1967 and 1973 Security Council resolutions calling on Israel to vacate Arab-occupied lands.

The Lebanese government is too weak to disarm Hezbollah but must nevertheless do so. Hezbollah - as the main representative of the Shiites, the single largest community, constituting 35 per cent to 40 per cent of the population - is, in fact, part of the government that's supposed to do the disarming.

We need an international force to contain Hezbollah even though France, the former occupier of Lebanon (1920-'43), Germany and others won't join without Hezbollah's consent.

Previous buffer zones between Lebanon and Israel had to be abandoned but a new one must be created.

Hezbollah must be shunned in favour of the Lebanese government even though the latter parrots all of Hezbollah's demands: prisoner exchange; an end to Israeli violation of Lebanese air space; the return of the disputed Shabaa Farms; and the release of Israeli maps showing where mines have been laid.

It is important to protect Lebanon's nascent democracy but it's all right to cripple it with the current military offensive.

Democracy must be promoted but crushed if it does not produce the right results, as in the Occupied Territories.

Israel can destroy but others must pay. Saudi Arabia has pledged \$1.5 billion, the U.S. \$30 million, the EU \$12.6 million and Canada \$1 million to help fix the bombed infrastructure, as they had done earlier in the West Bank and the Gaza.

Iran and Syria should not arm <u>Hamas</u> and Hezbollah but the U.S. can arm Israel, to which it has just rushed aviation fuel and bunker-buster bombs.

Pulverizing Palestinians, by force and economic strangulation, hasn't worked for 40 years but it must continue, even if it produces evermore militant forms of resistance.

Assassinating Arab leaders seems not to deplete their bench strength but targeted killings must go on, the latest in the Israeli crosshairs being Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah.

Iran and Syria can contain Hezbollah and Hamas but Iran and Syria must be boycotted.

NB: The Arab/Muslim world is inflamed; militancy is rising; moderates are marginalized; Islamists are winning wherever America is most involved; and the U.S., the biggest power in the world, and Israel, the biggest power in the region, are driven more and more by insecurity and fear.

It is to this world order that Harper has committed Canada.

Haroon Siddiqui appears Thursday and Sunday. hsiddiq @ thestar.ca.

Load-Date: July 30, 2006

End of Document



The New York Times

June 14, 2006 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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

Length: 1356 words

Byline: By STEVEN ERLANGER and IAN FISHER; Steven Erlanger reported from Gaza for this article, and Ian

Fisher from Tel Aviv.

Dateline: GAZA, June 13

Body

Eight Palestinian civilians were killed and more than 40 wounded Tuesday by an Israeli missile strike on Islamic militants riding in a van that Israeli officials said was carrying rockets to launch at Israel. Two men in the van were also killed, including a man the Israelis consider an important rocket maker.

The officials said the strike had prevented more of what has been a rising number of Palestinian missile attacks launched from Gaza. But the civilian casualties further inflamed Palestinian rage over eight deaths last week on a beach from what residents said was an errant Israeli shell. Seven of the dead were from one family.

In a news conference in Tel Aviv, Israel's defense minister, Amir Peretz, announced Tuesday that an investigation into the deaths on Friday showed that Israel was not to blame.

"We have enough findings to back up the suspicion that the intention to describe this as an Israeli event is simply not correct," he said, citing films, data on where and when the shells landed, and a piece of shrapnel taken from a victim. "The accumulating evidence proves that this incident was not due to Israeli forces."

The account was quickly disputed by officials from Human Rights Watch, who cited contrary evidence from an investigation of their own.

In the attack on Tuesday, one missile struck a van and killed two members of Islamic Jihad and apparently wounded a third. But a second missile fired shortly afterward hit the curb just in front of a house whose occupants had emerged to see what had happened, and members of the Mughrabi family and their neighbors were killed.

Two children and three medical workers died in the second explosion, after the first had destroyed the yellow Volkswagen van of a noted Islamic Jihad rocket maker, Hamoud Wadiya, who was killed. Israel said Mr. Wadiya was transporting Katyusha rockets to launch at Israel, and rockets were seen in the wreckage.

The Katyusha is a factory-made weapon of longer range and much greater accuracy than the crude Qassam rocket that Palestinian militants build in machine shops with explosives mixed in cooking pots.

The Katyushas, Israel says, have been smuggled into the Gaza Strip from Egypt and represent a significantly enhanced danger to Israeli cities.

Since Israel withdrew from Gaza 10 months ago, scores of Qassam rockets have been launched from Gaza; Israel says there were 100 rockets fired last month. Between June 2004 and March 2006, eight Israelis, including three children, were killed in the attacks, the Israeli military says.

Israel says it has been forced to go after the launching sites because the Palestinian authorities have done nothing about them.

Palestinian militants say they launch the rockets in response to Israel's continuing campaign to capture or kill Palestinian militants from Islamic Jihad and Al Aksa Martyrs Brigades.

After Tuesday's attack, a weeping Hekmat Mughrabi said her 30-year-old son, Ashraf, had died in her arms. Ashraf ran to the door after the first explosion, trying to calm children playing on the roof, she said. "He was shouting to the kids, 'Don't be afraid, don't be afraid!' " and had not even finished his sentence when the second missile hit, she told The Associated Press.

An angry Palestinian Authority president, Mahmoud Abbas, called the Israeli actions "state terrorism" and accused Israel of trying to "wipe out the Palestinian people."

Mr. Abbas, whose aides feel his support for talks is being undermined by the civilian death toll, said, "Every day there are martyrs, there are wounded people, all of them innocents, all of them bystanders."

The deaths are bound to make it harder for Mr. Abbas and the United States to persuade <u>Hamas</u>, which controls the Palestinian Authority, to recognize the right of Israel to exist, to forswear violence and to accept previous Palestinian-Israeli agreements, which are based on a permanent two-state solution.

Mr. Abbas will also find it more difficult to get <u>Hamas</u> to accept a referendum proposal that would at least implicitly recognize Israel.

There was pandemonium on Tuesday at Al Shifa Hospital, where the dead and the wounded were brought. Gunmen surged through the courtyard, firing weapons into the air, and banging on the door of the morgue to retrieve the bodies of their colleagues or family members.

They grabbed stretchers and paraded the corpses in impromptu marches around the hospital yards and into the streets, bearing the black banners of Islamic Jihad and the yellow ones of Fatah and Al Aksa Martyrs Brigades, to which Ashraf Mughrabi belonged.

In a gruesome scene, one Islamic Jihad militant smeared the blood of his dead colleague onto his rifle and lifted it high into the air. Amid the acrid smoke of burning tires, <u>women</u> shouted, "Death to Israel! Death to the occupation!"

After the explosion on the beach in Gaza on Friday, <u>Hamas</u> said it was abandoning its 16-month cease-fire with Israel, though Israeli officials insist that <u>Hamas</u> had started firing its own Qassams toward Israel a week before.

Human Rights Watch, which has been investigating the Israeli shelling in Gaza on Friday, said of the deaths, "The evidence we have gathered strongly suggests Israeli artillery fire was to blame." It called on Israel to open an independent investigation rather than relying on its own military.

An American expert working with Human Rights Watch, Marc Garlasco, is a former Pentagon official who did bomb damage assessment for the American military in Kosovo and worked for the Defense Intelligence Agency.

He said that he had visited the beach the day after the explosion, and that the crater size, the shrapnel and the location of injuries on the bodies all pointed to "a shell dropping from the sky, not explosives under the sand."

In an interview in Gaza, he said he had found shrapnel "consistent with a 155-mm. Israeli shell fired from a M109 howitzer," including one piece stamped "155mm."

Defense Minister Peretz and other Israeli military officials offered a different analysis.

They contended that the explosion on the beach occurred between 4:57 p.m. and 5:10 p.m. They based that on an array of films, not specifically identified but shown at the news conference in Tel Aviv. One film taken from seaward showed what the officials called normal activity on that stretch of beach, with the time stamped as late as 4:57. A later film stamped at 5:15 showed an ambulance arriving from a hospital about five minutes away.

Brig. Gen. Hezi Levy, Israel's surgeon general and one of the investigators, said that they had accounted for all but one of the shells fired that day, and that none of them had exploded during this time. He said the one unaccounted-for artillery shell was fired "much" before 4:57. Later, another military official specified that that shell was launched at 4:30.

"There is no chance that this shell caused such damage," the general said.

The news conference, however, did make clear that shelling had occurred near that time and place. The last shell fell, according to a photograph of the site marked with the artillery hits, at 4:48, several hundred yards north of the site of the deaths.

General Levy said that four of those injured were taken to Israeli hospitals and that the single piece of shrapnel extracted from one of them did not match any munitions used that day.

The officials said they also reviewed other recent bombardments in the area and ruled out the possibility that an Israeli shell had landed there earlierand might have been set off by the Palestinian family.

Mr. Peretz and the others refused to speculate on what could have caused the explosion, though military officials have contended that *Hamas* may have planted land mines against Israeli commandos.

Mr. Peretz did not rule out the possibility of allowing outside experts review Israel's evidence, as Human Rights Watch demanded. But the army's chief of staff, Lt. Gen. Dan Halutz, said he did not see the need.

"What we are doing is very, very, very professional," he told reporters. "We don't need the assistance of anyone."

http://www.nytimes.com

Graphic

Photo: Victims from a house in Gaza that was hit yesterday by an Israeli missile. A rocket maker was also killed. (Photo by Khalil Hamra/Associated Press)(pg. A6)Chart: "Comparing Rockets"A Palestinian van hit by an Israeli missile on Tuesday was carrying Katyusha rockets.KatyushaRange: up to 28 miles

length: 17 feetThere are two known variations of the Katyusha used against the Israelis -- the 240-millimeter, above, which was test-fired by Hezbollah in August 2005, and the 122-millimeter, fired from the Gaza Strip in March 2006.QasssamRange: 2-6 miles

length: 6 feetQassam are handmade rockets with shorter range and less accuracy than the factory-made Katyusha.(Sources by Military Periscope

GlobalSecurity.org

Jane's

Israel Defense Forces)(pg. A6)

Load-Date: June 14, 2006

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St. Louis Post-Dispatch (Missouri)

December 6, 2005 Tuesday

THIRD EDITION

Copyright 2005 St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Inc.

Section: NEWS; Pg. A1

Length: 2134 words

Byline: By Jon Sawyer POST-DISPATCH WASHINGTON BUREAU CHIEF

Dateline: FALLS CHURCH, VA.

Body

As Sheikh Shaker el Sayed stood before his congregation for the start of Friday prayers last month at Dar al-Hijrah Mosque, he looked out upon a community that was in distress but strong in faith.

Off to one side, seated on the prayer carpet beneath the mosque's circular skylights, was Allam al-Alami, an engineer from suburban Virginia, grieving over the loss of five close relatives killed the previous week in a suicide-bomb attack at a wedding party in Amman, Jordan.

On the floor to al-Alami's left was Abdelhaleem Ashqar, a former business professor at Howard University, awaiting trial on charges that he helped the militant Palestinian group <u>Hamas</u> over a decade ago. On his ankle: an electronic monitoring bracelet that records his every move.

In the upstairs prayer room for <u>women</u>, wearing a full hijab that covered her face except for her eyes, was Mirsada Stabancic, 27, a mother of four. Her husband, former St. Louisan Randall "Ismail" Royer, is serving a 20-year sentence for supporting Kashmiri Muslims in their violent struggle for independence from India.

And in the main prayer room, directly in front of el Sayed, stood Omar Abu Ali, solemn and distinguished, a Jordanian-American computer programmer in a pinstriped suit.

Abu Ali had come to prayers from the federal court in Alexandria, Va. A jury had begun deliberations that morning on the most serious of charges -- that his son Ahmed had joined an al-Qaida terrorist cell in Saudi Arabia and conspired to assassinate President George W. Bush. Five days later, he would be found guilty, on all counts.

No wonder, then, that on this day the imam urged his congregation to look beyond the trials of this life, to reflect that "no judgment in this life will be final. There will be a review. And the review is not going to be in the appeals court or the Supreme Court. . . .

"So today, if you are wronged -- if you cannot speak, if you cannot make your point because in this life a judge has made up his mind or her mind to do injustice because of whatever reason, don't be sad," el Sayed said. "You are only wronged for the few days in which we are living, and those count for nothing in comparison to eternity."

"We are in love with this country"

Imagine a community of faith devoted to its members but also open to outsiders, a big-hearted place that sponsors schools, comforts the afflicted and cares for the needy -- the sort of place that could raise \$12,500 cash at a single service for victims of Hurricane Katrina.

Place that community just outside the nation's capital. Make it the biggest mosque in the region, drawing several thousand people to prayers each week -- among them, newly arrived immigrants as well as established professionals and diplomats.

Then imagine sustaining that community, and its faith, amid a series of federal prosecutions -- terrorism-related cases that the Bush administration hails as landmark victories but that members of this community view as either ill-conceived or outright abuse of government power.

Dar al-Hijrah ("Land of Migration") mosque was established in 1983, in a house in this suburb of Washington. The house still stands, but services are held in a larger building next door that was completed in 1991 with financial help from the Saudi government. The mosque has no current Saudi support but does have close links with the Muslim American Society and the Islamic Society of North America.

The mosque picked up notoriety when it was disclosed that two of the 9/11 hijackers had worshipped there, for a period of several weeks in spring 2001. El Sayed, who took over as imam in July, has been the target of criticism himself for public comments -- made as general secretary of the Muslim American Society -- praising Palestinian resistance to Israel.

El Sayed, 54, an Egyptian immigrant, complains that media accounts often convey false impressions, so often that he almost despairs of doing interviews.

"This is an open mosque," he says, referring to the apparent presence here of the hijackers. "Anybody could go through the doors at Dar al-Hijrah and come out, without any of us knowing they were there. . . . Yet, the more this story is reported, the more it is asserted one way or another, it suggests that Dar al-Hijrah is somehow a haven for unsavory personalities -- which is not correct. A total distortion.

"Wherever I go, there is always the question, that we have not condemned terrorism enough," he said. "Should I just make a condemnation song, a CD of it? We quote it on our Web site, we speak it to the media, yet people are not willing to take our answer for what it is."

El Sayed says that amid all the tension since the 9/11 attacks, too many forget that Muslim Americans are both -- Muslims and Americans, committed to faith and country alike.

"We are in love with this country," he said. "We have a vested, personal and community interest for this country always to be safe. We will never waver on that issue. Even if the government does the most awful things to us, we will not waver on that."

Crackdown, or overreaching?

After 9/11, the Justice Department proclaimed that the gloves were off, that it would seize every opportunity to go after suspected terrorists.

"Let the terrorists among us be warned," then-Attorney General John Ashcroft declared in late 2001. "If you overstay your visa, even by one day, we will arrest you. If you violate a local law, you will be put in jail and kept in custody as long as possible. We will use every available statute. We will seek every available prosecutorial advantage."

Nowhere has that strategy been applied so forcefully, or successfully, than in the eastern district of Virginia. U.S. Attorney Paul McNulty, a former Ashcroft aide, has racked up more terrorism-related convictions and guilty pleas than any other prosecutor. He was recently nominated as deputy attorney general, the No. 2 post in the Justice Department.

But to many of the estimated 40,000 Muslims who live in the Washington area, those same cases look like overreach, in a climate all too permissive of attacks on Islam itself.

They recall the comment by President George W. Bush, quickly retracted, referring to the U.S. anti-terrorist war as a "crusade." They note the incendiary remarks from well-known Christian evangelists -- the Rev. Franklin Graham's depiction of Islam as "a very evil and wicked religion," for example, or the Rev. Jerry Falwell's description of the Prophet Muhammad as "a violent man, a man of war" and "a terrorist."

There was also the statement by Ashcroft himself, in an interview with columnist Cal Thomas in late 2001: "Islam is a religion in which God requires you to send your son to die for Him. Christianity is a faith in which God sends His Son to die for you."

Guilty pleas and long sentences

Prosecutors referred to the series of cases over Kashmiri independence, including that of St. Louisan Royer, as the "Virginia Jihad"; local Muslims refer to it dismissively as the "paintball" case because of allegations the defendants trained at a local paintball course.

The charges were based on alleged violations of the Neutrality Act, a rarely enforced statute dating to 1794 that bars U.S. citizens from joining military action against countries with which the United States is not at war. Participants were accused of taking part in training exercises, with the aim of joining Lashkar e-Taiba, a militant Muslim group fighting for Kashmiri independence from India.

Six of the 11 defendants pleaded guilty, three were convicted at trial and two were acquitted. Two of the defendants got reduced sentences after pleading guilty to charges that the group also contemplated fighting with the Taliban against U.S. forces; the others denied any such intent.

The paintball group had attended lectures by a charismatic Iraqi-American imam named Ali al-Timimi, at a storefront mosque in downtown Falls Church. Al-Timimi, who was also a Ph.D. cancer researcher, was convicted this year of inciting others to levy war against the United States. He was sentenced to life in prison.

Abu Ali's conviction on conspiracy charges was based almost entirely on a confession he made while in custody of the Saudi Arabian security service. His claim that he confessed only after being tortured was rejected by the jury.

U.S. District Judge Leonie Brinkema presided over most of the "Virginia Jihad" cases and also that of Ali al-Timimi. She called the mandatory sentences that federal guidelines required her to impose -- life for al-Timimi and up to 85 years in the "paintball" cases -- "appalling."

A Palestinian activist

Another case that has fueled resentment among Muslims is that of Abdelhaleem Ashqar, the former Howard professor charged with helping *Hamas*.

The indictment alleges that in the early 1990s, when Ashqar was a graduate student at the University of Mississippi, he helped launder and disburse about \$1 million to further the aims of *Hamas*.

His alleged that actions in support of <u>Hamas</u> all took place before 1995, the year <u>Hamas</u> was officially designated a terrorist group by the United States. The indictment also cites his refusal to testify about <u>Hamas</u> before federal grand juries in 1998 and 2003, despite an offer of immunity.

The evidence against him came from pre-1995 FBI wiretaps and a break-in at his Mississippi apartment, both conducted as intelligence operations that required no court warrants.

Ashqar and two other <u>Hamas</u> supporters were charged in August last year, a week before the Republican National Convention, in a case that Ashcroft hailed as a major success for the USA Patriot Act provisions that made it easier for intelligence information to be used in law enforcement.

The indictment relied on the Racketeering and Corrupt Organizations statutes, originally aimed at organized crime. The Justice Department's announcement noted that these were allegations only. Other parts of the government were less careful:

"Three Hamas Terrorists Indicted for Racketeering" was the headline on a State Department Web site.

Ashqar, 47, lives in suburban Virginia with his wife, a teacher. He has been under house arrest since shortly after his arrest. Trial is scheduled for October in Chicago. In the meantime, he is confined to home except for two hours each weekday morning and afternoon and for Friday prayers.

Despite his confinement, Ashqar registered as a candidate in the Palestinian presidential elections in January -- and came in fourth.

Ashqar grew up in the West Bank, in a family of political activists. In the waning days of the Ottoman Empire, the Turks jailed his grandfather, an agitator for home rule. In 1936, the British authorities then governing Palestine jailed his father, an outspoken cleric. Ashqar himself was jailed -- and tortured, he says -- by the Israelis. Prosecutions like his are merely a continuation in this country of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, he believes. He considers the Virginia Jihad case as an equally miscast part of the war on terrorism.

"The only case that is different is Abu Ali," Ashqar said, referring to the alleged conspiracy to assassinate the president that ended in conviction last month. "But that young man grew up in this community," he said. "Everyone knows him. They simply don't believe the charges."

Could friction over such prosecutions end up alienating Muslims in communities such as Falls Church? Could there be an American version of Leeds, England, hometown of the second-generation Pakistani Muslims who blew themselves up in the London suicide attacks in July that killed 56 people and wounded 700?

Ashqar said he doesn't think so, that in his opinion American Muslims are more integrated into the broader society than Muslims in Europe and more willing to seek out constructive political power. What worries him is the generation of younger Muslims who come to mosque infrequently, if at all, and who view their situation through an American prism.

"For us immigrants, I compare the situation here to the situation in Israel or I compare it to the situations where Muslims live under dictatorship, and for me it is still tolerable here," he said.

"But for the younger generation, who have lived only here, it often feels intolerable. They insist on standing up now."

About our series More than four years after the Sept. 11 attacks, Muslims in the United States and around the world are grappling with tension inside and outside their faith. Many have come to believe that the war on terrorism is really a war on Islam.

Sunday: St. Louisans meshing Islam with America. Monday: The British response to homegrown unrest. Today: Prosecutions trouble one Muslim community. Wednesday: From Parkway South to Pakistan, a convert's story. Sunday: Improving the U.S. image in the Muslim world.

STLtoday.com/muslims Read earlier installments of this series online.

Notes

Graphic

PHOTO; MAP

PHOTO - Muslim men pray at Dar al-Hijrah Mosque in Falls Church, Va., on a Friday in November. Several members of the congregation have been charged or prosecuted under the U.S. crackdown on terrorism. Photo by Robert Cohen | Post-Dispatch PHOTO - An image of the American flag adorns a sandal left among other shoes outside the prayer room at Dar al-Hijrah Mosque in Falls Church, Va., last month. Photo by Robert Cohen | Post-Dispatch PHOTO - Sheikh Shaker el Sayed delivers a sermon before prayers last month at Dar al-Hijrah Mosque in Falls Church, Va. "We have a vested, personal and community interest for this country always to be safe," el Sayed said in an interview. Photo by Robert Cohen | Post-Dispatch MAP BY THE POST-DISPATCH - FALLS CHURCH PHOTO - Royer Serving 20-year sentence

Load-Date: December 6, 2005

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DIGEST

St. Louis Post-Dispatch (Missouri)
September 17, 2006 Sunday
SECOND EDITION

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A6

Length: 472 words

Byline: FROM NEWS SERVICES

Body

TOKYO

Typhoon slams into Japanese island chain

A strong typhoon battered Japan's southern Ryukyu island chain on Saturday, and two people died after heavy downpours triggered a landslide, a news report said.

Typhoon Shanshan, with maximum sustained winds of 110 mph, was forecast to continue north toward Japan's southwestern main island of Kyushu, where it could make landfall as early as Monday, Japan's Meteorological Agency said.

Heavy rain triggered landslides that killed two people on Kyushu on Saturday as the typhoon approached, Kyodo News service reported.

The storm forced the suspension of dozens of flights and disrupted shipping in the region, public broadcaster NHK reported. Taiwan issued a maritime alert Friday for ships off its eastern and southern coasts as the typhoon passed.

BAIKONUR, KAZAKHSTAN

Russian rocket to take tourist to space station

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 only 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.

DIGEST

The attacks in the region's main commercial center of Hat Yai came just hours after the military staged a peace rally in the south, the site of a Muslim insurgency, where it expressed hope that people would work with authorities to end the violence.

Authorities quickly blamed separatist insurgents for the attacks. Since 2004, they have waged a bloody campaign that has killed at least 1,700 people -- most civilians.

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. The White House would not confirm the meeting, and it was not clear whether Bush's schedule in New York had been set. The two men last met in October 2005 in Washington.

Abbas, a moderate who leads the Fatah Party, and the militant Islamic group <u>Hamas</u>, which currently rules alone, agreed last week to form a national unity government that would strive to establish a Palestinian state alongside Israel -- implying recognition of the Jewish state.

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

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<u>Israelis kill Islamic Jihad leader in West Bank: Hani Awijan's group blamed</u> for attacks that have killed 71

Ottawa Citizen
July 30, 2006 Sunday
Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A4

Length: 484 words

Byline: Ali Daraghmeh, The Associated Press

Dateline: NABLUS, West Bank

Body

NABLUS, West Bank - Israeli troops killed a top leader of the radical Islamic Jihad in a West Bank raid yesterday, the group said, and the Israelis pressed ahead with their offensive in the Gaza Strip.

Islamic Jihad said the leader of its militant wing in Nablus, Hani Awijan, 29, was killed by Israeli undercover troops. They came to arrest him while he was playing soccer with friends and relatives, the group said. Another Islamic Jihad militant was also killed.

The army confirmed soldiers operated in Nablus and said a militant was killed in an exchange of fire.

Israel Radio said Mr. Awijan was responsible for a series of attacks on Israelis. Over the past 17 months, Islamic Jihad has been responsible for all 12 suicide bombing attacks in Israel, killing 71 people.

Islamic Jihad announced Mr. Awijan's death from mosque loudspeakers. As news of the raid spread through Nablus, large crowds gathered. Militants burned tires in the streets and called for a general strike in the city. Shops were quickly closed.

While most attention is on the Israel-Lebanon conflict and the monthlong Israeli offensive in Gaza, Israeli forces carry out nightly arrest raids in the West Bank, searching for suspected militants. Often more than 20 are detained in a single night.

Israel moved tanks and troops into Gaza and started an intensive campaign of airstrikes after <u>Hamas</u>-linked militants tunnelled under the border and attacked an Israeli army post at a crossing point, killing two soldiers and capturing a third, Cpl. Gilad Shalit, 19.

Palestinian officials said they have not received a response to their demand that Israel guarantee that it will free <u>women</u>, children and long-serving Palestinian prisoners before Cpl. Shalit is released.

Dr. Salah Bardawil, a senior <u>Hamas</u> official, said Israel's refusal to guarantee the release of prisoners before the release of Cpl. Shalit had created a stalemate.

Israelis kill Islamic Jihad leader in West Bank: Hani Awijan's group blamed for attacks that have killed 71

Early yesterday, Israeli tanks moved back into Gaza a day after completing a two-day raid in the northern part of the seaside strip in which 30 Palestinians were killed. Most of the dead were armed militants, but some were civilians, including an elderly woman and a child.

Late yesterday, residents reported Israeli tanks moving east of Gaza City, a frequent area of Israeli operations, to try to stop Palestinian militants from firing rockets at Israeli communities.

In airstrikes early today, Israeli aircraft destroyed a house belonging to a militant in Gaza City, residents said. Israel warned the occupants to leave, and the house was empty. Another target was the house of a militant leader in the town of Beit Hanoun. Eight people were wounded in the attacks, three seriously, hospital officials said.

Also, Israeli aircraft fired missiles near the southern town or Rafah, knocking out electricity. The Israelis said they were aiming at a site where Palestinians were tunneling under the Gaza-Egypt border.

Load-Date: July 30, 2006

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Captured Israeli 'in Egypt for swap'

The Australian (Australia)
September 6, 2006 Wednesday
All-round First Edition

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 9

Length: 495 words

Byline: Abraham Rabinovich, Jerusalem

Body

MATP

<u>HAMAS</u> has transferred the captive Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit to Egypt in anticipation of his exchange for 800 Palestinian prisoners in Israeli hands, according to the Arabic-language newspaper al-Khayat, published in London.

The report received apparent confirmation, in slightly different form, from Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, who told a Bahrain newspaper that a deal for Corporal Shalit's release had been reached and that the soldier "will be transferred" to Egypt, at which time the number of Palestinian prisoners to be released by Israel will be announced.

Corporal Shalit's capture two months ago by militants who tunnelled into Israel from the Gaza Strip triggered severe Israeli reprisals that have taken the lives of about 250 Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, knocked out part of its electricity supply and imposed severe economic sanctions. In addition, leading *Hamas* legislators on the West Bank have been imprisoned.

Al-Khayat, a widely respected publication, said Israel had refused to release prisoners "with blood on their hands" as part of the deal, which means anyone involved in executing or planning fatal terror attacks.

It has also refused to release Marwan Barghouti, a leading Fatah figure seen as the person most likely to inherit Mr Abbas's role as leader of the Fatah movement and possibly as head of the Palestinian Authority.

The al-Khayat report, which cited Palestinian sources, said the deal also included Palestinian agreement to a temporary truce, which presumably means a halt in the firing of rockets into Israel from the Gaza Strip, and Israeli agreement to lift the restrictions it has imposed since Corporal Shalit's capture.

A senior Israeli minister told Israel Radio he was unaware of any such deal. Israeli defence sources declined to comment.

The militants holding Corporal Shalit, who turned 20 in captivity, have demanded the release of all Palestinian **women** prisoners, as well as juveniles and men who have been in prison for 20 years or longer. They also sought the release of men in leadership positions who do not fall into those categories, such as Barghouti.

Captured Israeli 'in Egypt for swap'

Meanwhile, Israel has accepted the offer of UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan's help in obtaining the release of two soldiers captured by Hezbollah in a raid from Lebanon on July 12 that triggered the month-long war.

Israel demands the unconditional release of sergeants Ehud Goldwasser and Eldad Regev, who were seized on Israeli territory. However, it is understood that they will not be released unless Israel also releases prisoners. Any deal reached will be between Israel and the Lebanese Government.

Hezbollah is particularly keen for the return of Samir Kuntar, who has been held by Israel for 28 years for clubbing to death a four-year-old girl and shooting her father in a raid. It is not clear whether Israel will agree to his release. It was primarily to obtain Kuntar's release that Hezbollah staged the raid to seize soldiers for an exchange.

Load-Date: September 5, 2006



No more of behind-closed-doors dealings with Hicks; Letters to the Editor>letters.editor@canberratimes.com.au

Canberra Times (Australia)

July 1, 2006 Saturday

Final Edition

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Section: A; Pg. B06 **Length:** 501 words

Byline: The Canberra Times

Body

"The Supreme Court ruled Thursday that President Bush overstepped his authority in ordering military war crimes trials for Guantanamo Bay detainees" (New York Times, June 29).

The ruling states clearly that the proposed trials by military tribunals are illegal under United States law and international Geneva conventions.

For four years, John Howard, Alexander Downer and Philip Ruddock have asserted the military tribunals are legal, humane, and appropriate for one of our citizens, David Hicks. Not even Australia's "best friends", Bush and his mob, can assert this any more. What say you now, parliamentarians? Judy Bamberger, O'Connor Just when you think arrogance and stupidity are becoming their defining characteristics, the Americans' system of checks and balances kicks in to snuff out an administration's misanthropy.

Hopefully now, David Hicks won't be found guilty of secret charges by a secret panel and given a secret sentence.

Let's hear in full what he is accused of. No more of the behind-closed-doors arrangements that our Foreign Minister has managed to pull off with the British to keep Hicks in purgatory for the political convenience of the incumbent Australian and US federal governments.

Jody Bailey, Kahibah, NSW Palestinian pain Palestinian fighters have recently attacked an Israeli army post, including a watchtower, and abducted one barely adult soldier.

Later they demanded the release of Palestinian children and <u>women</u> from Israeli political detention in exchange for the release of the youth.

Israel's response is to smash the Gaza ghetto, including its infrastructure, and to round up the democratically elected politicians they don't like.

Like always, when Israel plays out its overwhelming occupation power, the US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice does nothing but to ask for moderation and continues her travels, drumming up support for the "war on terror", but not for the "war on our terror".

No more of behind-closed-doors dealings with Hicks Letters to the Editor>letters.editor@canberratimes.com.au

Moral high priests Tony Blair, John Howard and Alexander Downer are no- where to be seen or heard. Has the Israeli Government, have we, has anyone learnt anything from the world- destabilising history of outrageous injustice inflicted first on Jews and now on Palestinians, the latter of which we continue to condone?

Jochen Zeil, Hackett That Israel is not interested in peace or a Palestinian state is quite evident from its dismissal of the agreement and its provocations to end the ceasefire that <u>Hamas</u> has observed for 17 months ("<u>Hamas</u> deal recognises two-state solution," June 29, p15).

First Israel kills the Palestinian head of security forces Jamal Abu Samdhana (June 8), then shells the Gaza beach killing members of the Ghaliya family.

The Israeli air force then kills three children in a crowded street (June 20).

Israel rained 5000 shells on Gaza in the past month alone (Tanya Reinhart, Yediot Aharanot, June 21).

Having incited the conflagration and destroyed the ceasefire, Israel can revert to its old slogan of "no one to talk with".

Narendra Mohan Kommalapati, Spence

Load-Date: June 30, 2006



<u>Israeli forces kill Islamic Jihad head: Playing soccer. Died in firefight with</u> undercover troops

The Gazette (Montreal)
July 30, 2006 Sunday
Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A4

Length: 496 words

Byline: ALI DARAGHMEH, AP Dateline: NABLUS, West Bank

Body

Israeli troops killed a top leader of the violent Islamic Jihad in a West Bank raid yesterday, the group said, and the Israelis also pressed ahead with their offensive in the Gaza Strip.

In announcements from mosque loudspeakers, Islamic Jihad said the leader of its militant wing in Nablus, Hani Awijan, 29, was killed by Israeli undercover troops. They came to arrest him while he was playing soccer with friends and relatives, the group said. Another Islamic Jihad militant was also killed.

The army confirmed soldiers operated in Nablus and said a militant was killed in an exchange of fire.

Israel Radio said Awijan was responsible for a series of attacks on Israelis. Over the past 17 months, Islamic Jihad has been responsible for all 12 suicide bombing attacks in Israel, killing 71 people.

News of the raid spread through Nablus, and large crowds gathered at the hospital. Militants burned tires in the streets and called for a general strike in the city.

Shops were quickly closed.

While most attention is on the Israel-Lebanon conflict and the month-long Israeli offensive in Gaza, Israeli forces carry out nightly arrest raids in the West Bank, searching for suspected militants.

Often more than 20 are detained in a single night.

Israel moved tanks and troops into Gaza and started an intensive campaign of air strikes after <u>Hamas</u>-linked militants tunnelled under the border and attacked an Israeli army post at a crossing point, killing two soldiers and capturing a third.

Palestinian officials said they have not received a response to their demand that Israel guarantee to free <u>women</u>, children and long-serving Palestinian prisoners before an Israeli soldier seized by Gaza militants is released.

Dr. Salah Bardawil, a senior <u>Hamas</u> official, said Israel's refusal to guarantee that it would release any Palestinian prisoners if the soldier were freed had created a stalemate.

Israeli forces kill Islamic Jihad head: Playing soccer. Died in firefight with undercover troops

Early yesterday, some Israeli tanks moved back into Gaza a day after completing a two-day raid in the northern part of the seaside strip in which 30 Palestinians were killed.

Most were armed militants, but some were civilians, including an elderly woman and a child.

Late yesterday, residents reported Israeli tanks moving in a buffer zone east of Gaza City, a frequent area of Israeli operations to try to stop Palestinian militants from firing rockets at Israeli communities.

Early today, Israeli aircraft destroyed a house belonging to a militant in Gaza City, residents said.

Israel warned the occupants to leave, and the house was empty. Three people nearby were wounded.

Also, Israeli aircraft fired missiles near the southern town or Rafah, knocking out electricity. The Israelis said they were aiming at a site where Palestinians were tunnelling under the Gaza-Egypt border.

Since Israel pulled out of Gaza last summer, turning control of the border over to Egypt and the Palestinians, the Israeli military has said that cross-border smuggling of weapons and explosives has increased considerably.

Load-Date: July 30, 2006



Muslims responsible for lack of democracy: Yaseen

The Nation (AsiaNet)

March 25, 2006 Saturday

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Section: NATIONWIDE INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 523 words

Dateline: KARACHI MAR 25

Body

Eminent activist, Tariq Ali Saturday predicted decline of religious movements.

Addressing a seminar "Political Islam, Challenges and Responses" at WSF moot at City Sports Complex, he said that this was passing phase of religious movements. He said, "Performance of MMA govt in NWFP has revealed that they are not different from others in economic and social policies. Only different is of 'cultural assault', which aims at diverting attention of people from real issues. They (religious groups) have shown increasing tendency of engaging people in peripheral issues." He said that the US did not want general elections in Egypt and Saudi Arabia due to fear of possible victory of religious movements.

"PLO has defeated in Palestine by <u>Hamas</u> due to Oslo accord and aggressive policies of Israel," he said. He pointed out that PLO made several compromises. Tariq believed that <u>Hamas</u> did not win due to religious vote. Talking about Pakistan, he alleged that MMA govt had done nothing for social sector development. He predicted that a wave would emerge against them as they were bent upon 'engaging people in other things.'

He said that Taliban were not good rulers but USA had no right to overthrow them."US occupation of Afghanistan has increased the influence of Taliban," he said. He said that former US Ambassador to Kabul, Zalmay Khalilzad had developed contacts with Talibans after developing differences with Northern Alliance. The imperialist forces have unleashed propaganda against Islam due to the fact that Muslim countries have energy resources, he suggested, adding that same attitude could have been meted out against Buddhism and Sikhism if they had oil.

Chairman Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) Yaseen Malik speaking at another seminar said, "Muslims are equally responsible for cruelty meted out against them because majority of them have no believe in democracy." To a question, he said the dialogue process was going on between India and Pakistan for resolving the Kashmir dispute and they believed in the process. Yaseen Malik said that Kashmiris believe in dialogue and even if these dialogues failed to resolve the Kashmir issue, it would be their political victory because then no one would blame them for not taking recourse to the negotiation. He said the close liaison between the people of India and Pakistan was important as they could compel their respective governments to take initiatives and solve the Kashmir issue at the earliest.

"Kashmir is the main hurdle in the way of true friendship between India and Pakistan and you cannot imagine durable and true friendship between the two without resolving this outstanding issue," he asserted. He pointed out that 15,000 Pundits were living in the occupied Kashmir. He urged them to return Kashmir.

Muslims responsible for lack of democracy: Yaseen

Former Information Minister Javed Jabbar said 35 million people in America living below the poverty line. In UK, <u>women</u> got voting right after a struggle spread over 3,00 years and in France it took 2,00 years to give right of vote to <u>women</u> folk. He said the South Asia, where the democratic institutions exist; the situation at the home front was not encouraging.

Load-Date: March 27, 2006



Conflict likely to top G-8 talks

The Toronto Star July 15, 2006 Saturday

Copyright 2006 Toronto Star Newspapers, Ltd.

Section: NEWS; Pg. A17

Length: 815 words

Byline: Les Whittington, Toronto Star With files from Reuters, Associated Press

Dateline: LONDON

Body

Stephen Harper yesterday joined with British Prime Minister Tony Blair in a call for international pressure to halt Arab-Israeli violence, but Canada's prime minister continued to single out Palestinian militants for blame in the latest flare-up in the Middle East.

Blair, who called the renewed fighting in the Middle East "absolutely tragic," urged the world community to throw its weight behind the peace mission dispatched to the region by United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan.

In a joint press conference with Harper, Blair backed up Israel's right to defend itself but also expressed sympathy for the "suffering" of the Palestinians and "the plight" of Lebanon, which has become a battlefield in the latest flare-up.

Blair said Palestinians and Israelis must return to the bargaining table and pursue a solution in keeping with the UN-backed "roadmap for peace" that calls for development of an independent Palestine and recognition of Israel's right to exist.

"The truth of the matter is, and this is what is most frustrating about the whole situation between Israel and Palestine, there is actual total international unanimity on the basic solution to this, which is a two-state solution.

"The only way you are going to get a two-state solution is that you negotiate the outstanding issues ... and that both sides of the negotiation accept the right to exist of the other," Blair said.

Harper agreed with the need for fresh negotiations. But he continued to put the onus on the <u>Hamas</u>-led Palestinian Authority to open the way to a peaceful resolution of the conflict.

"I think it's very difficult to move forward on the 'roadmap' unless the <u>Hamas</u> government is prepared to accept the principles of the 'roadmap.'

"To this point, they've been unwilling to do so," Harper said.

He urged <u>Hamas</u> to support the two-state solution to the conflict and to make a "commitment to non-violence and the recognition" of Israel.

Conflict likely to top G-8 talks

"The real secret to (resolving the crisis) is how we in the international community can find some way of empowering, on both sides, the forces of moderation and the forces that are inclined to negotiation rather than to violence. And that's a role I'm sure we'll all be reflecting on in St. Petersburg."

The Prime Minister was referring to this weekend's Group of Eight summit in Russia where the Middle East is likely to overwhelm the official agenda.

U.S. President George W. Bush yesterday called the leaders of Lebanon, Egypt and Jordan to explore ways to end three days of furious fighting between Israel and Hezbollah militants in Lebanon.

Turning aside complaints that Israel is using excessive force, Bush rejected a ceasefire plea from Lebanese Prime Minister Fuad Saniora, saying Israelis have a right to protect themselves.

The White House said Bush would not press Israel to halt its military operation.

"The president is not going to make military decisions for Israel," White House press secretary Tony Snow said.

In contrast with Bush's stand, Russian President Vladimir Putin said, "No hostage-takings are acceptable ... but neither is the use of full-scale force in response to these, even if unlawful, actions. We will demand that all sides involved in the conflict immediately stop the bloodshed."

French President Jacques Chirac accused Israel of going too far. "One could ask if today there is not a sort of will to destroy Lebanon, its equipment, its roads, its communications," said Chirac, who has tried to patch relations with Washington after disagreements over the Iraq war.

Italian Premier Romani Prodi said the spiral of violence was making a return to dialogue difficult. "We have regressed 20 years. If we go on like this, all efforts made in the past years will have been in vain," he said.

Top UN relief co-ordinator Jan Egeland said those who had seized Israeli soldiers and fired rockets into Israel from both Gaza and southern Lebanon bore their share of the blame.

"They don't seem to care the slightest bit that it is the children and the <u>women</u> and the civilians who bear the brunt of all of this," he told a news conference in Geneva.

After talks in Cairo yesterday, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and King Abdullah of Jordan appealed for international efforts to contain the conflict and prevent an escalation.

Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Angelo Sodano said Pope Benedict and his aides were deeply concerned.

Finnish Foreign Minister Erkki Tuomioja, holding the rotating EU presidency, warned: "There is still the possibility it could get worse and that the conflict could spread, especially to Syria."

Meanwhile, Syria's ruling Baath party said yesterday it would support its allies Hezbollah and Lebanon against Israel's attacks. "The Syrian people are ready to extend full support to the Lebanese people and their heroic resistance to remain steadfast and confront the barbaric Israeli aggression and its crimes," a communique said.

Graphic

SERGEI GUNEYEV AFP-Getty Images U.S. President George W. Bush and Russian President Vladimir Putin hold informal talks in St. Petersburg yesterday, ahead of today's meeting of the Group of Eight industrialized nations.

Load-Date: July 15, 2006



In Focus

The Gazette (Montreal)
February 21, 2006 Tuesday
Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A2

Length: 491 words **Byline:** The Gazette

Body

Hamas picks pragmatist

Ismail Haniyeh, the 43-year-old <u>Hamas</u> activist tapped by the Islamic militant group to form a new Palestinian government, has a reputation as a pragmatist who prefers compromise to conflict with Palestinian rivals. Yesterday, Haniyeh reached out to Fatah and other factions to join a broad-based cabinet that has a chance of gaining international approval. Details, Page A20

Serbs, Albanians in talks

Background: Disputed Kosovo province has been administered by the UN since 1999 after a NATO war aimed at stopping the crackdown of Serb forces on independence-minded ethnic Albanians.

New: The long-awaited talks on the future status of Kosovo open yesterday as rival Serbs and ethnic Albanians stake out tough positions. Details, Page A17

Plateau, city in cash row

Car owners could be the winners as the Plateau Mont Royal borough and the city of Montreal battle over who gets to keep the money from proposed hikes in parking meter fees. Details, Page A6

Cyber-bullying a problem

A McGill University professor is urging schools and parents to team up to combat student cyber-bullying, a growing phenomenon of online insults and virtual harassment. Details, Page A6

NORAD to be expanded

A new North American defence treaty with the United States will not compromise Canada's control over its own military, newly appointed Defence Minister Gordon O'Connor says. Details, Page A12

Lawyer: Harris a liar

Spectators cheered as a lawyer accused former Ontario premier Mike Harris of lying about a controversial meeting the day Dudley George died at the 1995 standoff at Ipperwash Provincial Park. Details, Page A12

In Focus

Business

He's the boss's man

Call him right wing if you want. Michel Kelly-Gagnon, the 34-year-old lawyer who will soon personify the wants and wishes of Quebec's employers, doesn't shudder at the label. Details, Page B1

Fur sales roasty-toasty

A hot global economy and the marketing of fur as the "ultimate eco-fabric" are feeding Canada's fur trade, according to the Fur Council of Canada. Details, Page B1

Sports

Blacks rule NBA all-stars

Viewers of the NBA All-Star Game may have noticed an odd fact: There were no white U.S. players on either team. In fact, only five white Americans have played in the last 10 all-star games. Details, Page C5

Busy schedule for Heil

Olympic freestyle moguls gold-medallist Jennifer Heil is back in Montreal, but not for long, as she faces a busy post-Olympic schedule for a few months. Details, Page C5

Arts & Life

Ditch the old makeup

The biggest mistake <u>women</u> make when it comes to makeup is hanging on to it for too long. The stuff deteriorates and can harbour bacteria. Details, Page D1

The mindful way to run

Applying some of the physical and mental principles of tai chi to your running regimen can help avoid injury, fitness writer Jill Barker writes. Details, Page D4

Follow-Ups

Peladeau trial set for November: Anne-Marie Peladeau will go on trial beginning Nov. 22 on robbery charges. Page A8

Graphic

Photo: (Ismail Haniyeh)

Load-Date: February 21, 2006



Kidnappers in call for prison releases

Daily Post (North Wales)

August 24, 2006, Thursday

North Wales Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 17

Length: 574 words **Byline:** ED JAMES

Body

A PREVIOUSLY unheard of militant group in Gaza released footage showing two kidnapped Fox News journalists and demanded Muslim prisoners in US jails be released within 72 hours in exchange for the men.

In the footage, American correspondent Steve Centanni, 60, of Washington DC, and cameraman Olaf Wiig, 36, of New Zealand, said they were being cared for and appealed for help in winning their release. The footage was the first sign of the journalists since they were kidnapped on August 14 from their TV van in Gaza City.

"Our captors are treating us well," Centanni said.

A statement issued by the Holy Jihad Brigades railed against the US wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and characterised them as a war against Islam. It marked the first time a militant group in Gaza has made demands on a foreign country other than Israel, which was not directly mentioned in the statement.

Local militant groups have routinely tried to limit the conflict to a fight between Palestinians and Israel, fearing they would jeopardise international support for the Palestinian cause.

All the major Palestinian militant groups have condemned the kidnapping and denied involvement. Palestinian leaders have also called for the men's release.

It was unclear whether a group from outside Gaza could be involved. Palestinian and Israeli officials have previously said al Qaida was trying to infiltrate into Gaza from Egypt.

Palestinian security officials said they were analysing the video. The <u>Hamas</u>-led Palestinian government appealed to the kidnappers to release the journalists.

"The two guests must be released immediately because such acts are harming the image of the Palestinian people," said government spokesman Ghazi Hamad, adding that security services were doing their "utmost" to bring the men to safety.

However, Mushir Masri, a <u>Hamas</u> politician, said the US bore some responsibility for the abduction. "We hold the Zionist enemy and the American administration responsible for such acts because of their unfair policies," he said.

The militants' statement was peppered with verses from the Koran and written in a literary and poetic style, a sharp departure from the terse statements usually issued by Palestinian militant groups.

Kidnappers in call for prison releases

In the statement, the Holy Jihad Brigades demanded that Muslim prisoners in US jails be released within three days in exchange for Centanni and Wiig. The group did not say what would happen if the deadline passed unanswered.

"We are going to exchange the Muslim <u>female</u> and male prisoners in American jails in return for the prisoners that we have. We are going to give you 72 hours, beginning midnight tonight, to take your decision," the statement said. "If you implement and meet our condition, we will fulfil our promise. If not, wait, and we are going to wait with you."

It was not clear whether the group was referring to prisoners being held by the United States in Guantanamo Bay or Iraq, where the US is currently detaining large numbers of Muslim prisoners.

"The powers of evil are united in waging wars against Islam and their people," the statement continued.

Palestinian militant groups have often seized foreigners, including media, but usually release them within hours. The nine days Centanni and Wiig have been held marked the longest kidnapping so far.

In the video footage, the men, sitting cross-legged on the floor in sweat suits, appear to be in good health. No armed men were seen and no banner or logo was displayed.

Load-Date: August 24, 2006



My Middle East mission a success, declares Blair

Daily Post (North Wales)
September 12, 2006, Tuesday
Mersey Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 23

Length: 470 words

Byline: LIAM CHRISTOPHER Daily Post Correspondent

Body

TONY BLAIR hailed his Middle East mission as a success as he headed back to the UK last night.

Despite a furious reception from protesters when he arrived for talks in Beirut, the Prime Minister insisted the situation in Palestine and Lebanon had been "moved on" during his three-day visit.

He also revealed he intended to return to the troubled region when it would help achieve further progress.

The Premier's official spokesman delivered an upbeat assessment of the trip after Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas announced that a deal had been reached with militant group *Hamas* to form a national unity government.

The spokesman said the agreement could be a "serious" step forward for the peace process.

The <u>Hamas</u> administration is not currently recognised by the UK or EU, but Mr Blair believes the West could work with a unity government featuring the extremists.

"Of course we have to see the details, but potentially this is a highly significant announcement," the spokesman said.

Earlier, the Prime Minister was confronted with Lebanese rage over his refusal to call for an immediate ceasefire after Israel's attack this summer.

Thousands of demonstrators thronged the streets in Beirut, and a joint press conference with Lebanese Premier Fuad Siniora was disrupted.

A woman, believed to be an Irish aid worker, broke into the proceedings by waving a banner and shouting: "This is an insult to the families of thousands of Lebanese who have died. Shame on you, shame on you, Mr Blair."

The dramatic protests upstaged Mr Blair's announcement of a pounds 40m aid package for Lebanon, during what a high-risk finale to his Middle East tour.

Britain is to give pounds 22.3m to rebuild Lebanon's shattered infrastructure, including help with six emergency bridges needed to replace those destroyed by the Israelis, and will pump a further pounds 20m into funding the international stability force in the south of the country.

My Middle East mission a success, declares Blair

Mr Blair, who said the demonstration made him feel "at home", was challenged whether he had "blood on his hands" because of his stance, but insisted: "There never was going to be a cessation unless it was done on the basis of a UN resolution. That's the reality, that's what I worked for throughout.

"I have got used to demonstrations in my country and elsewhere, so I suppose demonstrations here kind of make me feel at home."

Rounding off his trip, Mr Blair laid a wreath at the tomb of Rafik

Hariri, the Lebanese Prime Minister killed on February 14 in a huge explosion blamed on Syria.

Mr Blair stood for a few moments in silent tribute accompanied by Mr Siniora and Mr Hariri's son, Saad.

The Prime Minister's official spokesman said: "We're not exaggerating how far we are down the road. We're still early days, but at least we've seen the beginning of re-engagement."

Demos kind of make me feel at home

Graphic

A <u>female</u> protester confronts Tony Blair as he stages a joint press conference with Lebanese Premier Fuad Siniora, in Beirut Picture: JOHN GILES

Load-Date: September 12, 2006



For those about to die

The Times (London)

April 6, 2006, Thursday

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Section: FEATURES; Times2; Pg. 18

Length: 829 words

Byline: Stephen Dalton

Body

The Palestinian director Hany Abu-Assad tells STEPHEN DALTON how he went about putting a human face on a pair of suicide bombers

There can be few more contentious subjects for sympathetic film treatment than suicide bombers. Fortunately, the writer-director Hany Abu-Assad's Paradise Now is a gripping and powerful thriller that cuts to the conflicted human emotions and tortuous moral dilemmas behind the bloodshed. Even more impressively, this Palestinian drama won both a Golden Globe award and an Oscar nomination this year.

"Why am I interested in this story?" ponders the 44-year-old Palestinian, who was born and brought up in Nazareth before moving to Amsterdam at 19. "Because it's part of the Palestinian narrative. But for everybody this is an interesting story, I think."

Despite earning numerous festival prizes, including one from Amnesty International, Paradise Now has inevitably proved highly controversial. It has been attacked for depicting Israelis as little more than military targets while being over sympathetic to its protagonists, two young Palestinians (Kais Nashef and Ali Suliman) who undertake a botched bombing mission in Tel Aviv.

But Abu-Assad insists that he is a storyteller, not a propagandist. He takes a fairly standard liberal line on Israel and Palestine, arguing for an equal, peaceful, two-state solution. He also contends, a little disingenuously perhaps, that probing the psyches of would-be killers has been a cinematic staple from Samson and Delilah to The Godfather.

"The film is nothing new. It allows us to go somewhere that we can't go, and understand people we would not want to meet."

The troubled shooting of Paradise Now would make a riveting drama in its own right. First, a delicate balancing act had to be performed between the Israeli and Palestinian authorities to film in Nablus on the West Bank, where real-life gunfire frequently disrupted the shoot.

"This was a big problem," nods Abu-Assad. "You go to a city that is almost 40 years under occupation and four years under siege, where nobody can go out without the humiliation of negotiation with the soldiers. We had to negotiate with them to come and go out, and we had to negotiate with local people to make the film. But also you have the danger of death, because every day there is curfew or invasion or bombings."

First there was the nearby missile blast that drove several European crew members home early. Then the location manager was kidnapped by an Arab group who objected to suicide bombers being portrayed as anything less than

For those about to die

devoutly religious martyrs. The late Yassir Arafat was still in charge at this point, and Abu Assad had to call the former PLO leader's besieged compound to secure his colleague's release. The final straw was a mine explosion that killed seven people close to the set, prompting a swift relocation to Nazareth.

Paradise Now was partly financed with Israeli money, and had a limited release in Israel. Even so, it drew protests before the Academy Awards from Israeli families who had lost children in suicide attacks, putting forward a 32,000-name petition that demanded its disqualification from the Best Foreign Language Film nominees.

In the end Tsotsi took the Oscar, but Abu-Assad dismisses any suggestions that political considerations may have swayed the vote.

"It doesn't matter," he shrugs. "As long as you have no proof you can't make conclusions. But there were also a lot of Jews and Israelis who appreciated the film; you can't blame the people who don't like the movie. They have the right to not appreciate it, and also to make a film from another point of view."

After 25 years in the Netherlands, Abu-Assad recently moved to Los Angeles. He is working on his English-language debut, L.A. Cairo, a tragicomedy about an Arab actor in Hollywood.

Meanwhile, he is keeping one eye on events in Palestine, and concedes that the election of <u>Hamas</u> may soon consign Paradise Now to the period-drama archives.

"Well, it was not because of my movie that <u>Hamas</u> got elected," Abu-Assad laughs softly. "But in a way I think it is positive because maybe the current leadership will wake up. And maybe it is also positive because it's a good test for all sides: a test for the West, a test for <u>Hamas</u> and a test for Israel But my biggest fear is that all three of them will fail."

One surprising aspect of Paradise Now is its use of black comedy to undercut deadly serious themes. During his research, Abu-Assad unearthed many absurd anecdotes, including a double suicide mission that fell apart when a male bomber objected to the feminist arguments of his *female* partner in crime.

"He said, 'No no no! The job of woman is to create life, and the job of man is to kill in order to protect life!' But she said: 'No, this is an old idea; now we have equality!' And they had this big discussion. This is a true story in the police reports. It would make a great movie, but I think it is too much for my film."

Paradise Now is released on April 14

Load-Date: April 6, 2006



Israeli Police Investigating Sex Case Take Items From President's Home

The New York Times

August 23, 2006 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2006 The New York Times Company

Section: Section A; Column 1; Foreign Desk; Pg. 8

Length: 533 words

Byline: By GREG MYRE

Dateline: JERUSALEM, Aug. 22

Body

The Israeli police have confiscated a computer and documents from the official residence of President Moshe Katsav and plan to question him as part of an investigation into sexual harassment accusations, the police said Tuesday.

Mr. Katsav's position is largely ceremonial, and any legal proceedings against him would not directly threaten the government of Prime Minister Ehud Olmert.

But the case comes at a time when several senior government figures have been involved in legal or political controversies. In addition, many Israelis have been sharply critical of the country's political and military leadership over the handling of the recent fighting in Lebanon.

The case involving Mr. Katsav surfaced almost two months ago when a woman who previously worked for him told an Israeli newspaper that he had sexually harassed her. Later, a second woman made similar allegations. Neither woman has been identified.

Mr. Katsav wrote to the attorney general, saying one of the <u>women</u> had demanded money from him before she made her accusation publicly.

The attorney general, Menachem Mazuz, ordered an investigation last month, but the case was overshadowed by the fighting between Israel and Hezbollah.

The police said they entered the president's official residence on Monday night, taking the computer and documents. The authorities are searching for communications between Mr. Katsav and his accusers, according to Israel radio.

Police investigators will return to Mr. Katsav's residence on Wednesday to question him, according to a police spokesman, Micky Rosenfeld.

Mr. Katsav has denied any wrongdoing, and his office said Tuesday that he was fully cooperating with the investigation.

No charges have been filed, but if they are, Mr. Katsav is expected to resign.

Israel's justice minister, Haim Ramon, resigned Sunday after he was charged with forcibly kissing a <u>female</u> soldier last month.

In other recent controversies, the state comptroller has been investigating the circumstances surrounding Mr. Olmert's sale of his Jerusalem home two years ago, and the purchase of a new one nearby. Critics contend that he received an above-market price for the sale of his old home and that he paid below the market rate for his new one.

Also, the army's chief of staff, Lt. Gen. Dan Halutz, has faced a storm of criticism after a newspaper disclosed that he spoke to his bank and sold mutual fund shares several hours after Hezbollah staged its cross-border raid on July 12, precipitating the fighting in Lebanon.

Mr. Katsav was appointed to his post in 2000, after his predecessor, Ezer Weizman, resigned amid a corruption scandal. Mr. Weizman quit after it was disclosed that during the 1980's, when he was a member of parliament and a government minister, he received hundreds of thousands of dollars from a French businessman with interests in Israel.

In other developments Tuesday, an Israeli military court in the West Bank charged the speaker of the Palestinian parliament, Aziz Dweik, a <u>Hamas</u> member, with belonging to an illegal organization, The Associated Press reported.

Israel considers Hamas a terrorist organization, and membership in the group is banned under Israeli law.

http://www.nytimes.com

Graphic

Photo: President Moshe Katsav of Israel has been accused of sexual harassment by two <u>women</u>. (Photo by Agence France-Presse -- Getty Images, 2005)

Load-Date: August 23, 2006



News Summary

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

Copyright 2006 The New York Times Company

Section: Section 1; Column 3; Metropolitan Desk; Pg. 2

Length: 542 words

Body

INTERNATIONAL 3-9

U.S. Announces Russia Talks

The White House said it would open formal negotiations that would allow Russia to become one of the world's largest repositories of spent nuclear fuel. In exchange, Russia is expected to cooperate in forcing Iran to give up the enrichment of uranium. 1

Recount Calls Grow in Mexico

While the announced winner of Mexico's presidential election, Felipe Calderon, kept a low profile, his leftist rival, Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, hardened his position that the poll had been marred by fraud and suggested that there would be instability without a recount. 6

Pakistan Reconsiders Laws

Pakistani society has remained bitterly divided over a set of Islamic decrees that address rape and adultery and under which more than 4,500 *women* await trial. There are signs that the laws may be softened. 9

Hamas Official Offers Truce

The Palestinian prime minister from <u>Hamas</u>, Ismail Haniya, called for a mutual cease-fire with Israel after Israeli forces pulled out of most of the northern Gaza Strip. 4

More G.I.'s May Face Charges

No American serviceman has been executed since 1961. But in the past month, new cases in Iraq have led to charges against 12 American servicemen who may face the death penalty in connection with the killing of Iraqi civilians. 8

Plane Crashes in Siberia

A Russian passenger airliner flying from Moscow to Siberia crashed as it landed at an airport. At least 145 of 200 people onboard died, according to initial reports, while the others were hospitalized, many with burns. 3

News Summary

Pope's Stop in Spain

Pope Benedict XVI arrived in Spain for a brief but charged visit to register the church's opposition to gay marriage.

NATIONAL 10-17

Tax Revenue Boom

An unexpectedly steep rise in tax revenues from corporations and the wealthy is driving down the deficit, even though spending has climbed sharply because of the war in Iraq and the cost of hurricane relief. 1

Protest From Bush Ally

In a sharply worded letter to President Bush, an important congressional ally charged that the administration might have violated the law by failing to inform Congress of some secret intelligence programs and risked losing Republican support on national security matters. 1

Gulf Real Estate Flurry

An extraordinarily large number of houses in the flood-ravaged metropolitan area of New Orleans are now being bought and sold, according to real estate analysts and market experts. 1

SCIENCE

Milestone in AIDS Treatment

The first complete treatment for AIDS that is taken once a day as a single pill is expected to be available soon. The pill, which combines three drugs made by two companies, would mark a milestone in improving the simplicity of treatment for the disease, experts say. 10

NEW YORK/REGION 19-23

New Jersey Shutdown Ends

Gov. Jon S. Corzine signed a budget for New Jersey, after a seven-day government shutdown and a standoff with the Legislature that paralyzed state operations and cost the state millions of dollars. 22

OBITUARIES 25

Rabbi Louis Jacobs

An internationally renowned scholar of Judaism whose seemingly clear path to the post of chief rabbi of the British Commonwealth was blocked by the Orthodox establishment more than 40 years ago, he was 85. 25

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http://www.nytimes.com

Load-Date: July 9, 2006



Captured soldier's father begs for crisis to end: 'What good will come of it?' Shalit pleads

Ottawa Citizen

July 18, 2006 Tuesday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A5

Length: 484 words

Byline: Stephen Farrell, The Times, London

Dateline: HILLA, Israel

Body

HILLA, Israel - The father of the Israeli soldier kidnapped in Gaza three weeks ago described yesterday how he watched in a trance as the crisis escalated into a war with Lebanon.

By an extraordinary coincidence, Noam Shalit was sitting in Ehud Olmert's office at 10 a.m. last Wednesday when an aide walked into the Israeli prime minister's office with news that Hezbollah had captured two more Israeli soldiers on the Lebanese border.

"It was like an, I don't know the English word, hazui (hallucination)," Mr. Shalit said.

"His military assistant came in with a note and briefed him and then began all the telephone calls and so on. He didn't leave, he didn't stop the meeting with us. We sat with him for about an hour while the Japanese prime minister waited outside.

"It was a very hard feeling because at that moment I realized that all the cards had been reshuffled and things wouldn't be as they were before. We were now in another severe crisis and we knew it would complicate our case, not simplify it."

Yesterday, he sat in his garden of olive, orange and lemon trees awaiting news of his son, Gilad, 19 -- the same age as Mr. Shalit's twin brother, Yoel, when he was killed in the Golan Heights in 1973.

A moderate who still talks of his hopes for an eventual negotiated settlement with the Palestinians, even while his son is in the hands of *Hamas*, Mr. Shalit remains in daily contact with Israeli officials.

He agreed there was no sign of a breakthrough even before the escalation, but hinted that if his country were not virtually at war, he would be making louder noises about getting his son free.

Mr. Shalit still holds out hope, pointing out that Mr. Olmert spoke of a wider release of prisoners to Mahmoud Abbas, the Palestinian president, before the emergency.

Captured soldier's father begs for crisis to end: 'What good will come of it?' Shalit pleads

To hardliners who call for an end to Israel's tradition of trading prisoners, he said, "It is a very solid and well-known code in Israel, and the Israel Defence Forces in particular, that they don't abandon combat soldiers in the field. I believe it is still valid."

He added, "My message to the <u>Hamas</u> people is first of all, let's stop this crisis immediately. What good will come out of it?

"Beyond the suffering of the families there are thousands of Palestinians suffering, being killed by day and by night, they are without electricity and water.

"They would do better around the negotiating table and not with terror actions and Qassam rockets," Mr. Shalit said.

Watching his son's capture escalate into war, he spoke of the suffering on all sides, and expressed his anger against Hezbollah's leader, Sheik Hassan Nasrallah.

"The events are passing us by. Our main thought is to get back our son. All the other things are in the background.

"But we are connected to the situation in Israel. People, civilians and soldiers being killed is very painful for us, and also innocent Lebanese who have to pay the price for one crazed person."

Graphic

Photo: David Silverman, Getty Images; Israeli <u>women</u> comfort each other after a rocket struck their apartment building in the northern Israeli town of Carmiel. A rocket also landed just outside Nazareth, the farthest point south to be hit so far.

Load-Date: July 18, 2006



Israeli tanks roll back into abandoned settlements

The Times (London)
July 7, 2006, Friday

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Section: OVERSEAS NEWS; Pg. 36

Length: 566 words

Byline: Stephen Farrell in Beit Lahiya

Body

AT LEAST 20 Palestinians and 1 Israeli soldier were killed yesterday in the worst clashes since Israeli troops moved back into the Gaza Strip last week.

The Israeli army said that its forces came under "continuous" fire from anti tank missiles and rocket-propelled grenades as its tanks reoccupied three Jewish settlements abandoned last year. An Arabic television channel said that the soldier was killed by sniper fire.

The advance was met by heavy resistance from <u>Hamas</u> and other militant groups. At night the streets of Gaza's northernmost towns, Beit Hanoun and Beit Lahiya, are deserted except for bands of gunmen armed with missiles and heavy machineguns.

Red tracer fire illuminates the skyline but gunmen are often unable to identify friend from foe. Two al-Jazeera journalists were shot and injured on Wednesday by militants who mistook them for Israeli undercover soldiers.

After the highest Palestinian death toll for two years, <u>women</u> and children began evacuating buildings closest to the settlements, which at night become fortresses of militants, who can be seen carrying bombs with protruding electrical cables, to bury them in alleys and near roads.

Palestinians claimed that the deadliest attack, an Israeli air strike near Beit Lahiya, killed six Palestinian civilians. Israel's army said that it carried out two air strikes against armed militants, killing four gunmen. Apache helicopter gunships joined in the attacks.

Visiting the wounded at Gaza's main hospital, Ismail Haniya, the Palestinian Prime Minister, last night called for international intervention to stop the offensive.

Israel says that its Operation Summer Rains is intended to secure the release of the captive Corporal Gilad Shalit, and to stop Palestinian militants firing Qassam rockets into Israel.

Ehud Olmert, Israel's Prime Minister, has refused to negotiate, but the missing soldier's father, Noam Shalit, last night said that he did not expect the Palestinians to give up his son for nothing. "Everything has a price. I don't think there will be any sort of move to free Gilad without a price," he told Army Radio. "That's not the way it works in the Middle East."

The clashes have intensified after a new generation of <u>Hamas</u>'s home-made rockets began landing in the town of Ashkelon in the past two days.

Israeli tanks roll back into abandoned settlements

Israel has in return fired thousands of rounds of 155mm heavy artillery into Gaza, pausing briefly last month after eight Palestinians were killed at a beach picnic while Israel was shelling the coast.

Israel's military exonerated itself after an internal investigation, and the land-based shelling and coastal firing resumed after the seizure of Corporal Shalit, 19, in a cross-border tunnel raid by militants.

As she walked out of the area with three of her nine children, Hanad Tayyah, a widow, said that she was certain the fighting would escalate. "We are going because the Israeli tanks have fired many shells in front of our buildings," she said.

The clashes, she added, were the worst she had seen during seven years living in northern Gaza, although she had been forced to leave "many times" before, and sighed with frustration over the issue of continued firing of rockets by Palestinian militants.

"I don't know. Sometimes I say they (militants) have the right to do that.

Sometimes I change my mind. The rockets have no benefit and the Israeli reaction is much bigger than our own," she told The Times.

Load-Date: July 7, 2006



In Short

The Irish Times

June 9, 2006 Friday

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Section: WORLD; Other World Stories; Pg. 13

Length: 559 words

Body

Today's other stories in brief.

Palestine referendum set for July

RAMALLAH - Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas will hold a referendum on a statehood proposal that implicitly recognises Israel on July 31st, after *Hamas* rejected the plan, officials said yesterday.

Mr Abbas will issue a decree tomorrow formally announcing the referendum date, the officials said.

After calling the referendum earlier this week, Mr Abbas had given <u>Hamas</u> a few more days to reconsider its position on a manifesto penned by Palestinian prisoners in an Israeli jail. - (Reuters)

Suspected plan to attack aircraft

ZURICH - Seven people of North African origin are being held on suspicion of plotting to attack an Israeli El Al airliner in Switzerland, according to the Swiss attorney general's office.

The office gave no details of what kind of attack was planned or where it was intended to take place. It also said no explosives had been found. - (Reuters)

Belarus bans EU and US officials

MINSK - Belarus said yesterday it had barred entry to EU and US officials in retaliation for a similar ban by western countries over the re-election of President Alexander Lukashenko.

Western countries, long critical of Mr Lukashenko's tough line on dissent, dismissed as blatantly rigged his landslide victory in March, giving him a third term in office. - (Reuters)

Oil-rich countries criticised over aid

LONDON - Rich countries, particularly in the Middle East, are shirking their moral duty to contribute enough cash to tackle humanitarian emergencies, the head of the UN World Food Programme has said.

Describing it as "the scandal of our time", James Morris said 350 million children were still hungry in 2006 while the oil-rich countries of the Gulf were contributing only a fraction of what they could give in multilateral aid. - (Reuters)

Warlords advance on Somali capital

In Short

MOGADISHU - Warlords driven out of Mogadishu by an Islamist militia are advancing back towards the Somali capital from their last stronghold of Jowhar, residents said yesterday.

They said the Islamists were pulling back towards the town of Balad, which fell on Sunday and is on the road to the capital, and that Jowhar warlords had moved into positions south of the town. - (Reuters)

Bahrain woman to head UN assembly

UNITED NATIONS - The General Assembly has elected as its next president a champion of <u>women</u>'s rights in Islamic courts, making Haya Rashed al-Khalifa of Bahrain the third woman to lead the 191-nation body.

Ms al-Khalifa takes up the presidency at the opening of the assembly's 61st session on September 12th. She succeeds Jan Eliasson, the Swedish foreign minister. - (Reuters)

Rare okapi found in Congo park

JOHANNESBURG - Conservationists say they have found conclusive proof of the existence of a rare giraffe-like creature in Congo's Virunga National Park. First discovered in what is now Virunga in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo in 1901, the shy forest-dwelling okapi had not been found since 1959. - (Reuters)

Israeli anger over wine labelling

STOCKHOLM - Israel's embassy in Stockholm has criticised Sweden's alcohol monopoly for describing wines produced in the Golan Heights as coming from occupied Syrian territory.

On its website and in its literature, Systembolaget labels three kosher wines produced by Israeli settlers as coming from "Israeli- occupied Syrian territory". - (Reuters)

Load-Date: June 9, 2006



Payback time

University Wire March 31, 2006 Friday

Copyright 2006 Indiana Daily Student via U-Wire

Section: COLUMN Length: 573 words

Byline: By Ayesha Awan, Indiana Daily Student; SOURCE: Indiana U.

Dateline: BLOOMINGTON, Ind.

Body

I was enjoying a lazy vacation in sunny Naperville, III., when I opened up the Chicago Tribune and was presented with the headline: "Museums in legal bind as terror victims sue."

Apparently, victims of terrorist attacks are suing various museums for ancient artifacts that belong to nations who support terrorism. This particular suit is on the behalf of survivors of a 1997 terrorist attack at the Ben Yehuda pedestrian mall in Jerusalem. *Hamas* claimed responsibility for the attack, and according to the logic of the plaintiffs, since *Hamas* is partially funded by Iran, they have a right to priceless Persian artifacts in various American museums such as the University of Chicago's Oriental Institute, the Field Museum, Harvard University, the University of Michigan, the Detroit Institute of Arts and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

What wonderful logic! If these people succeed in their goal it opens up a whole new window! I am SO excited! Since the Native people of this continent were systematically decimated and denied their rights starting with the very first exploits of the Virginia Company et al, they too should be compensated. They can start with the profits of the exhibit at Jamestown, then they can move on to the various Pilgrim Museums in Massachusetts and countless more!

African Americans were enslaved, beaten, raped and violently murdered for centuries. So, using the logic of the plaintiffs in the Iran case, every preserved Plantation House Museum is fair game! I say start with Jefferson's place. Hell, they could probably sue the state of Indiana for its period of rule of by Ku Klux Klan.

Why limit this amazing legal landmark to Americans who can afford expensive lawyers? We should spread these legal rights to the rest of the world just like we want to spread democracy!

South Asia, Australia and a good chunk of Africa fell victim to British colonialism for years. The Brits killed, raped, took away the land and livelihood of some people, occasionally they even tortured, murdered and chopped up some people. And don't forget firing into crowds of peacefully demonstrating <u>women</u> and children. Oh and the rounding up and shipping of people as indentured laborers in remote parts of the empire. Add the desecration of sacred religious sites to the list, too.

Therefore, we are all entitled to take things from Britain. I'm going to go with the Crown Jewels, especially considering a lot of them were probably stolen from the lands in which they were mined. It's payback time boys, let's go audit Buckingham Palace! Woo hoo!

Payback time

Hmm ... What's next? Latin America and South America! Murder, disease, rape, enslavement, discrimination, desecration of religious sites, theft of resources and land. (Are we seeing a pattern here?) So all indigenous people of the region are entitled to the gold of the Spanish treasury, and then they can head to the museums and take some paintings. I recommend Picasso's, Dali was pretty good, a lot of people like Velasquez, too.

Oh how I love bitter sarcasm. For those of you reading this and thinking, "Hey that's not fair, they are completely different situations," you're wrong. It's the same formula. Some people fall victim to the violent tendencies of another nation. Therefore they are entitled to compensation by any means possible.

Unless maybe you believe some people's entitlement to compensation is more important than others? Hmm ...

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Load-Date: March 31, 2006



CHRISTMAS CHARITY APPEAL: United by courage, Palestinian women seize opportunity to assert their rights

The Independent (London)
January 5, 2006 Thursday
First Edition

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Section: FOREIGN NEWS; Pg. 25

Length: 832 words

Byline: By Donald Macintyre in Gaza

Body

Consider two Palestinian <u>women</u>: the first is Ibt-i-sam Al Za'aneen, 45, who became one of only two <u>female</u> councillors in the conflict-ravaged northern Gaza town of Beit Hanoun this year. She stood as an independent. Fatah and <u>Hamas</u>, whose strongholds are in Gaza, had tried to woo her because of the popularity of her nononsense campaign for <u>women</u>. But, she says: 'I don't want this faction or that to tell me what to do. I feel very strong. I don't need them.'

The second woman is Umm Ahmed, 29, who has six children. She can still remember the shock of being beaten for the first time by her husband eight days after she married him when she was 15. 'He beat me for sitting on the front step,' she says. 'Then he beat me because of my cooking.'

Her husband took a second wife, refusing Umm Ahmed a separation, let alone a divorce, and he has never stopped beating her. Her cheeks bear the scars of cigarette burns he inflicted. Umm Ahmed is, obviously, not her real name.

There seems little in common. Yet both are <u>women</u> of courage, with a strong sense of duty. Both live in a culture in which <u>women</u> are often subordinate. And both, in different ways, are at the cutting edge of the work done by one of the most impressive of all Palestinian NGOs, the Gaza <u>Women</u>'s Affairs Centre, (GWAC) supported since 1993 by Education Action International, one of the three charities backed in the Independent Christmas Appeal. Ibt-i-sam has even browbeaten Beit Hanoun's mayor, despite the strong opposition of his horrified <u>Hamas</u> colleagues, into allowing a woman's unit in the municipality, now giving badly needed advice to 80 <u>women</u> a week. She says: 'He told me, 'God help with you with those sheikhs in the mosque, but go for it'.'

She was able to beat intimidation largely because of her training in a GWAC programme, supported by Education Action, to increase <u>women</u>'s participation in the male-dominated world of Palestinian politics. Its success is proved by the number of <u>women</u> standing in this month's Palestinian Legislative Council elections.

The GWAC led a campaign with other Palestinian <u>women</u>'s organisations which ensured a fifth of the nationally elected PLC seats will go to <u>women</u>.

CHRISTMAS CHARITY APPEAL: United by courage, Palestinian women seize opportunity to assert their rights

The GWAC, under the courageous and inspiring leadership of Naila Eyash, its director, has run 25 public workshops to persuade <u>women</u> to register to vote. And the GWAC magazine, Al Ghaida'a " the only one in Gaza serving <u>women</u>" has exhorted readers to think for themselves. Andaleeb Adwan, the programme officer trained in advocacy and other skills by Education Action, says: 'We say the woman should vote as she believes, not just as her husband or her father or the mukhtar [the village elder] says.'

The activists have also begun a programme at Gaza's Islamic University to introduce <u>women</u> students to human rights, the law, job possibilities and the political process.

Another of the centre's activists, Zeinab Al Ghoneime, will be fighting alone against 39 men for one of seven Gaza City district PLC seats, also as an independent and on a platform of <u>women</u>'s issues. She wants laws to allow divorced <u>women</u> custody of their children until they are at least 15. And she wants severe penalties for wife-beating and 'honour killing'. At present, Ms Eyash says, disputes over violence against <u>women</u> are often informally settled between male family members or through a mukhtar, also a man. The result is often bad for the <u>women</u>. If police are contacted, she says, they do not 'always exercise their responsibility well'.

The activists also want a <u>women</u>'s refuge in Gaza, fiercely opposed by <u>Hamas</u> and many religious leaders who say it would encourage <u>women</u> to leave their husbands. That is where Umm Ahmed " the wife and mother whose husband has been beating her for 14 years " comes in. Her case was among many uncovered by a GWAC research project which found domestic violence affects one in five of Gaza's <u>women</u>.

This has been exacerbated in the years of Israeli-Palestinian conflict since 2000. Unemployment, and the consequent humiliation for men, triggered by Gaza's devastated economy, is a major factor. Israel's policy of preventing 10,000 students a year travelling from Gaza to West Bank universities, and many more workers from seeking jobs in Israel itself, only adds to this. So, too, does the custom that widows of conflict victims are often forced to marry one of their husband's brothers " even if he has a wife " or leave home without the children.

Sulieman Mleahat, Education Action's Middle East programme manager, says: 'National struggles in Palestine have taken precedence over <u>women</u>'s liberation. Now these <u>women</u> have realised the two go hand in hand. For Palestinian society to genuinely develop, its **women** must be supported to assume their rightful place in society.'

The result will benefit all of Palestinian society. The GWAC campaign poster urges <u>women</u>: 'Share in the election to complete the picture.' Ms Eyash adds: 'Without this participation, what kind of democracy will we have?'

Graphic

The Gaza <u>Women</u>'s Affairs Centre is supported by Education Action International, one of three charities backed by Independent readers

Load-Date: January 5, 2006



Sports Digest

The Toronto Star
February 7, 2006 Tuesday

Copyright 2006 Toronto Star Newspapers, Ltd.

Section: SPORTS; Pg. E11

Length: 515 words

Body

TACOMA, Wash. Hockey

Under-18 tournament

moved from Israel

after *Hamas* victory

The chairman of the Israel Ice Hockey Federation is reeling after security concerns forced the Division Three world under-18 hockey championship to be moved from Israel to Romania.

"We're devastated," Alan Maislin, a Montreal trucking executive, said. "I feel like I've been stabbed in the heart."

Metulla, a town on Israel's volatile border with Lebanon, was preparing for the March 13-20 tournament until the International Ice Hockey Federation made the decision to move it last Thursday.

The decision follows the Jan. 25 Palestinian Authority election victory by <u>Hamas</u> and recent tension along the border with Lebanon.

Football

Seahawks cheer stuns

manslaughter hearing

A judge startled prosecutors, sheriff's deputies and spectators by leading a Super Bowl cheer for the Seattle Seahawks before a sentencing hearing in a manslaughter case.

As Beverly Grant took the bench Friday, she asked everyone in court to say, "Go Seahawks."

"One family is seeing a son go off to prison, and one family is here to find justice for their loved one who was murdered. ... Do you think they want to root for the Seahawks?" deputy prosecutor Sunni Y. Ko said afterwards.

Basketball

Sampson pleads

not guilty in fraud case

Sports Digest

Former NBA star Ralph Sampson pleaded not guilty yesterday to charges he lied about his finances to obtain courtappointed counsel in a child support case.

The charges stem from a child support case in which Sampson, 45, was charged with failure to pay more than \$300,000 (U.S.) in child support to two daughters by different **women**.

Blazers, Woods settle

dog-fighting suspension

The Portland Trail Blazers and Qyntel Woods have settled their pay dispute over his suspension after allegations of dog fighting. The settlement involves pay withheld from Woods in the 2004-05 season.

Baseball

New manager says

Marlins must shave

Now that the Florida Marlins have trimmed their payroll, facial hair is next.

New manager Joe Girardi wants to see no goatees, moustaches or beards.

"Maybe it's old school. But it's kind of neat when people are always clean," he said.

Rugby

Talk about being

hungry for a win

A Sale rugby player was banned for 18 weeks yesterday after pleading guilty to biting a Munster player in a European club match.

Epi Taione was cited for biting Denis Leamy's arm in Sale's defeat to Munster Jan. 21.

Golf

That guy's drive was

just a little bit off

Golfers at the New South Wales amateur championship had to deal with a different type of hazard - a stolen truck crashed on to the course, as police chased an armed man.

Midway through Sunday's second round, a man who allegedly held up a supermarket rammed through a fence and on to a fairway. He drove into a bunker before getting stuck.

Horse Racing

Stevie Wonderboy will

miss Kentucky Derby

Stevie Wonderboy has a small fracture in his right front leg that will keep the Breeders' Cup Juvenile champion and Eclipse winner out of the Kentucky Derby.

Trainer Doug O'Neill said the colt came out of a workout yesterday with the injury.

Sports Digest

WITH FILES FROM STAR WIRE SERVICES

SPORTS DIGEST

Load-Date: February 7, 2006



Sunday Vent

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution
January 29, 2006 Sunday
Home Edition

Copyright 2006 The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Section: METRO NEWS; Pg. 2D

Length: 487 words

Body

Does this mean there's never going to be a Hartsfield-Jackson-Campbell International Airport?

What is it with urban people? You move to the suburbs and cut down all the trees in your yard. Move back to town, man!

The difference between Lee and Washington is that the guys signing the Declaration of Independence actually won their war. Now get over it.

No, my dear fellow venter, 100 percent of money given to panhandlers does not go directly to alcohol. A portion goes to crack.

The French stay thin by running ... away from the Germans.

I'm sure Mark Richt's coaching deal puts him in the same financial ballpark as the professors at UGA, right?

We the people want a receipt for our vote!

What did we go back to before they invented drawing boards?

When I get home, my bottle of Jack Daniel's is smiling. You can keep your dog.

I hate to break it to the emotional cripple whose kids hate her, but cats do not love anybody or anything. Go to the shelter and get a dog!

If George "Wiretap" Bush wants to know anything about me, he can ask my wife's coworkers.

Georgia was a "former Soviet republic?" Was that when Jimmy Carter and Wyche Fowler were in office?

The White House is not pleased that <u>Hamas</u> won the Palestinian vote? I thought democracy would solve all the problems in the Middle East.

Is the Peach Buzz guy getting a kickback from Star Jones Reynolds' book publisher?

Sunday Vent

Anyone who steals motorcycles is an absolute idiot. There is not a biker around that won't hunt you down. And we travel in packs.

Hey, Wachovia, when you commend a customer for vigilence, is that the same as vigilance?

Gruesome wrecks closing the interstates happen as if on schedule around here.

Thanks, Dubya! With your help, *Hamas* became the majority party among Palestinians, with 57 percent of the vote.

To the guy with the unsecured pickup load on I-75 South in Jonesboro, thank you for the flying debris that damaged the bumper of my pretty purple Caprice!

My chocolate Lab, Shadroe, has always smiled at me. Lately, she has also started winking. This must have something to do with the Year of the Dog.

Was I asleep when Oprah was named judge and jury of the universe?

In 2020, there will be no cars built ANYWHERE. Gas will be about \$250 a gallon and your SUV will be a planter in your yard.

Hey. AJC, leave Oprah off the front page. That's what the National Enquirer is for.

Delta may be in bankruptcy, but their flight attendants will win "Best Dressed" in the unemployment line.

Why do people have to die before the politicians get off their butts and pass safety laws?

A legible TV Week was one of the reasons I used to buy the Sunday paper.

My gas bill is in triple digits and you want me to bake my wet newspaper? Brilliant!

Scientists say the human male brain develops more slowly than the <u>females</u>'. The same can't be said of the male ego.

The Republican economic plan is tinkle down, not trickle down.

Need to Vent? Call 404-222-8338; e-vent: vent@ajc.com

Graphic

Graphic: Scott Thigpen / SpecialIllustration of a Micheal Jackson-like celebrity with a lion: I can't wait for "Lion Taming With the Stars."

Load-Date: January 29, 2006



Israeli strike on office pressures Palestinian PM

Canberra Times (Australia)

July 3, 2006 Monday

Final Edition

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Section: A; Pg. 2 Length: 210 words

Byline: The Canberra Times

Body

About 5000 troops and columns of Israeli tanks were poised on the Gaza border in the largest Israeli military operation since it pulled out of the tiny coastal territory last September, ending a 38-year-occupation.

Israel has rejected demands issued by the three Palestinian groups holding Corporal Shalit.

The Popular Resistance Committees, the armed wing of <u>Hamas</u>, and the previously unknown Army of Islam said they were seeking the release of "1000 Palestinian, Arab, Muslim and other prisoners".

Meanwhile, in Jakarta yesterday, thousands of Indonesian men, <u>women</u> and children rallied at the US embassy in a protest against Israel's ongoing military operation in the Palestinian territories.

The protest was organised by the Islamist Justice and Prosperity Party whose members shouted anti- American slogans, denounced Israel and accused its troops of human rights violations. About 500 police with water canons protected the American complex, often the staging point for anti-Western demonstrations.

In Jakarta, the Islamic party's leader called on the United Nations and US to pressure Israel into ending its action. Demonstrators, mostly clad in flowing white gowns, chanted "God is Great" and held banners that said "Save Palestine" and "America is terrorist".

Load-Date: July 2, 2006



SPOTLIGHT ON: PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution
January 25, 2006 Wednesday
Home Edition

Copyright 2006 The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Section: ATLANTA & THE WORLD; Pg. 6F

Length: 543 words

Body

About 1.3 million Palestinians are eligible to vote in today's parliamentary elections to choose legislative leaders.

History

Before the war of 1967, the West Bank was part of Jordan, and the Gaza Strip was part of Egypt. Since that time, Palestinians in most parts of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem, have lived under Israeli military rule. The settlements that Israel has built in the West Bank are deemed to be illegal under international law, although Israel disputes this. In 2005, Israel withdrew its military forces from the Gaza Strip and evacuated settlers who had moved there after 1967. Israel and the Palestinians began a peace process in the early 1990s, but a final agreement has not been reached.

Palestinian territories at a glance

- * Size: 2,305 square miles in the West Bank and 141 square miles in Gaza (Palestinian Ministry of Information) (Georgia is about 25 times larger than the Palestinian territories.)
- * Capital: Headquarters of the Palestinian Authority are in Ramallah, but the intended Palestinian seat of government is Jerusalem
- * Population: 3.8 million (2005 U.N. estimate)
- * Life expectancy: Women, 74 years; Men, 71 years (2005 estimate)
- * Population growth rate: 3.2 percent (2005 estimate)
- * Religious groups: Muslim, 85 percent; Christian, 8 percent; Jewish, 7 percent.
- * Principal language: Arabic
- * Head of government: President Mahmoud Abbas

SPOTLIGHT ON: PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES

- * Gross domestic product per capita: \$1,120 (2005 estimate)
- * Currency: The Israeli shekel is the currency in use; the Oslo agreement has prevented the Palestinian Monetary Authority from issuing a national currency.
- * Poverty rate: 23 percent live below national poverty line.
- * Unemployment rate: 26.9 percent for men, 18.6 percent for women (2003 estimate)

The elections a glance

- * Voters: Residents of voting age: 1.7 million. Registered, eligible voters: 1.3 million
- * Polling stations: In Gaza: 254. In the West Bank/Jerusalem: 754. Total: 1,008
- * Polling hours: 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- * Exit polls: Expected an hour after polls close
- * Parliament seats: 132. Total number of legislators chosen in 16 electoral districts: 66. Total number of legislators chosen from party slates: 66.
- * Candidates: 728. Competing in districts: 414. Competing on party slates: 314.
- * Number of women candidates: 85
- * Observers: Foreign: 343. Local: 17,268
- * Parties: 11

The main five:

- 1) Fatah, ruling party of Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas.
- 2) Reform and Change, name under which Islamic militant *Hamas* is competing in election.
- 3) Third Way, headed by outgoing Palestinian Finance Minister Salam Fayyad.
- 4) Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, radical PLO faction headed by Ahmed Saadat, jailed for ordering the assassination of an Israeli Cabinet minister in 2001.
- 5) Independent Palestine, headed by human rights campaigner Mustafa Barghouti. (Source: Palestinian Central Election Commission.)

Atlanta's Palestinian connection

- * Distance between Atlanta and the Palestinian Territories: About 6,500 miles
- * Time difference between Atlanta and the Palestinian Territories: Seven hours; if it is 12:00 p.m. in Atlanta, it is 7:00 p.m. in the Palestinian Territories.

Sources: World Bank, Statesman's Yearbook, BBC Country Studies, United Nations; Brookings Institution.

Research by Alice Wertheim

Graphic

SPOTLIGHT ON: PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES

Photo: KEVIN FRAYER / Associated PressPalestinian supporters of $\underline{\textit{Hamas}}$ attend an election rally in the West

Bank town of Hebron.

Photo: Mahmoud Abbas

Map: StaffMap shows Palestinian territories; inset map points to area of detail in the Middle East.

Load-Date: January 25, 2006



Offensive to continue in Gaza, Israel says; Olmert describes fighting as a 'war' without a timetable

The International Herald Tribune
July 10, 2006 Monday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 1

Length: 951 words

Byline: Steven Erlanger

Dateline: GAZA

Body

Israel will continue its military offensive in the Gaza Strip at its own pace until Palestinian militants release a captured Israeli soldier and halt their rocket attacks, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert told his cabinet on Sunday.

The operation in Gaza is a "war for which it is impossible to set a timetable," Olmert said, according to briefings provided by an Israeli official.

"We will continue this battle with levelheadedness and patience, while making use of the proper means," he said. "We cannot sit and not respond to the Qassam rocket fire."

Olmert ruled out negotiations with <u>Hamas</u>, which leads the Palestinian government and whose military branch is holding Corporal Gilad Shalit, who was taken in a raid into Israel on June 25.

"Such negotiations would support another kidnapping," Olmert said.

He said that he had been prepared to release prisoners to the Palestinian president, Mahmoud Abbas, before the two men met for a formal summit meeting, something that Abbas himself said on Friday. But Olmert said that "we intended to release them to moderate elements, not terrorist elements." Releasing prisoners to <u>Hamas</u> in response to a kidnapping would further damage Palestinian moderates and reward extremism, Olmert said.

He repeated to the cabinet that Israel would not reoccupy Gaza, but would act militarily there as it saw fit.

"We will operate, enter and pull out as needed," the Israeli official quoted Olmert as saying.

Major General Yoav Galant, commander of Israel's southern region, said late Saturday that Israel was ready for a long campaign, planning to shift the focus of operations from place to place.

"We are prepared to continue the operation a month, two months and, if need be, even more," Galant told Channel 2 television. "The Palestinians will do their reckoning. They will count hundreds of dead terrorists; they will count the damaged infrastructure, the destroyed offices, the damaged factories."

Offensive to continue in Gaza, Israel says Olmert describes fighting as a 'war' without a timetable

On Sunday, the Palestinians counted more dead, even as, in wildly emotional scenes, they mourned and buried four people killed Saturday night, near the Karni commercial crossing, in a house explosion. The Palestinans blamed Israel for the deaths and praised the dead as "shuhada," or martyrs.

But Israel said on Sunday said that its investigation showed that the explosion did not come from an airstrike, and intelligence showed that it was caused by a Palestinian anti-tank rocket.

Captain Jacob Dallal, an army spokesman, said that the air force, which tracks its missiles carefully, said that its missile "hit the intended target," which was a nearby street where armed militants were walking with weapons. He said the army did not know what happened to the men it targeted, but that "we hit the area we targeted, not the house."

An Israeli military official said that intelligence information developed later, presumably from a source within Gaza, "clearly says that it was a Palestinian anti-tank missile." The military official said that he was unable to be identified or to be more specific.

On Sunday, a Palestinian civilian was killed by an Israeli missile launched at a car carrying <u>Hamas</u> militants in the southern town of Rafah. The militants apparently escaped from the car, and a second missile hit nearby, wounding bystanders. The dead man was identified as Bilal Sliman Rabah, an 18-year-old supermarket clerk. Seven other Palestinians were wounded, with one in very serious condition, hospital authorities said.

Earlier Sunday, just after midnight, the air force struck a group of armed militants near the Karni commercial crossing, wounding three, Palestinian security sources said.

And the Israeli air force destroyed a key bridge in Beit Hanoun, in northern Gaza, and an electricity transformer there.

Palestinians continued to fire Qassam rockets into Israel despite the military operation. One resident of the nearby Israeli town of Sderot was moderately wounded Sunday morning by shrapnel from a Qassam. A second rocket hit a house, causing damage, and three people were treated for shock.

Three of the four Palestinians killed on Saturday in the house explosion were members of the Hajaj family Um Ayman Hajaj, 48, her son Muhammad, 21, and her daughter Rawan, 6. Four other family members were wounded.

Iman Hajaj, 23, one of Um Ayman Hajaj's 14 children, was in the house at the time, in the living room, while some of those wounded were watching an Egyptian soap opera on television. Those who died, she said, were outside in the garden, drinking tea or cooking corn over a fire.

"We had been nervous for two days with the movement of tanks and the shells," said Hajaj, sitting in a room of mourning <u>women</u>, all covered in black head scarves and long black robes, in a relative's house nearby.

"My brother Muhammad, who died, had just arrived a minute before to visit my married sister," Hajaj said, beginning to cry, then held out her hand, holding a curved piece of shrapnel. "More than 20 pieces like this we took from the body of my mother," she said.

As she spoke, young <u>women</u> who lined the banister of the stairway began to chant in unison: "With our souls, with our blood, we sacrifice ourselves for our shahid."

Um Hassan Hajaj, the aunt of the dead mother, spoke angrily about what she said was the responsibility of Israel and the United States for the deaths in her family.

"Look at what your weapons are doing to us," she yelled. "All of Palestine is ours, and Israel must leave our land."

As the television cameras came closer, she turned to them and shouted: "One day the Muslim countries will change everything, and there will be hard days for America. Injustice never lasts."

Offensive to continue in Gaza, Israel says Olmert describes fighting as a 'war' without a timetable

Greg Myre contributed reporting from Jerusalem.

Load-Date: July 10, 2006



Health officials frustrated as bird flu deaths soar in Indonesia

St. Petersburg Times (Florida)

June 1, 2006 Thursday

0 Edition

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Dateline: JAKARTA, INDONESIA; BERLIN; AMSTERDAM, NETHERLANDS; UNITED NATIONS; RAMALLAH,

WEST BANK; LA PAZ, BOLIVIA

Body

JAKARTA, Indonesia - Indonesia averaged one human bird flu death every 2½ days in May, putting it on pace to soon surpass Vietnam as the world's hardest-hit country.

The latest death, announced Wednesday, was a 15-year-old boy whose preliminary tests were positive for the H5N1 virus. It comes as international health officials express growing frustration that they must fight Indonesia's bureaucracy as well as the disease.

"We're tying to fix this leak in the roof, and there's a storm," World Health Organization spokesman Dick Thompson said. "The storm is that the virus is in animals almost everywhere and the lack of effective attention that's being addressed to the problem."

Indonesia, an archipelago of 17,000 islands with a population of 220-million people, has a patchwork of local, regional and national bureaucracies that often send mixed messages. The impression, health officials said, is often that no one is truly at the helm.

"I don't think anyone can understand it unless you come here and see it for yourself," said Steven Bjorge, a WHO epidemiologist in Jakarta. "The amount of decentralization here is breathtaking."

Hitler's globe part of German museum display

BERLIN - The globe that Adolf Hitler gazed upon while contemplating world domination is in remarkably good condition but for one blemish - the bullet hole directly through Berlin, inflicted by a Soviet soldier after the Nazi dictator's defeat in 1945.

The oversized orb is among more than 8,000 artifacts in the German Historical Museum's new permanent display on the country's 2,000-year history, which seeks to help Germans rediscover their identity.

Many Germans have shunned the study of their past. Museum director Hans Ottomeyer hopes the exhibit can contribute to changing that.

Health officials frustrated as bird flu deaths soar in Indonesia

"It is a history that has been shaped by dramatic wars and long periods of peace," Ottomeyer said. "We attempt to show what strategies are used to generate hate, to vilify others, and start wars. On the other hand, we show how reasonable policies form the basis for prosperity and times of peace."

In addressing the Holocaust, the museum augments artifacts with art and photographs, but focuses on a haunting all-white cutaway model of the gas chambers and crematoria at the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp.

The more than 80,000-square-foot exhibition will be officially opened Friday by Chancellor Angela Merkel.

Report clears U.N. in Milosevic death

AMSTERDAM, Netherlands - Slobodan Milosevic defied doctors' orders to quit smoking and took unauthorized medication smuggled to him in prison, a U.N. war crimes tribunal report into his death said Wednesday.

In the most complete survey of events leading to the former Yugoslav president's death in March, the report cleared U.N. authorities of giving inadequate medical care and said the fatal heart attack probably could not have been prevented.

Milosevic's brother, Borislav, disputed the report, saying the tribunal "bears responsibility for my brother's death" because it "denied him the opportunity for treatment."

The Serb leader was found dead March 11 in his cell.

Annan says fight against AIDS is falling short

UNITED NATIONS - The world has fallen far short of its promises five years ago to fight HIV/AIDS, U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan warned leaders meeting Wednesday to find new ways to tackle the virus.

A day after a major U.N. report found the disease had slowed in its spread, Annan told delegates that efforts to fight AIDS among **women** and children had failed and that young people still have little understanding of AIDS.

The virus "has spread further, faster and with more catastrophic long-term effects than any other disease," Annan said.

Annan's words were meant to impart a sense of urgency to the first day of the three-day General Assembly High-Level Meeting on AIDS.

Hamas says thousands of salaries can't be paid

RAMALLAH, West Bank - The <u>Hamas</u>-led Palestinian government does not have enough money to pay tens of thousands of employees, the finance minister said Wednesday, raising fears of more unrest in the chaotic West Bank and Gaza Strip.

International economic sanctions against the militant group <u>Hamas</u> have left the government unable to pay the salaries of its 165,000 employees for three months. Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh said Tuesday the government planned to begin paying the overdue salaries.

On Wednesday, Finance Minister Omar Abdel Razek said 40,000 workers would receive one month's salary. He said only the lowest wage earners, those who earn up to \$333 a month, would be paid. The others would have to wait.

Separately Wednesday, Palestinian militants fired three rockets at the Israeli town of Sderot. One of the projectiles landed in a home a few dozen yards from the home of Defense Minister Amir Peretz. No one was hurt.

Bolivian farmers plan to form 'self-defense' group

Health officials frustrated as bird flu deaths soar in Indonesia

LA PAZ, Bolivia - Bolivia's largest agribusiness group said Wednesday it would form "self-defense" units to defend land it fears the country's new leftist government will confiscate to give to the poor.

The National Farming Confederation said in a statement that it rejected President Evo Morales' land reform policy.

The Morales administration rejected the idea.

"The government cannot accept their announcement because these groups are illegal and border on being criminal," said Alfredo Rada, a deputy minister in charge of coordinating between the government and the country's civil organizations.

Graphic

PHOTO, ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Body

INTERNATIONAL A3-12

Chirac to Rescind Law That Caused French Riots

President Jacques Chirac of France crumbled under pressure from students, unions, business leaders and even some of his own party leaders, announcing that he would rescind a disputed youth labor law. A1

1 in 4 Wives in Syria Beaten

Syria's first comprehensive field investigation of violence against <u>women</u> has concluded that nearly one married woman in four surveyed had been beaten. The study was released last week as part of a report on Syria by the United Nations Development Fund for **Women**. A5

Bush Addresses Iran Concerns

President Bush said that he remained committed to using diplomacy to block Iran from developing a nuclear weapon, his first public comments addressing recent speculation that the United States was weighing military action to do so. A3

Israeli Rebuff Angers Hamas

Israel's decision to boycott the new <u>Hamas</u>-led Palestinian government was sharply condemned in a statement by **Hamas**, which called the decision a "declaration of war." A8

Travel Ban on Belarus Leaders

Effective immediately, the European Union imposed travel restrictions on President Aleksandr G. Lukashenko of Belarus and 30 more of the country's officials, blocking their entrance to much of Europe as punishment for tampering with elections. A1

14 Die in Kenyan Plane Crash

A military cargo plane carrying a high-level Kenyan delegation on a peace mission crashed as it tried to land in bad weather in the north of the country, killing 14 people, including five members of Parliament. A12

NATIONAL A14-19

Immigrants Across U.S. Rally for Citizenship

Waving American flags and blue banners that read "We are America," throngs of cheering immigrants and their supporters converged on the nation's capital and in scores of other cities calling on Congress to offer legal status and citizenship to millions of illegal immigrants. A1

Police to Video Interrogations

The Detroit Police Department, whose image has been marred for years by complaints of civil rights abuses, has agreed to videotape interrogations of all suspects in crimes that carry a penalty of life in prison without the possibility of parole. A1

Grants Given for Cell Research

California's program to study embryonic stem cells awarded its first round of grants, using money drawn from \$14 million in bond notes bought recently by state business leaders trying to move the program forward despite legal challenges. A18

Anguished 9/11 Testimony

The jurors who will soon decide whether Zacarias Moussaoui is to be executed or spend the remainder of his life in prison were confronted with a steady stream of anguished testimony from surviving family members of those killed on Sept. 11, 2001. A16

Contact Lens Cleaner Examined

After 109 patients in 17 states became infected with severe fungal eye infections, federal health officials were investigating whether a popular contact lens cleaning solution might be the cause. A16

Storm Victims Still Surfacing

The bodies of storm victims, many of them overlooked in initial searches, are still being discovered in New Orleans after seven months. A1

NEW YORK/REGION B1-6

Head of Transit Union Gets 10 Days in Jail

Roger Toussaint, the president of the New York City transit workers' union, who led bus and subway workers in a strike that left New Yorkers trudging for miles for three days, was sentenced to 10 days in jail after his lawyers said they would not contest contempt charges. B1

Rainbow Immigration Rally

A diverse crowd of thousands, including a Salvadoran housekeeper, Korean dancers and a Senegalese street vendor, converged at City Hall Park to rally for immigration reform and an easier path to citizenship. B1

A Challenge to Lieberman

James H. Dean, the brother of Howard Dean, the Democratic national chairman, is roiling Connecticut's Democratic establishment by working to unseat Senator Joseph Lieberman, the party's 2000 vice presidential candidate, over his support for the war in Iraq. B1

SPORTSTUESDAY D1-7

Dismissal Sought in Duke Case

Lawyers for 46 players on the Duke lacrosse team said DNA evidence released proved that none of the players raped a woman at an off-campus party four weeks ago. Based on that lack of DNA evidence, the lawyers asked the Durham County district attorney to drop the case. D1

OBITUARIES B7

Vilgot Sjoman

A Swedish filmmaker whose notoriously risque "I Am Curious (Yellow)," sufficiently alarmed censors to generate millions at the box office, he was 81. B7

BUSINESS DAY C1-12

Fast Food Online

In an effort to cut labor costs and provide more focused customer service, McDonald's has begun having workers take customer orders remotely over the Internet. A1

Enron's Ex-Chief Testifies

Jeffrey K. Skilling, the former Enron chief executive, took the stand in his own defense and declared that he is "absolutely innocent" of charges that he conspired to defraud Enron. C1

Wal-Mart's Bank Dispute

Wal-Mart Stores promised bank regulators once again that it would never open bank branches as part of its plan to open a bank to process credit card transactions. C1

Chinese Cars on the Way

Shanghai Automotive Industry, the Chinese automaker that has joint ventures with General Motors and Volkswagen, announced details for plans to sell its own cars in China. C6

Business Digest C2

EDITORIAL A20-21

Editorials: Military fantasies on Iran; adventures in testifying; tax cuts on hold; first the pork, Governor.

Column: Nicholas D. Kristof.

Crossword E2 TV Listings E9 Weather D8

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Byline: Hindustan Times

Dateline: NEW DELHI, India

Body

NEW DELHI, India, July 22 -- AAI Aqsa: The third holiest site in Islam. But Israel has governed the ground since 1967. In September 2000, a heavily guarded Ariel Sharon visited the mosque. Palestinians interpreted it as an assault, and let loose the second Intifada. The toll of the AI Aqsa intifada during 2002-2004: 4,173.

Ahmad Yassin: Despite being paraplegic and nearly blind, Yassin fathered 12 children and rallied Sunnis together to form *Hamas*. He was arrested in 1989, released in 1997 and assassinated in April 2004 by an Israeli helicopter gunship.

BBa'ath: Though made popular by Saddam Hussein, a faction of the Ba'ath holds 135 of the 250 seats in the Syrian parliament. The Lebanese wing of the party is led by Assem Qanso, who has had to scuffle with Damascuswary politicians.

CCondoleezza Rice: Sent as a peace broker to the region. But hopes are minimal, as she is Secretary of a state that has given its ally more time to destroy what it believes is a terrorist network in Lebanon. Has said "a temporary ceasefire would be a false promise".

Cyprus: West Asia's 'blue lagoon', which gave up hopes of a summer tourist season when the sealift began last Monday. It's raining refugees: some 20,000 foreign nationals have already come through Cyprus. Their complaint: "We feel alone."

DDisproportionate use of force: The new 'collateral damage' - a weak phrase used as alibi. When Israel unleashed an all-out offensive to free three soldiers, the UN Security Council elite admonished the Jewish state with this mild reproof.

EEhud Olmert: Taking over from General Sharon is not an easy task, especially for someone whose background in the military and defence leaves a lot to be desired. There are many who believe that the current crisis has snowballed because Olmert has to prove to his people that he has muscles to flex.

EU Special Envoy: Marc Otté is EU's special representative to the Middle East. His job is simple - to meet 'friends', make statements about 'positive developments' and solemnly express Europe's collected stance - 'Make love, not war.'

FFatah: Perceived by many Palestinians to be corrupt and ineffective, Fatah lost to <u>Hamas</u> in the Jan '06 . The rift between the two has widened ever since and is being fuelled by many. In May this year, Israeli security sources

claimed they had uncovered a <u>Hamas</u> plot to assassinate Fatah leader and president Mahmoud Abbas. The allegation was denied.

Fouad Siniora: The same time last year, Siniora became the first Prime Minister to form a government post Syria's withdrawal from Lebanon. His was also the first government to include members of Hezbollah. All that Siniora can do now is bite his nails as his weak democracy becomes the casualty of war.

GGaza Strip: Not a night club, but an ancient trading area abutting the Mediterranean. Aldous Huxley could've felt 'eyeless' there, but Israel is going into the territory with both eyes open. Most of the 4 lakh people there are impoverished. Civilian causalties in the latest war: 60+.

Gilad Shalit: The captured Israeli corporal who's the apparent casus belli of the latest offensive, which the ever-poetic Israeli army calls 'Summer rains'. His captors want all <u>female</u> Palestinians and those under 18 to be freed from Israeli prisons in exchange of this 20-year-old.

HHamas: Considered by Israel and the US to be a terrorist organisation, <u>Hamas</u> won 74 of the 132 seats in Jan '06 and now forms the democratically elected government of the Palestinian people. Its capture of an Israeli soldier (see Gilad Shalit) is considered evidence enough of it not having changed its ways.

Hasan Nasrallah: When he's not reading Sharon's biography, Nasrallah makes transient but impactful appearances on Arab television. Widely credited in Lebanon for ending the Israeli occupation, this leader of Hezbollah has helped his cadres enjoy the political status they now do.

Hezbollah: Pioneers of armed resistance or masters of a terroist network? Both might be misleading, as its primary motive is to fight the Israeli Defence Forces. On 12 July, Hezbollah started Operation Truthful Promise, named for a 'promise' by Nasrallah to capture Israeli soldiers and swap them for the remaining three Lebanese held by Israel. Israel retaliated with Operation Change of Direction.

Ilntifada: This Arabic for 'shaking off' gave the name to the first (1987-93) and the second (see Al Aqsa) Palestinian uprising. The first intifada was sparked by a road accident and ended with the Oslo Accord. Its civilian casualties: 1,087 Palestinians, 101 Israelis. The second is still raging.

JJordan: This kingdom, whose army is said to have killed more Palestinians than anyone else, was the keeper of Jerusalem till June 1967. Not directly affected by the current crisis, it's going on collaborating with Israel on a Dead Sea-Red Sea canal.

KKnesset: The Israeli parliament, which is now led by Olmert's Kadima Party. The building in which it's housed now was a gift from James Rothschild. Its latest session passed a record number of resolutions to smoothen the path of the ongoing war.

LLebanon: The site of the largest evacuation exercise now, the country has half a million of its population homeless. Roads, bridges and telecom networks paralysed, as is the \$4-billion tourism industry. Has 14 Hezbollah representatives in its government.

MMossad: This most respected and feared of all intelligence organisations hasn't been able to get to the Israeli hostages in the present crisis. Their glory is celebrated in Steven Spielberg's Munich and Marvin Chomsky's Victory at Entebbe.

NNeo-conservatives: Rumsfield, Cheney, Wolfolwitz - the one things that binds them together is their fervent belief in neo-conservatism, a philosophy that is not deferential to traditional forms of diplomacy and is less incilned to a compromise of principle. Effect - Unilateral action in Iraq. Their project for the New American Century has called for an Israel no longer dependent on American aid through the removal of major threats in the region. Effect - Israel is given time to do what it has to.

OOslo Agreement: After highly secretive deliberations in Norway, the Oslo Accords were finalised in August 1993. The agreement called for the withdrawal of Israelis forces from parts of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank and also

affirmed the Palestinian right to self-governance within those areas. The violence has not stopped, the Israelis have not left and this vital component in the road-map for peace has had once accident after another.

PPalestinian Statehood: The 'State of Palestine' (SoP) is nothing more than a declaration that was approved by the PLO in 1988. The declaration asks for Palestine's capital to be Jerusalem and recognises Israel with its pre-1967 boundaries. Israel rejected the declaration and the SoP is still a distant dream.

QQualitative military edge: Israel, the only nuclear state in the area, wants weapons that are superior to its neighbours'. The paranoia stems from its 1948 experience, when the just-born state had to hold its own on all fronts, though it was outnumbered. Israel thus tries to maintain QME in order to offset the supposed numerical superiority of Arab armed forces it may face in future wars.

RRuhollah Khomeini: The Grand Ayatollah of Iran who gave Iran its Islamic state and non-aligned status. Pictures of this Shia leader, who once urged Mikhail Gorbachev to embrace Islam, adorn most offices of the Hezbollah.

SSix-day War: New research shows it was triggered by a Russian lie on Israel's massing of troops on the Syrian border. At its end, the Israeli army was 50 km from Amman, 60 km from Damascus, and 110 km from Cairo.

TTel Aviv: It has been one of <u>Hamas</u>' favourite targets and suicide bombers are known to pay visits to the city's discotheques, buses and ATMs at regular intervals. Most foreign embassies are located here, enabling countries to remain neutral on the competing claims on Jerusalem.

UN Security Council: The Security Council (SC) would have perhaps been able to bring peace to the region, were it not for the Veto card used often enough by the US. Most recently, the SC wanted to pass a resolution which condemned Israel's use of force in and around Gaza. The US felt the resolution was not 'balanced' enough.

UUN Security Council: The Security Council (SC) would have perhaps been able to bring peace to the region, were it not for the Veto card used often enough by the US. Most recently, the SC wanted to pass a resolution which condemned Israel's use of force in and around Gaza. The US felt the resolution was not 'balanced' enough.

VValley of Tears: The Golan Heights is a plateau, whose borders are shared by Israel, Syria, Jordan and Lebanon. Israel captured the heights from Syria in 1967 and its 'occupation' has been disputed since. Roadside memorials have propped up as dedications to those who have died in the area, justifying the mantle 'Valley of Tears.'

WWest Bank: East Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Ramallah can all be found in this landlocked territory which is called 'occupied' by others and 'disputed' by the Israelis. Israeli settlers occupy parts of the area that continue to be controlled by the Israeli military.

XX-mas: Has become a rare symbol of syncretism in this deeply divided area. It may not bring gifts for all the children of the region, but it attracts people of all faiths to the celebrations in Jerusalem and Bethlehem every year.

YYom Kippur War: Egypt and Syria caught Israel off-guard by striking on the Jewish holiday in 1973, though Anwar al-Sadat's right hand man was a Mossad agent. But the advantage lasted 48 hours, after which Israel pushed into the Golan Heights and Sinai Peninsula. Resulted in the Camp David accord.

ZZionism: Considered by some to be the exact opposite of 'anti-semitism', Zionism is an ideology that supports a homeland for the Jews in the 'Land of Israel', where Jewish kingdoms existed up to the 2nd century. Though thoroughly out-of-date, the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 is widely credited to the Zionists.

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THE AUSTRALIAN

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Section: FEATURES; Letters; Pg. 9

Length: 2493 words

Body

MATP

Conflicting versions of past vying for gospel status

MOST TALKED ABOUT

TEACHING HISTORY

KEVIN Donnelly (Inquirer, 28-29/1) criticises the History Teachers Association of Victoria for saying that there is no single view of history, but competing versions of the past. He goes on to say that this view of history leads to errors such as Japanese textbooks ignoring the rape of Nanking, presenting one flawed view of history.

Notice the logic: multiple views of history result in a text book with a single view. If the History Teachers Association had their way, the opposite would have happened.

The Japanese textbooks would include competing views of what happened in Nanking, based on evidence, and the rape of Nanking would be the most plausible version of those events.

When I was at school I learnt the apparent truth that Wellington defeated Napoleon at Waterloo. Recently I have heard quite a convincing version of the battle to the effect that the German General Blucher was the major player. Am I succumbing to postmodernist relativism, or just becoming a little better educated?

John Travers

Hawthorn, SA

DONNELLY claims there is evidence to suggest our students are receiving "only a fragmented understanding of the past". However, he fails to produce any.

If, as Donnelly seems to suggest, there is a singular narrative to our history which should be common to all students regardless of their background or identity, how does he explain the work of Keith Windschuttle and Henry Reynolds? What should history teachers make of these conflicting views?

Donnelly's ethos seems to require a choice to be made, the choice of the dominant political paradigm. This attitude is elitist and narrow-minded and it does our students absolutely no favours whatsoever.

C. Hindrum

Launceston, Tas

I REMEMBER being taught history with chronology and cannot imagine how any child could possibly make sense of it without knowing when things happened.

On the other hand, I can understand why teachers are panicking about the proposal to reintroduce this desirable method of teaching. After all, if you have never been taught a thing, how can you be expected to pass on knowledge that you do not have?

Colin White

Highgate, WA

TEACHING history used to be teaching what happened. Simple. What happened to that idea?

Derek Budd

Tweed Heads, NSW

AS a Year 12 history student, I am afraid I can't say that the latest prime ministerial excursion into the realm of history makes much sense to me.

The curriculum doesn't encourage us to look at history as a grand narrative, either of the largely defunct Marxist sort or the recently resuscitated 19th century continual progress sort that Howard seems to favour. This, however, does not mean that the history curriculum can be said to be a fragmented stew of themes and issues or a hotbed of postmodern relativism. Each unit of the curriculum, like almost all works of history, focuses on a particular time, place and event.

In my modern history class, for example, we looked at World War II in the Pacific. Within this selected area of historical study, we learn a chronology of events and examine the themes and issues surrounding them. There is nothing at all postmodern about this. This sort of history can be traced back to the ancient Greek historian Herodotus.

It is also true that in history class we look at events from different perspectives and are offered different interpretations of events.

However, the equating of this with a repudiation of objective truth in favour of a postmodern multiplicity of truths is entirely baseless. It is possible to argue that a single, objective truth does exist but that it is so complex that it is impossible for the historian to gain a complete picture of even a single event. The gap between the truth of the matter and the historian's knowledge creates ambiguity and requires interpretation, thus multiple versions of the past emerge. No postmodernism required.

Chris Monnox

North Wollongong, NSW

THE Prime Minister's comments on the teaching of history are easier to understand than the multi-syllabic comments by academics. He is saying that we cannot understand and value our own society and institutions unless we know how they came to exist. Contrary to the assembly by rote of dates and bare facts, this means comprehending the history and development of our British and European laws and institutions from which our own society and democratic freedoms are derived.

John Cameron-Stewart

Athelstone, SA

JOHN Howard's wish to take history classrooms back to the 1950s is par for the course. But his remarks are probably timed to distract us from the Wheat Board scandal and the possible involvement of several ministers and departments.

Helen Lewers

Napoleons, Vic

WE have Mao's Little Red Book with his slant on Chinese history. Doubtless, now that he's promoting history, we will have John Howard's Little Blue Book to fascinate us with his on Australia's history.

Robert McCormick

Bridgewater, SA

Let them go overseas if pay isn't enough

IT is interesting to note that the only defence raised by the Business Council of Australia ("Workers losing in CEO pay bonanza", 28-29/1) for exorbitant executive salaries is one of blackmail -- pay up or we will go overseas and you will be left with second best. But there can be no justification for the level of remuneration currently handed out by extraordinarily weak boards of public companies that have little at stake, except self-interest.

Being appointed to a chief executive position with an international remuneration rarely guarantees outstanding performance and most simply bask in the mediocrity generated by a booming economy. Numerous examples of highly paid executive failure abound but lessons are not learned and solutions tend to start with the premise that we must pay more to get a better candidate.

That there will be a downturn in the economy at some stage cannot be disputed and history demonstrates that many boards will wring their hands with despair at the inability of their hand-picked, highly-paid CEOs to perform under pressure. With excuses and blame aplenty you can be sure that the incumbent will ride off into a blissful early retirement, cushioned by an obscene termination payout.

If this executive club truly believes that they can perform better with a larger salary overseas then let them feel free to depart to foreign shores and leave a little more of the cake to be shared by those workers and shareholders who do not have that choice. I doubt that we will notice your absence.

Mike Yalden

Kiama, NSW

WE were told by the Government and Business Council of Australia that IR reform was essential for improved productivity, yet they lack similar enthusiasm when it comes to further gains by elimination of obscene executive salary and bonus packages and the smashing of the bankers' cartel. John Howard has made it clear that he will have no truck with the politics of envy, but when will he tackle the politics of greed which gives capitalism a bad name?

Peter Rutherford

Ocean Grove, Vic

IT is not surprising that many of these chief executives belong to companies which are members of the Business Council of Australia, because the BCA is the main lobby group behind John Howard's industrial reforms agenda. These executives have done very well indeed since Howard came to office in 1996.

These greedy chiefs of industry are the very same individuals who are advocating a national industrial relations system and a more competitive labour cost structure at the expense of employees.

Richard Slater

Berowra Heights, NSW

THE Treasurer would really be chortling if he could claim even 30 per cent of CEOs' megasalaries as tax.

In the past 10 years, CEO salaries have increased 500 per cent, but the performance incentive component has increased by only 37 per cent. Which explains why the CEOs have not been held responsible for not training and unskilling the workforce via outsourcing responsibility to labour hire companies. We are still paying for the political solution to the waterfront dispute.

Bernie Dean

Mt Morgan, Qld

THE report on CEOs' obscene pay packages has blown the BCA's cover. Howard's industrial relations laws are good for CEOs and bad for workers.

B. Welch

Bridgeman Downs, Qld

SO what's the reason the Government won't be referring CEO salaries to the Fair Pay Commission? Any guesses?

Sunil Badami

London, UK

War chest is full

WHILE the Palestinians live in squalor and abject poverty, there seems to be no shortage of money for guns, ammunition and political symbols. With these priorities as the Palestinian mindset, do they deserve our help?

Can you imagine the furore if Australian families spent welfare payments this way and then cried poor?

This is not limited to the Palestinians. After Saddam Hussein drained their marshes, the Iraqis were bemoaning the lack of food, schools, hospitals etc, although they didn't need guns as they already had plenty.

It will be interesting to see if <u>Hamas</u> can, indeed, obtain funding from the Arab world. I think that it will come, instead, from Iran.

Colin White

Highgate, WA

THE <u>Hamas</u> charter is against any Middle East peace process and states that there is no solution for the Palestinian question except through jihad.

<u>Hamas</u> has indicated it has no desire to change its charter. Its members have murdered Jewish <u>women</u>, deliberately blown up babies and encouraged their own schoolchildren to die for Allah.

Letter writers in newspapers, however, ignore this and place full responsibility on Israel and the US to accept their election and negotiate. How exactly does one begin the conversation?

Daniel Lewis

Rushcutters Bay, NSW

DEMOCRACY has not failed in the Middle East -- it has triumphed. The genius of democracy is that it exposes the hearts and minds of the people. The election of <u>Hamas</u> was not an aberration, but a deliberate choice of adult Palestinians. For too long their culture of death has been excused by soft minds in the West. Now there are no more excuses -- they have shown where their hearts lie and made their choice. Let them now suffer the consequences.

David Straface

Wembley, WA

IRRESPECTIVE of future changes in the organisation's attitude, there is almost no way the <u>Hamas</u> victory in the Palestinian elections can fail to strengthen the electoral appeal of Benjamin Netanyahu and other hardliners in Israeli politics. With elections in Israel only a few weeks away, I mourn in advance for the peace process.

Steve Brook

Elwood, Vic

THE predictable knee-jerk reaction by both Israel and the US to <u>Hamas</u>'s election victory shines a sad beacon on Churchill's dictum: democracy is the worst possible form of government, except for all the other forms.

John Dorman

Carnegie, Vic

IN the light of the <u>Hamas</u> victory, what will happen in the unlikely, but not impossible event, that Saddam Hussein is voted back to power?

Roseanne Schneider

Yeronga, Qld

Awesome marketing power

IN response to your correspondent Glenda Korporaal ("Bitter harvest", Business, 28-29/1), I would expect an Arab grain buyer to have problems with the Australian Wheat Board because of the marketing clout that the organisation has when it sells Australian wheat crop on behalf of the nation's growers. He would like nothing better than to have numerous weak sellers lining up before him. It is all the more difficult for our friend because he knows that the Australian product is second to none -- not to speak of the after- sales service and other backup provided by our grower marketer. The unique structure and constitution of AWB ensure that maximising grower returns is the number one priority.

Strong evidence of the success of the single desk system can be found in the increase in the tonnage produced and acreage sown of wheat and the corresponding contraction of the wool industry.

Jock Munro

Rankin's Springs, NSW

Police roster has a role

YOUR Inquirer article (28-29/1) touches on, but does not explore a very important factor that obviously contributed heavily to the Cronulla riots. That is the ongoing failure of the police service to roster sufficient police on duty on weekends. The question of whether they have sufficient powers is moot if there is no police on duty. We went through this 15 years ago when we and a dozen other families were forced out of our homes by offensive behaviour and vandalism because hundreds of complaints were ignored by police due to lack of police on duty. We had another taste about 12 months ago when three hours of complaints about obscene language and behaviour were

met with lies (that they had attended) and then hanging up on us three times and refusing to even give their names. It took two letters from our MP to get a grudging admission that they had failed in their duty.

Ken Hancock

Waverley, NSW

FIRST BYTE

letters@theaustralian.com.au

If the new Indigenous Affairs Minister Mal Brough is one-eighth Aboriginal, you can rely on the other seven-eighths being pure white middle class Liberal.

Greg Hart

Corinda, Qld

One-eighth Aboriginal means he is seven times more likely to be something else.

A.Burford

Bunbury, WA

Your letter writers (First Byte, 27 and 28-29/1) on the Aboriginal ceremony in Farm Cove on Australia Day were clearly not there and have completely misrepresented it. Called woggan-ma-gule, it was much more than a "cleansing ceremony". It told a story that "honours the past and celebrates the future". I was there and it was profoundly moving and highly professional. All five free-to-air TV channels reported it, most notably SBS.

Peter Clayton

Neutral Bay, NSW

Professional tennis is a weird sport. It insists on serving up disrespectful, voluble and, arguably, unsporting grunts in return for respectful silence from paying spectators.

Barry J.Horne

Sorrento, WA

What a breath of fresh air Cypriot Marcos Baghdatis is, when you look at the spoilt brat and sore loser antics of our very own Leyton Hewitt.

G.Unwin

Gold Coast, Qld

In the wake of 9/11, George W. Bush announced "you are either with us or against us". With the rise in democratically elected anti-US governments around the world recently I think the answer is clear. Most people are against him and his policies.

Doug Steley

Maroochydore, Qld

About the riots in Cronulla. I work in Nigeria and let me tell you, we in Australia know nothing about riots.

Matt Spencer

Lavender Bay, NSW

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Load-Date: January 29, 2006



Spielberg's 'Munich' massacre

University Wire January 20, 2006 Friday

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Section: COMMENTARY

Length: 954 words

Byline: By Jamie Weinstein, Cornell Daily Sun; SOURCE: Cornell U.

Dateline: ITHACA, N.Y.

Body

There is so much the Hollywood crowd could teach us and even more they could teach our President and his advisors. Take this for example:

It seems like just yesterday our President was being derided by many on the left for being a "cowboy" -- to the disbelief of little children everywhere. But with the enormous success of Brokeback Mountain, we now know that being a cowboy is only a bad thing if you are a straight cowboy. Had President Bush embraced his cowboy image, and also proclaimed his gayness, then he just may have succeeded in winning the Hollywood crowd over -- and maybe even an academy award. And you thought Karl Rove was smart. Bush's Brain has nothing on those wizards in Hollywood.

But I digress. This column has nothing to do with gay cowboys. Just Steven Spielberg (I am pretty sure he is neither gay nor a cowboy).

Over winter break, Spielberg released his highly anticipated film "Munich," which purports to tell the story of how Israel dealt with the Black September terrorists responsible for the massacre of 11 Israeli athletes and coaches at the 1972 Olympic games. In truth, no director or screenwriter could create a movie portraying the Israeli response accurately since the details of the response are a state secret. So Spielberg admittedly created a fictional account of what happened and inserted his (and anti-zionist screenwriter Tony Kushner's) political beliefs and biases into it.

The movie's central philosophy is essentially this: an eye for an eye leaves everyone blind. This is something that may be interesting if you heard it from Barney the Purple Dinosaur, but it leaves something to be desired from a director who believes his film is a "prayer for peace," as he told Time Magazine.

The Palestinian Arabs in 1972 targeted innocent Olympic athletes. They targeted them and killed them in cold blood. Massacred them. For being Israelis. For being Jews.

In the aftermath of the 1972 Munich Massacre, Israel, it is said, targeted those responsible for the ruthless bloodbath -those who physically perpetrated the attacks and those who helped plan and finance them. Those with blood-stained hands were found and eliminated -- some estimate that 18 terrorists in total were ultimately done away with.

To most (hopefully), the distinction is obvious between the two cases, though it wasn't evidently apparent to Spielberg. For starters, the Israeli athletes were innocents. They were killed for who they were, not for what they

Spielberg's 'Munich' massacre

did. The Palestinian Arabs killed by Israel, on the other hand, were targeted for the acts they committed, not for who they were ethnically or religiously.

But here is the crucial distinction that flies right over Spielberg's head and tears apart his "eye for an eye makes everyone blind" theme. The Israeli response was not primarily motivated out of revenge. They did not kill Palestinian Arabs because some Palestinian Arabs killed Israelis.

No. Israel targeted strategic people. Those who carried out the operation, those who planned it, and those who financed it. By eliminating these people, Israel was making it harder for the next operation against innocent Israeli citizens to occur. By taking out these criminals, these murderers, Israel was fulfilling the number one obligation that any government has: protecting its citizens.

We hear in "Munich" repeatedly that those targeted by Israel will simply be replaced. If only it were that simple. When you take out crucial members of any organization (like the masterminds and financiers) it makes the organization harder to operate and often less efficient. You eliminate, among other things, experience and expertise. Who could say that doesn't make a difference?

Ten years ago this month, Israel found and killed chief <u>Hamas</u> bomb maker Yahya Ayyash. His elimination was surely a serious setback for the terrorist group. More recently, we have seen contemporary examples of this. In March and April of 2004, Israel targeted and killed <u>Hamas</u> leaders Sheik Ahmed Yassin and Abdel Aziz Rantisi. These leaders were pivotal to the functioning and inspiration of <u>Hamas</u>, a terrorist organization which calls for the destruction of Israel and ruthlessly targets innocent Israeli men, <u>women</u> and children on busses and in cafes for death.

As a result, the group was left in disarray. Such targeted assassinations, along with the building of a security barrier along on the West Bank, helped reduce terrorist attacks within Israel proper by over 90 percent, not only leaving less people blind, but fewer innocent Israeli men, **women** and children dead.

There were other parts of "Munich" which reminded me that Spielberg lives in Hollywood and exists in a land of make-believe where anything is possible. Nothing reminded me of this more than the question raised at the end of the film by the leader of the Israeli team charged with taking out the Munich terrorists. As he begins to regret his actions, he questions why Israel couldn't have simply arrested the terrorists and put them on trial. As if Israeli agents could go from Paris to London to Athens to Beirut with police badges and say, "Mr. Terrorist, we are here to take you to Israel and put you on trial. Please come with us." Maybe this is plausible in Mickey Mouse land, but not on planet earth.

"Munich" had the potential for being a truly phenomenal and important film. And some parts of it were, especially the very beginning. But the film, with its childish political message and moral relativism, trivialized the barbaric massacre of 11 completely innocent men.

Spielberg should have saved his thoughts on terrorism for his dinner parties with Barbra Streisand. Why couldn't he have just made a movie about gay cowboys?

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Load-Date: January 20, 2006



The New York Times
February 1, 2006 Wednesday
Late Edition - Final

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

Length: 942 words

Body

INTERNATIONAL A3-12

Report Links Iran Military To Disputed Nuclear Work

The International Atomic Energy Agency says it has evidence that suggests links between Iran's ostensibly peaceful nuclear program and its military work on missiles, according to a confidential agency report released to member countries. A1

Persian Gulf states, after years of hesitation, are joining the call for tougher action on Iran's nuclear development efforts, increasingly worried that a nuclear Iran could set off an arms race in the region.

A10

Hamas Troubles Moderates

Since <u>Hamas</u> swept parliamentary elections in the West Bank and Gaza, secularists, Christian Arabs and Muslims who want a more secular state wonder to what extent <u>Hamas</u> will impose its religious beliefs. A12

Dane Straddles Muslim Issue

As Islamic protests spread about cartoons of the prophet Muhammad in a Danish newspaper, the Danish prime minister defended press freedom in his country but distanced himself from the drawings. A10

11 Bodies Found in Iraq

The bodies of 11 young men, some of them shot repeatedly and bearing marks of torture, were found in a minibus in western Baghdad, Interior Ministry officials said. A8

Loan for Ghana Mines Approved

The board of the International Finance Corporation approved a \$75 million loan to a subsidiary of Newmont Mining for a project in Ghana despite calls from environmental groups urging safeguards to protect those losing land to the project. A6

5-Year Plan Set for Afghan Aid

An aid conference of more than 60 nations, including the United States, agreed on a five-year blueprint to restore Afghanistan's security, build a functioning economy and counter the country's narcotics trade. A3

NATIONAL A13-21

Bush Cites Strong Union; Vows to Fight Terrorism

President Bush warned against "the false comfort of isolationism" and called for aggressive American leadership around the world in a State of the Union address that sought to reassert his control over the nation's agenda heading into a pivotal midterm election campaign. A1

As President Bush promised to reduce American dependence on oil from the Middle East, he echoed many presidents before him. A16

Hidden Heart Risk for Women

<u>Women</u> are more likely than men to have a hidden type of coronary disease in which their heart muscle is starved for oxygen even though their coronary arteries look clear and free of blockages on X-rays, doctors are reporting. A1

Ex-Postal Employee Kills 5

A woman who had left her Postal Service job because of psychological problems shot and killed five former colleagues and critically wounded another at a sorting plant in Goleta, Calif., before fatally shooting herself, the authorities said. A13

Plea Deal in Nightclub Fire

The band manager who set off the fireworks that ignited a Rhode Island nightclub fire in February 2003 agreed to plead guilty to 100 counts of involuntary manslaughter. A13

Alito Sworn In as 110th Justice

Judge Samuel A. Alito Jr. was quietly sworn as the 110th justice of the Supreme Court, taking the oath of office after a sharply divided Senate voted roughly along party lines to confirm him. A21

Storm Inquiry Cites Many Flaws

Government complacency, poor planning and dereliction of duty during Hurricane Katrina contributed to the deaths of dozens of the frail and sick in New Orleans, Senate investigators said. A20

NEW YORK/REGION B1-6

Long-Range Budget Goals For Bloomberg's 2nd Term

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg proposed a \$55.5 billion budget that would spend most of a \$3.3 billion surplus this year not on politically popular programs, but on paying down debt and meeting other long-term costs that threaten the city's future financial stability. In doing so, he is expending financial and political capital in ways that would have been unheard of in prior administrations. A1

Child Agency Had Warnings

Despite receiving six complaints about the family of Quachaun Browne since 2004, the city's child welfare agency failed to detect a dangerous new presence in the family's apartment and failed to act before a weekend-long torrent of abuse and neglect that ended with the 4-year-old's death, the authorities said. B1

A Field Gets Smaller

The Republican billionaire Tom Golisano announced that he would not run for governor of New York. B1

Neediest Cases B6

EDUCATION B7

SPORTSWEDNESDAY D1-6

ARTS E1-12

DINING OUT F1-8

OBITUARIES A22-23

Coretta Scott King

The wife of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., who after his assassination continued to proselytize his vision of racial peace and nonviolent social change, she was 78. A1

BUSINESS DAY C1-16

Google Stocks Drop

After astounding investors with its incredible growth in its first year and a half as a public company, Google learned the perils of high expectations. An earnings increase that fell short of Wall Street's targets sent its shares plummeting. C1

Greenspan's Last Day

Alan Greenspan, who stepped down after 18 years as chairman of the Federal Reserve, spent his last day at the Fed pushing through one more small increase in short-term interest rates, giving his successor, Ben S. Bernanke, considerable freedom to make his own mark on the economy. C1

Enron Trial Begins

On the opening day of the trial of Kenneth L. Lay and Jeffrey K. Skilling, prosecutors accused Enron executives of accounting "hocus pocus" while the duo's defense lawyers countered that market panic is what caused the collapse of the energy company in 2001. C1

Business Digest C2

EDITORIAL A24-25

Editorials: The state of energy; Verlyn Klinkenborg on Vasily Grossman.

Columns: Thomas L. Friedman, Maureen Dowd, Sarah Vowell.

Crosswords E6
TV Listings E11
Weather D8

http://www.nytimes.com

Load-Date: February 1, 2006



Why chocolate and ice-cream should be taken off the Middle East menu

The Times (London)
February 3, 2006, Friday

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Section: FEATURES; Pg. 25

Length: 938 words

Byline: Gerard Baker, gerard.baker@thetimes.co.uk

Body

Back in the 1980s, when Mikhail Gorbachev was unleashing the energising turmoil of glasnost on the Soviet Union, there was a lively debate among political scientists. Could a dysfunctional economic system characterised by state monopolies, bureaucratic inefficiencies and a total absence of entrepreneurial incentives transform itself under an open political framework into a dynamic economy?

The believers said yes, political reform would lead to economic reform. In the end, freedom would liberate the whole of society, including the economy. Free speech, the scrutiny of an open society, would lead quickly to free markets.

No, said the doubters. Without prior economic reform to unfreeze the system, a political thaw would only make matters worse. It would unleash unrealisable expectations. Rampant corruption would add awful inequality to the chaos of inefficiency. The poverty it illuminated would promote public anger and perhaps lead in the end to a sullen and threatening march back towards authoritarianism.

Twenty years later the doubters can point, with some vindication, to the state of Russia today, and make their case. There is a somewhat similar debate now taking place in the West on the advisability of democratic reform in the Middle East.

The victory of <u>Hamas</u> last week in the Palestinian Authority, coming on top of advances by Islamists in Iraq, Lebanon and Egypt, has posed the same question in a different form: can you lay the basic institutions of political openness, such as the right to vote, on top of societies twisted into their current abysmal state by a history of repression and a culture of intolerance? Or do you have to reform the cultural and social base first in order to get favourable democratic outcomes?

We know by now that elections are a necessary but certainly not sufficient condition for producing free, stable societies. If you were to let a classroom of seven-year-olds vote on how they should be allowed to run their lives, you know the result. They would end school, legislate for compulsory chocolate and ice-cream, liberalise fussy rules on TV-watching and computer-game playing and institute a more relaxed approach to bedtime.

If you give the vote to a few million Palestinians in their current state, they will vote for the equivalent of chocolate, TV and ice-cream. They will endorse the annihilation of Israel, the mass murder of Americans and a holy war against infidels everywhere.

That's not to say that Palestinians have puerile minds. But in political-historical-cultural terms they are like children. They have been conditioned entirely for decades by an environment of repression and poverty, pushed around by corrupt leaders poisoning their minds with hateful bile for decades and decades.

That's why the US is surely right to force the pace of democratic change in the region. Fomenting a political revolution in the Middle East is the only real way to the world's long-term security. As unpalatable as <u>Hamas</u> may be, would we really be better off today if that great benign autocrat, Yassir Arafat, were still leading his people? The security and stability supposedly afforded by Saddam Hussein or the Shah of Iran were illusory. On the surface all was calm, but underground, as we discovered in Iran and Iraq, we were laying the foundations for our own tragedy.

But simple, institutional political reform isn't going to do it either, because it is not just a history of tyranny that has produced these baleful consequences.

Attitudes in much of the Islamic world have been conditioned as well by cultural and religious repression. The intolerance of dissent, the suppression of diversity, the denial of <u>women</u>'s rights is not just something imposed by brutal dictators but, for many in the region, mandated by a particular account of their religious principles.

The flap over the publication by a Danish newspaper of offensive cartoons of Muhammad is a good example of what is wrong. The protesting Muslims in Europe or on the West Bank are not rioting and threatening innocent Danes because they've been told to but because they believe it's their religious duty. That is not compatible with freedom. My sensitivities, as a Catholic, are offended almost every day by something I read in the paper. But it's never occurred to me to avenge what I see by seeking to behead someone at The Guardian or The New York Times.

We can invade countries, impose elections and constitutions, but what can we do to change this culturally ingrained mentality? Not much, I suspect. This in the end is a battle within Islam for the soul of that religion and its meaning in modern life.

It's wrong and insulting to believe that there is something inevitable about repressive, intolerant Islam. Turkey has shown the alternative. Given a chance, the people of Iran, who have seen the devastating consequences of fanatical Islamism in action for 25 years, would show the way too.

Our job in the West is to make clear by ostracising the lunatics of <u>Hamas</u> and Tehran that there is no future for them and the people they purport to lead in their hateful and distorted ideology. We should encourage, through practical support, those in the region who favour a better way. But we must also, in our own societies, resist the pressure to tolerate the intolerance of Islamist extremism.

The breath of openness blowing through the Middle East is invigorating, but to be sustained it needs deep cultural change. Giving the vote to people who have been acculturated to an ideology of intolerance and hatred will not, on its own, usher in a new era of peace and stability. The risk is it will do the opposite.

Load-Date: February 3, 2006



Iran restates intention to defend Syria in the event of any attack by Israel

The Irish Times

July 18, 2006 Tuesday

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Section: WORLD; Other World Stories; Pg. 10

Length: 629 words

Body

MIDDLE EAST: A complex matrix of motives and interests lies behind the relationships between Iran, Syria and the Hizbullah, writes Michael Jansen

Iran and Syria agreed yesterday that a ceasefire and prisoner exchange would be "an acceptable and fair" way to end Israel's offensive against Lebanon.

This recipe, put forward by Iranian foreign minister Manouchehr Mottaki following a meeting in Damascus with Syrian president Bashar al-Assad, reflects the stance of the Lebanese Shia Hizbullah movement.

All three parties want a three-way ceasefire involving Hizbullah, the Palestinian <u>Hamas</u> movement, and Israel. Hizbullah and <u>Hamas</u>, which hold three Is- raeli soldiers, seek to swap them for Palestinian <u>female</u> and elderly prisoners and three Lebanese detainees.

Israel has rejected any deal.

Mr Mottaki reaffirmed Tehran's pledge to defend Syria if attacked by Israel, which claims Tehran and Damascus are behind the Palestinian and Lebanese operations to seize Israeli soldiers. Syria and Iran, who became allies in 1980 during the Iran-Iraq war, have denied involvement and insist Hizbullah is an independent organisation.

Iran served as mid-wife at the birth of Hizbullah during Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon. Tehran's Republican Guards trained and armed Hizbullah fighters, and Tehran has subsequently supplied funds and weaponry. Syria has facilitated the flow of money and arms to the group. Over the years, it gained a large degree of independence by raising funds from overseas Lebanese Shias and buying weapons on the international black market.

While Iran and Syria can influence Hizbullah, neither can dictate its actions. There is no indication that Hizbullah secretary general Hassan Nasrallah told Damascus or Tehran that he intended to capture Israeli troops at a time Israel was engaged in military operations in Gaza. Shaikh Nasrallah had proclaimed this intention many times.

It can be argued the destructive Israeli campaign in Lebanon does not suit either Damascus or Tehran. While seeking to keep up political pressure on Israel and US forces in Iraq, Tehran does not want a conflagration in Lebanon, Gaza or Iraq.

Iran's interest in Iraq is the same as that of the US: an end to sectarian warfare, Shia ascendancy, and reconstruction of the country. Since Iran has stated its readiness to talk about the package of incentives offered by Europe and the US as the price for suspension of nuclear programmes, Tehran does not really want the current explosion of hostilities to derail negotiations.

Iran restates intention to defend Syria in the event of any attack by Israel

Syria has never wanted any regional player to be in a position to drag it into conflict with Israel at a time and place not of Damascus's choosing. This is why Syria drove the Palestinian Liberation Organisation out of northern Lebanon in 1983.

Syrian spokesmen counter the charge that Damascus manipulates Hizbullah by saying it has had little leverage over the movement since withdrawing Syrian troops from Lebanon in 2005.

It can also be contended that a limited clash might serve the interests of Syria and Iran because they want to torpedo Israeli premier Ehud Olmert's unilateral policy of setting Israel's border in the West Bank, thereby finishing off negotiations on territorial settlements with the Arabs.

Iran and Syria seek a revival of the peace process on a regional basis with the aim of securing Israeli evacuation of Palestinian territory and the Syrian Golan.

If they encouraged Hizbullah to act with this objective in mind, both leaderships seriously misread the intentions of Israel.

Israeli analysts say Mr Olmert is determined to use the two-front offensive to re-establish Israel's deterrent power and secure Hizbullah's pull-back from its northern border as a prelude to annexing portions of the West Bank, all of east Jerusalem and the Golan.

Load-Date: July 26, 2006



The Mideast and Ideas for Peace

The New York Times
July 22, 2006 Saturday
Late Edition - Final

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Section: Section A; Column 4; Editorial Desk; Pg. 12

Length: 631 words

Body

To the Editor:

Re "More Than a Cease-Fire Needed" (editorial, July 21):

How do we enlist the United States in any peace process that involves Arab countries when our unconditional support for Israel makes us suspect from the start?

The proposal for peacekeeping troops to enforce a cease-fire will die aborning, since Israel has consistently rejected any suggestion of an international force on its borders.

There should first be a Security Council resolution calling for an end to indiscriminate shelling of civilian targets in Lebanon and a cessation of Hezbollah shelling of northern Israel.

If and when such a cease-fire is attained, peace talks may begin. Such talks should be comprehensive, and aggressive attention should be given to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

These talks must be all-inclusive, with <u>Hamas</u> and Hezbollah as participants, regardless of American objections.

Leonard Amada Whiting, N.J., July 21, 2006

To the Editor:

It's clear that you see Hezbollah as the leading agent in the hostilities now raging in the Middle East. But Hezbollah and *Hamas* were both formed in response to the Israeli occupation of Palestinian land.

If you call for a return of Israeli soldiers without asking anything of the Israelis in return, for example the release of children and **women** held in Israeli prisons, then nothing will have been achieved.

Kathleen Hill New York, July 21, 2006

To the Editor:

The Mideast and Ideas for Peace

Do you really think that the international community, by words or resolutions, can force Hezbollah to disband its militia?

Hezbollah and organizations like it will disband only when they are destroyed. It's the same in Iraq. These organizations are committed to one thing: the destruction of Israel and the United States.

Israel is showing the world what can and will happen if these organizations continue unfettered. The world needs to wake up and take these organizations out, once and for all, lest we be fearful of them for the rest of our lives.

Bret P. Wallach Hicksville, N.Y., July 21, 2006

To the Editor:

It is certainly true that the people of Lebanon and Israel need more than a cease-fire. Although the recent provocation of the Israeli war machine was uncalled for, Israel since 1967 has violated the Lebanese airspace and waterways and has invaded the country at will.

Any international force that may become involved should deploy on both sides of the border to protect the Israelis from rockets and the Lebanese from the Israeli firepower. It should have the authority to stop Israel's violation of Lebanese airspace and prevent Israeli forces from invading Lebanon again.

Reconstruction and compensation issues should be addressed as part of any deal, or forces unfriendly to the United States will offer the help in exchange for political influence.

Lebanon will need a Marshall Plan to rebuild, with guarantees this time that it will not be victimized again.

Wael A. Jaber Shaker Heights, Ohio, July 21, 2006

To the Editor:

The principle of proportionality in international law is not a formula whereby there should be one dead Lebanese for every dead Israeli.

Proportionality means that the destruction caused by military force must be outweighed by the good it will accomplish; one cannot use more force than necessary to achieve one's objectives.

The high number of civilians killed by Israeli forces is disproportionate, not to the number of Israeli victims of Hezbollah's rockets, but to the goals Israel claims it is trying to achieve in Lebanon.

If anything, the devastation and the high body count are making Hezbollah's anti-Israeli arguments more plausible to the many Lebanese affected by Israel's wide-ranging attacks.

Max Paul Friedman Bochum, Germany, July 21, 2006

The writer is a professor of history at Florida State University.

http://www.nytimes.com

Load-Date: July 22, 2006



<u>Pro-Israel groups rally support for Lieberman; Connecticut senator faces</u> <u>stiff opposition from Ned Lamont, who is critical of Lieberman's support of</u> <u>the Iraq war</u>

Telegraph Herald (Dubuque, IA)

July 21, 2006 Friday

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Section: NATIONAL/WORLD; Pg. c18

Length: 609 words

Byline: ASSOCIATED PRESS **Dateline:** HARTFORD, Conn.

Body

Pro-Israel groups, afraid of losing one of their staunchest supporters in Congress, are pouring money into beleaguered Sen. Joe Lieberman's campaign as he tries to fend off a tougher-than-expected primary challenge.

The three-term lawmaker is struggling to dispatch millionaire businessman Ned Lamont in the Aug. 8 primary. Lamont's fierce criticism of Lieberman's backing of the Iraq war and perceived closeness to President Bush has won him followers among hard-core Democrats.

The primary is Aug. 8 and Lieberman has said he will run as an independent if he loses.

Pro-Israel political action committees have donated to the Connecticut senator's campaign and have urged their national membership to give generously now and later, if Lieberman is forced to run as an unaffiliated candidate.

"Joe Lieberman, without exception, no conditions ... is the No. 1 pro-Israel advocate and leader in Congress," said Mark Vogel, chairman of the National Action Committee, a pro-Israel political action committee. "There is nobody who does more on behalf of Israel than Joe Lieberman. That is why he is incredibly important to the pro-Israel community."

An Orthodox Jew who never campaigned on Saturday, the Sabbath, because of his religious beliefs, Lieberman has been consistent in his support for Israel during his 17 years in the Senate.

In a recent interview with The Associated Press, Lieberman said Israel had a right to launch offensives in the Gaza Strip and Lebanon after two Israeli soldiers were kidnapped. He added that if Arab countries urged restraint by Hezbollah and *Hamas*, it "will allow the Israelis to cool down."

Lamont, who is Episcopalian, has said the United States must "unambiguously stand with our ally," but urged Bush to work on a peace settlement. He opposes negotiating with *Hamas* or Hezbollah.

Israel's war with Hezbollah militants could result in an increase in donations to Lieberman, Vogel said.

"When there's turmoil, people don't like change," he said.

Pro-Israel groups rally support for Lieberman Connecticut senator faces stiff opposition from Ned Lamont, who is critical of Lieberman's support of the Iraq war

According to The Center for Responsive Politics, Lieberman currently ranks fourth on the list of candidates receiving money from pro-Israel PACs in 2006. As of July 10, the most recent figures available, Lieberman had received \$66,500 for the PACs out of \$8.5 million raised.

Fourteen of the 32 PACs identified as pro-Israel by the Center have contributed to Lieberman's campaign, including \$10,000 from the <u>Women</u>'s Alliance for Israel PAC, \$5,000 from the Florida-based Sun PAC and \$2,000 from the New York-based Hudson Valley PAC.

Vogel's group is reaching out to thousands of supporters in more than 35 states. For the first time, National Action Committee is inserting a separate flyer urging contributions to Lieberman in an invitation for an upcoming fundraiser.

In 2000, Lieberman received \$83,000 from pro-Israel PACs when he ran for his Senate seat, according to the Center. He also was the Democratic vice presidential candidate later that year.

Morris Amitay, founder of the pro-Israel Washington PAC, said increasing numbers around the country who support Lieberman's pro-Israel stance are giving to his campaign because of the primary. Supporters also are volunteering to travel to Connecticut to help.

"It's become such a big story and I think the polls have shown the race could be growing close and of course there's concern," Amitay said.

Lieberman's campaign has been reaching out to pro-Israel supporters. Michael Kassen, a Westport, Conn., businessman who contributes to pro-Israel causes and various candidates, said the campaign has been in touch.

"This is a group that he can turn to," said Kassen, who gave Lieberman \$1,000 in 2005, according to campaign finance records.

Load-Date: July 21, 2006



Air strike kills top Palestinian rocket launcher and aide: Deaths of two children and six other civilians provoke more anger in Gaza City

The Vancouver Sun (British Columbia)

June 14, 2006 Wednesday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A14

Length: 522 words

Byline: Ibrahim Barzak, Associated Press

Dateline: GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip

Body

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip -- An Israeli air strike on a top Palestinian rocket launcher and his accomplice also killed two children and six other civilians Tuesday, inflaming Palestinian anger already aroused over the deaths of Gaza beachgoers.

The violence coincided with bloody infighting among Palestinian gunmen, and could hurt attempts by President Mahmoud Abbas and the West to pressure the *Hamas* government to moderate its virulently anti-Israel stance.

Abbas accused Israel of "state terrorism," and the Islamic Jihad militant group vowed to avenge the death of its chief rocket launcher, Hamoud Wadiya.

On Tuesday, Israel sent aircraft after Palestinians it said were on their way to carry out a rocket attack on Israel.

A first missile missed their yellow van as it travelled along a main road in Gaza City and sent it crashing into a curb, Palestinian witnesses said. Two more missiles killed two fighters inside the van, as well as eight civilians who had gathered near the site of the first strike.

Two of the dead were children, and three were medical workers on their way to tend to the wounded.

Ambulances carrying the 10 dead and 32 wounded raced toward Shifa Hospital in Gaza City. "He's dead!" shouted one medical worker as teams removed a victim from an ambulance. Other rescue workers carried a dead boy, the top of his head torn off by the blast.

Doctors, hard-pressed to handle the many wounded, treated some on the bloodied floor. Three lifeless bodies, drenched in blood, also lay on the floor.

At the hospital's morgue, angry <u>women</u> shouted, "Death to Israel, Death to the occupation!" One Islamic Jihad militant put his hands on one of the bodies, then smeared the blood on his rifle.

Dozens of gunmen fired in the air as families began taking bodies from the morgue to the mosque for funeral services.

Air strike kills top Palestinian rocket launcher and aide: Deaths of two children and six other civilians provoke more anger in Gaza City

"The Zionist enemy insists on shedding Palestinian blood and we insist on going ahead with our holy war and resistance," said Khader Habib, a group leader in Gaza. "God willing, the resistance groups ... will deliver a harsh response. All options are open."

A weeping Hekmat Mughrabi, her veil soaked with blood, said her 30-year-old son, Ashraf, and another 13-year-old relative died when the first missile struck the curb outside her home. The young man, hearing the explosion, ran to the door to calm children who had been on the roof making paper kites.

"He was shouting to the kids, 'Don't be afraid, don't be afraid,' " and hadn't even finished his sentence when the second missile hit, she said. "My son died in my arms."

Shrapnel from the blast flew into the house, wounding other family members, she added.

Outside her house was Wadiya's mangled van, its interior a jumble of twisted metal and shredded upholstery. A white slipper lay in a pool of blood on the ground, and angry crowds burned tires.

Peretz, the Israeli defence minister who reportedly delayed a major air offensive so Palestinians could curb the rockets, said all restraints were now off.

"We will act with all our might and use all our means against any group that acts against us," said Peretz, whose hometown, Sderot, comes under frequent attack.

Graphic

Photo: Nasser Shiyoukhi, Associated Press; A Palestinian girl holds a Koran and <u>women</u> chant slogans at rally supporting the <u>Hamas</u>-led government on Tuesday in the West Bank town of Hebron. Meanwhile, the killings of eight civilians in an Israeli air strike on Gaza City inflamed Palestinian anger, prompting angry <u>women</u> to shout 'Death to Israel' and 'Death to the occupation' at the hospital morgue there.

Load-Date: June 14, 2006



Medals ban is an absolute disgrace

EVENING CHRONICLE (Newcastle, UK)

July 24, 2006 Monday

Edition 1

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 20

Length: 1031 words

Byline: By The Evening Chronicle

Body

The article by Gareth Deighan entitled Banned from wearing medals leaves me with a feeling of overwhelming sadness.

How terribly sad it is that the British Government's, unfathomably mean spirited, refusal to permit Malaya / Borneo veterans the right to wear the medal, bestowed on them by a grateful Malaysian nation. This will deny veterans, such as Gordon King, a tiny bit of pride in their declining years.

This shocking revelation inspires the following questions.

Precisely what detrimental effect could the accepting and wearing of the PJM have on the integrity of the Imperial Honours System and what possible harm can result from permitting elderly veterans the unrestricted right to wear their medal with justifiable pride?

All of us should be delighted to see British veterans thus honoured by a grateful foreign nation and what an incredible shame that their own nation refuses to accord them similar honour and respect.

The mind boggles at such an ignominious exhibition of bureaucratic insensitivity.

JOHN FENTON Oshawa, Ontario, Canada.

Schools must be closed

WITH reference to school reorganisations in Gateshead 2006. I see from his letter to Your Shout, July 17, that Tony Dowling is still making ill informed, disparaging remarks in the name of Respect and has clearly failed to grasp my comments on responsible advice.

The reorganisation covers a large area, and is not just about closing schools.

As many more teachers in a wide area will be much more likely to struggle with lack of equipment and redundancy, if his efforts to obstruct reorganisations and closures succeed, they may wish to ask him to explain, why he and Jim Hutchinson, still dispute that wasting money on oversized buildings when it is needed to pay teachers, leads to larger or oversized classes.

Medals ban is an absolute disgrace

These people are posturing as presenting an alternative plan - a plan to allow reducing pupil numbers to produce reducing budgets while overhead costs of large buildings remain, leaving many schools to sink into poverty despite proper funding. Heads and governors struggling with budgets, could well be tempted to go for NIMBY solutions of aggressive pupil recruitment, resulting in very large numbers of preserved empty places being passed back and forward around the borough for years to come, thus ensuring maximum widespread disruption in many schools.

Fortunately, for most of the children of Gateshead, the council has decided to solve the problem, not move it around.

ALAN APPLEBY, Fell Close, Sunniside.

Thanks for your funds

I AM writing to thank all those in Northumberland who helped to make the British Heart Foundation's (BHF) Help a Heart Week 2006 a success.

So many people have supported us by digging deep and donating to our biggest ever UK-wide collection, by buying a heart ribbon from their local BHF Shop, joining a BHF lifecycle or raising funds their own way, that the charity is well on its way to raising its target of £1.3m.

To those people who gave their time for free - by volunteering to distribute and gather in collection envelopes or helping out with events and other fundraising activities - we are also extremely thankful.

Your support is invaluable.

The money Northumberland has raised during Help a Heart Week in June will help the BHF continue its life-saving research. With your ongoing support, we are continuing to save and improve the lives of the millions of men, **women** and children affected by heart disease. For that, we are very grateful.

STEPHEN LAYDEN, fundraising volunteer manager, PO Box 23, Brampton CA8 2WA.

You were so generous

ON BEHALF of the Broken Piston Motorcycle Club, we would like to thank the following businesses/friends for their donations, raffle prizes and support at our rally, held at the Mill House pub, Washington, to raise funds for NECA.

Kawasaki Newcastle, Team Valley Motorcycle Training, Durham Bikes, M&S Framwellgate, Proto, Demon Bikes, Armstrongs, Ken's, Hunters, Faultfinder Washington, Automotive Car Parts Washington, Nixon Hire Newcastle, Lee Porter Construction, Chirman Ltd, the management and staff of the Mill House, and last but not least all our friends in the various clubs that attended and gave so generously to help a very worthy charity. By the feedback we think everyone had a good time and you all helped in raising £565 for NECA.

THE BROKEN PISTONS.

Israeli attacks must cease

ON JULY 4, Tony Blair, in referring to Islamic extremism stated: "If you want to defeat this extremism you have to defeat its ideas and you have to defeat in particular a completely false sense of grievance against the West." At the time I questioned whether the sense of grievance was false and recent events have confirmed that the grievance is justified.

If any country other than Israel or the US had bombed Lebanon or Gaza to smithereens, the West would have quite rightly condemned them and probably attacked them. However, the US and UK have not uttered a word of condemnation against anyone other than Hezbollah, Syria and Iran.

<u>Hamas</u> wins a democratic election and the West immediately applies sanctions because <u>Hamas</u> does not recognize Israel. No suggestion of sanctions being applied against Israel which, in the words of the Lebanese Prime

Medals ban is an absolute disgrace

Minister, is tearing his country to shreds by killing and maiming mainly civilians and children and removing the infrastructure such as roads, sea-ports, airports, power and water.

There is no way that I can condone the extremist actions of Hezbollah and some factions within <u>Hamas</u> but as the Lebanese Prime Minister warned, desperate people take desperate action. However, as well as condemning extremists, the international community must ensure that the totally disproportionate actions of the Israeli government are stopped immediately. I therefore ask all fair minded readers to contact their MP imploring him/her to pressure Tony Blair to give total backing to Kofi Annan's call for a ceasefire. If Israel do not accede to this, then UN sanctions should be applied immediately with or without US backing.

PETER BELL, Newcastle,

PM desperate for limelight

SEND me, send me, begs Bush's Poodle. With world events spinning out of control, Tony Blair still want to be centre stage.

T NESBITT, Hebburn.

Load-Date: July 24, 2006



The Gazette (Montreal)
March 31, 2006 Friday
Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A2

Length: 596 words **Byline:** The Gazette

Body

Blast kills Afghan child, injures Canadian soldier

A 4-year-old boy wounded in the suicide bombing of a Canadian-Romanian convoy yesterday died in a hospital as coalition forces faced a third straight day of attacks in southern Afghanistan. The latest blast also injured a Canadian soldier, but he was expected to return to duty, military officials said. Details, Page A16

Hamas assails aid cuts

As <u>Hamas</u> government ministers took over their new offices yesterday, the group sharply criticized aid cuts that have been announced or threatened by Western countries, including Canada. In addition, the new interior minister said militants would not face arrest from the Palestinian police, who have occasionally detained them in the past. Details, Page A19

Court limits gay unions

Same-sex couples from states where gay marriage is banned cannot legally marry in Massachusetts, the state's highest court ruled yesterday. Details, Page A16

'Vampire Killer' dies

Wayne Boden, a serial killer who terrorized the country with a string of slayings of young <u>women</u> in Montreal and Calgary more than 30 years ago, has died in prison. Boden, whose penchant for biting the breasts of his victims earned him the

nickname the "Vampire Killer," was in his late 50s. Details, Page A12

Protesters dog Ignatieff

Toronto MP Michael Ignatieff, a conflict and human rights scholar, was put on the defensive yesterday about his support for the war in Iraq and his views on torture as he set out his vision of Canada to pave the way for his entry into the Liberal leadership race. Details, Page A12

Morselli dead at 67

Giuseppe (Joe) Morselli, long-time federal Liberal Party fundraiser and a star witness at last year's Gomery commission inquiry into the sponsorship scandal, has died of a heart attack in Orlando, Fla.

He was 67. Details, Page A8

Quebec: It's about money

A constitutional challenge of Quebec's planned ban on smoking in bars and some public places is motivated solely by economic interests and doesn't serve the public or justice, lawyers for the government argued in court yesterday. The restrictions go into effect May 31. Details, Page A6

business

A corporate matchmaker

Boston lawyer Leonard Gold plays matchmaker by providing cross-border help to Canadian companies seeking to develop operations in the United States and to U.S. firms wishing to establish a presence in Canada. Details, Page B1

Motorino's got juice

Motorcycles have always been miserly on gasoline, but a Vancouver firm is showcasing a model that uses none at all. Greenwit Technologies debuted its Motorino electric motorcycle this week. Details, Page B3

Sports

Fisi looks like a winner

For a guy who's entering what could be

the defining weekend of his racing career - Sunday's Australian Grand Prix - Renault's Giancarlo Fisichella sounds strangely composed. Details, Page C5

Steroid probe launched

Baseball launched its probe yesterday into alleged steroid use by Barry Bonds and others, and right away the head of the investigation came under attack because of his close ties to the sport. Details, Page C3

Preview

Ice Age is pretty cool

Ice Age: The Meltdown has all the creatures from the original movie heading for the hills as their world melts around them. Global warming, anyone? Don't worry: This warm and fuzzy film turns the world into one big water park. Details, Page D1

The cuss for laughs tour

A sleep-deprived troupe with an act they call the Insomniac Tour could be just what our Just for Laughs fest needs, Bill Brownstein writes: four comics whose gags are mostly unfit to print in a family newspaper. Details, Page D1

Graphic

Photo: Blast kills Afghan child, injures Canadian soldier

Load-Date: March 31, 2006



READERS WRITE

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

March 31, 2006 Friday

Main Edition

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The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Section: EDITORIAL; Pg. 14A

Length: 842 words

Byline: SCOTT ALDERMAN, BRIAN T. WILSON, GREG KERN, LINDA CONLEY, ARNIE DILL, JONATHAN

REINHOLD, MOLLIE PARRY KING

Body

Switch gears; focus on Kia jobs

I'm proud of what our state and the Troup County officials did to get a major new economic generator in Georgia, especially in the face of recent negative business news ("Education takes a back seat to Kia," Editorial, March 28).

Instead of trying to woo us with your keen predictive powers of how we gave away too much, or how education will suffer, or any other gloomy aspect of what everyone else views as exciting and positive economic news, The Atlanta Journal-Constitution should try this: Imagine a laid-off textile worker in Troup or some nearby county, struggling to feed his or her family. They are now being given some hope, some glimmer of sunrise on the horizon, the anticipation of receiving new skills. The best news of all is a chance to get a good-paying job with a good company, to restore their dignity and to give them and their families hope once again of a good future.

The last thing on that person's mind is how much Kia will save in taxes. This is the perspective from which you should report this good news. This cup is half full, not half empty.

SCOTT ALDERMAN, Valdosta

Cynthia McKinney: Responses to "McKinney hits Capitol officer at checkpoint," Page One, March 30

Congresswoman needs to live up to post

Let's assume the practice of the Capitol police is to give those they think are congressmen and <u>women</u> a pass on the security requirements.

Now how vitriolic would U.S. Rep. Cynthia McKinney (D-Ga.) be if a terrorist were to slip in with some sort of weapon and threaten the lives of her and her staff? She would rake the Capitol police over the coals for lax security.

READERS WRITE

The Capitol police officer was simply doing his job. McKinney's record on how she feels she is treated is indicative of a persecution complex. I have some advice to McKinney: Quit acting like the hired help, and you won't be treated like it.

BRIAN T. WILSON, Atlanta

Sense of reality truly lacking; it's a disgrace

I read, with no real surprise, about Cynthia McKinney's latest bout with her innate lack of grace. This woman has been walking around playing the victim, entitlement and race cards for so long that she has no sense of reality. Shame on the sheep who blindly follow and continue to vote for someone so devoid of common sense and common decency.

GREG KERN, Kennesaw

Pet stores wrong spot to purchase puppies

While I sympathize with Christie Baker, whose Wheaten Terrier pup was diagnosed with a parasitic illness, I was not surprised to read that the dog had come from Kansas, as that state is one of the largest "puppy-millers" ("State orders 6 stores to stop selling dogs after parasite found," Metro, March 29). *Female* dogs are bred more often than is good for them in horrid conditions. They live in trailers, in unclean, stacked cages, without proper heat and air conditioning.

Believe me, there are lots of "really cute" puppies and dogs waiting for a good home at your local animal shelter and from rescue groups. The Humane Society has a Web site, www.StopPuppyMills.com. Anyone contemplating buying a dog at a pet store may want to visit this site first. I hope that would make them reconsider buying a puppy from a pet store. It's the only way to eliminate the cruelty of puppy mills.

LINDA CONLEY, Tyrone

Minimum-wage raise would take out jobs

If, in Richard Ray's economic Neverland, raising the minimum wage to \$7.25 cuts poverty but not jobs, wouldn't a \$37.15 minimum wage reduce poverty much more ("Minimum wage increase overdue," @issue, March 30)? Ray is ignorant of the Law of Demand --- when the price of something rises, demand decreases.

A comprehensive survey of minimum wage studies found that a 10 percent boost in the minimum wage would cut employment of young workers by 1 percent to 2 percent.

An analysis of 1996-97 minimum wage increases showed that income was merely redistributed among the poor, giving increases to some and putting others out of work.

ARNIE DILL, Atlanta

<u>Hamas</u>' true intent is consistently ignored

Margaret Coker's assertion that Palestinian Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh refuses to give up armed resistance until Israel withdraws from the West Bank and Gaza is flat-out untrue ("Israel's ruling party optimistic on Coalition," News, March 30). *Hamas* has been very clear that its goal is the total elimination of Israel and the establishment of an Islamic state "from the Sea to the River."

Only days ago did Reuters report that <u>Hamas</u>' newly approved minister of information, Youssef Rizka, told a cheering crowd, "The land of Palestine is ours and not for the Jews."

JONATHAN REINHOLD, Atlanta

National ID on target

READERS WRITE

Jim Tharpe's article "Fake IDs could frustrate law to curb illegals" (Page One, March 30) makes a very good case for a national ID card. Surely, American ingenuity could come up with one that could not be faked.

I entered this country legally in 1946 and became a naturalized citizen in 1956. I had no trouble proving that my entry was legitimate, and I would have absolutely no problem applying for a national ID card and carrying it proudly.

MOLLIE PARRY KING, Athens

Graphic

Photo: MIKKI K. HARRIS / StaffSocial Security cards are among the forms of bogus identification cards that U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers often seize.

Photo: LOUIE FAVORITE / StaffA sign in front of Roger's Bar-B-Que restaurant in West Point displays positive hopes for the community after a Kia plant deal was sealed to bring about 4,500 plant and supplier jobs to the area.

Load-Date: March 31, 2006



US dials back the volume on 'democracy'

Christian Science Monitor March 8, 2006, Wednesday

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Section: USA; Pg. 2 Length: 990 words

Byline: Howard LaFranchi Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

Dateline: WASHINGTON

Highlight: Bush's public pronouncements on Islamic democratization take on a softer tone, as his recent trip to

Pakistan showed.

Body

President Bush has begun to soften his tone on the urgency of democratizing Muslim countries, lately choosing more cautious words that some experts say are a better match with his administration's modest political goals for countries ranging from Morocco to Pakistan.

The change so far is subtle. But the rise to power of <u>Hamas</u>, the radical Islamist group, through US-backed elections in the Palestinian territories and the difficulty of implanting democratic governance in Iraq are prompting Mr. Bush to soft-pedal his pronouncements.

The cautious approach is likely to continue at least until the administration sorts out how to respond to the new realities, experts say - leaving the Middle East peace process and other pressing regional matters hanging in the balance.

"A debate is raging within the administration. They are taking a second look at the entire process of exerting pressure on authoritarian rulers in the Middle East," says Fawaz Gerges, a foreign policy expert at Sarah Lawrence College in Bronxville, N.Y. "There is no certainty over what to do, but we are hearing a rhetoric that is less intensive and more nuanced than just a few weeks ago."

What some observers call the administration's "crusade for dramatic change" is being supplanted by more tempered language, seen in officials' references to long-term goals of democracy's bloom and in initiatives that promote reforms without upsetting stability in the Muslim world.

Moderation from Bush and Rice

The adjustment was evident last weekend in Pakistan, where Bush spoke merely of a "hope" for democracy. He also skirted pro-democracy opposition leaders that some reform advocates had encouraged him to meet.

It was also on display when Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice traveled recently to Egypt. There, she referred to certain "setbacks" to political openness in Egypt, but did not directly call President Hosni Mubarak's government on the carpet.

US dials back the volume on 'democracy'

"Middle East rulers are delighted at the prospect of a less demanding stance from the American government," says Mr. Gerges, noting that Secretary Rice did not publicly upbraid the Egyptian government for putting off local elections for two years.

Some rulers in the Islamic world may be breathing sighs of relief, but experts say that what may be happening with US government circles is a dovetailing of rhetoric and action.

"The policy of the Bush administration concerning democracy-building always proceeded along two tracks, with rhetoric that was somewhat far-reaching accompanied by the second level of actual diplomatic contacts with Arab countries, which have been very cautious," says Marina Ottaway, a democratization expert at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Washington.

Citing the Middle East Partnership Initiative - Bush's 2002 program that focuses on areas such as education, <u>women</u>'s rights, entrepreneurship, and democracy-building - she notes that such initiatives will not "shake the boat in any country very much."

As for administration rhetoric, the most noticeable change is that concerning Iraq, says Ms. Ottaway. "Remember, it was once that we were going to turn it into a democracy, but when was the last time we heard that?" She adds, "Now the focus is on when their military is in a position to take over for the US military. That's where we see the most dramatic change in rhetoric."

The question of rhetoric is crucial, says Ottaway, because it is a factor in the "difficult situation" the US now finds itself in across the region. Its "exaggerated" words left the US in a bind between those who feared America was going to impose too much - even by force, as in Iraq - and those democrats who now feel disappointed to "find they are living with the same regime," she says.

Not forgotten: the word 'crusade'

Democratic change in the Middle East has been slowed by the close association of American efforts with Bush ideology, say some democracy-building specialists who work in the region.

"People now see this as an American crusade, with all the unfortunate connotations that word has in the Muslim world," says Raymond Shonholtz, president of Partners for Democratic Change, a San Francisco-based organization that works with groups worldwide for better governance.

As a result, he says, and especially in the Middle East, American efforts are now saddled with "a very political orientation that is not terribly advantageous to the concrete development of democracy."

While acknowledging the US has "no easy answers," Mr. Shonholtz says it should adopt a long-term vision of political change - and employ "less strident" rhetoric reflecting that position. He cites the political transformation of Sinn Fein in Northern Ireland as an example that might be looked to as the US deals with the rise of <u>Hamas</u>.

In a revised Bush administration approach to democratization in Muslim nations, an essential element must be a better understanding of Islamist movements and a willingness to work more with the moderates among them, experts say.

"We need to talk more to all these Islamists who are not the violent extremists," says Ottaway. Islamist moderates have been "in the ascendency" in many countries, she says, but a botched US approach to the <u>Hamas</u> puzzle could set back reformists and stoke the fires of Islamist hardliners for years.

The answer is not to pull the rug out from under democratization in light of unexpected turns, says Sarah Lawrence's Mr. Gerges, but rather to press ahead on commitment to long-term change.

"Initially we are going to see the Islamists make some major gains - from Jordan to Morocco and Algeria and elsewhere - but they will do less well in elections down the road once Muslim voters see them in these offices," he

US dials back the volume on 'democracy'

says. "The only way to deflate the aura of the Islamists is to show the populations what abilities they have, and that is the process the US must stick by, even though it will take awhile."

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Load-Date: March 7, 2006



The Gazette (Montreal)
February 16, 2006 Thursday
Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A2

Length: 609 words **Byline:** The Gazette

Body

Abuse photos reignite Abu Ghraib scandal

New images showing Iraqis abused by U.S. guards at Abu Ghraib prison three years ago threatened yesterday to inflame public anger already running high over footage of British soldiers beating youths in southern Iraq. Images of naked prisoners, some bloodied and lying on the floor, were taken about the same time as earlier photos that triggered worldwide outrage and led to trials and prison sentences for several lower-ranking U.S. soldiers. Details, Page A16

Hamas to name cabinet

<u>Hamas</u> officials said yesterday the Islamic militant group would appoint a cabinet in early March - a timetable likely to benefit hawkish parties running in Israeli elections later that month. Details, Page A19

Net pharmacies rapped

Internet pharmacies are selling off Canada's prescription drug supply to U.S. consumers, and in so doing are reducing our access to necessary medicines, according to a new report released yesterday by the Fraser Institute. Details, Page A12

Harris: Cop 100% wrong

A police inspector who described the Mike Harris government as unconcerned about the welfare of natives was "100-per-cent" wrong about how the province viewed the Ipperwash crisis, the former Ontario premier testified yesterday. Details, Page A13

Accused rails about jail

Francois Pepin, charged with first-degree murder in the killing of Laval police officer Valerie Gignac in December, turned his court hearing into a spectacle yesterday by ranting about the "unlivable" conditions he's enduring in jail. Details, Page A5

Calcium fails bone test

Background: Osteoporosis touches an estimated 10 million North Americans, making their bones prone to break.

New: A huge study of calcium and Vitamin D supplements for older <u>women</u> shows they offer only limited protection against broken bones.

Next: Many experts say they still stand behind guidelines recommending the supplements. Details, Page A18

Federalism 101 for Iraqis

Ten influential Iraqis - including lawyers, politicians and a judge - are in Canada to learn how this country runs its federation. Their first stop was Montreal, where they were told about federal-provincial relations and Canadian multiculturalism. Details, Page A7

business

Companies stashing cash

Canadian corporations are sitting on a record pile of cash, and what they do with the surplus could have sweeping implications for the overall economy as well as for individual firms, RBC said in a report yesterday. Details, Page B5

sports

Bertuzzi sued again

Former NHLer Steve Moore has filed another lawsuit against the Todd Bertuzzi, placing a new legal hurdle in front of the Vancouver Canucks star while adding to Team Canada's distractions at the Winter Olympics. Details, Page C5

Boxer Bute aims high

It's going to be a pivotal year for unbeaten Lucian Bute - four fights in 2006, after which he hopes to be the top-ranked

super-middleweight and challenge for

the 168-pound crown. Details, Page C8

arts&life

Terra firma for Islands

They started out as the Unicorns, but

eventually found their musical footing as Islands. "I'm finally in my element now," says Nick Diamonds, who has soldiered in both bands with musical partner J'aime Tambeur. Details, Page D1

Juno nods predictable

Nickelback is back on top of the Canadian music scene after earning six Juno Award nominations yesterday, the most for any band. Crooner Michael Buble and jazz artist Diana Krall each scored five. Details, Page D1

Lura rooted in Verde

In her show at Kola Note on Saturday, Lura will share her gentle, easy-going version of Cape Verdean music, rooted in her homeland but woven with strands of African roots, Latin groove and contemporary pop. Details, Page D3

Graphic

Photo: Abuse photos reignite Abu Ghraib scandal

Load-Date: February 16, 2006



<u>Palestinian youth frustrated by Arafat's old guard Anger is stirred up by</u> privilege, reports Patrick Bishop in Gaza

The Daily Telegraph (LONDON)

January 17, 2006 Tuesday

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Section: NEWS; International; Pg. 14

Length: 588 words

Byline: Patrick Bishop

Body

THE banner stretched over the rubbish-strewn street boasts of "41 years of democracy and struggle". It gets a grim laugh from many who pass beneath it.

This is the campaigning slogan of Fatah, the movement that dominates Palestinian life.

To those whose interests it is supposed to represent it seems far from democratic. Rather, it is a pyramid of privilege. As for struggle, the only fighting is between rival factions scrapping over the spoils of power.

Fatah has fallen a long way since the days when it and its leader, Yasser Arafat, enjoyed the support of most Palestinians. "I'm 34 now," said Kamal Abu Shabab who works for an international aid organisation in the Gaza Strip. "When I was 13 or 14, when Abu Ammar [Arafat] was talking on the radio I believed him. Since he's gone the whole thing has fallen apart. They should have achieved something by now."

The lack of success is as much Arafat's fault as anyone's, but his death 14 months ago has put him beyond criticism. People's anger falls on Mahmoud Abbas, his successor, regarded by Palestinians and Israelis alike as hopelessly feeble and inept.

A year after he was elected as president of the Palestinian Authority, the West Bank and Gaza remain as poor as ever. In Gaza, where Israel finally pulled out four months ago, Mr Abbas has proved incapable of imposing his will. The result has been a nightmare of insecurity for ordinary people as competing Fatah factions and rival clans fight, kidnap and extort each other without interference from the police. Indeed the fragmented 70,000-strong security forces are a major contributor to the violence.

"When the Israelis were here we vented our hatred on them," said Jamal, a hotel worker. "Now we turn it on each other."

Mr Abbas promised to reform the underperforming PA and root out nepotism and corruption. He has been unable to prevent Fatah from imploding as largely self-interested factions square off.

After returning from Tunis 11 years ago, Arafat shared power and privileges with those who went into exile with him. This old guard have done little to accommodate younger activists who fought the Israelis in the first and second intifadas.

Palestinian youth frustrated by Arafat's old guard Anger is stirred up by privilege, reports Patrick Bishop in Gaza

In the elections for the Palestinian parliament set for Jan 25, old-timers like Nabil Shaath, the information minister, are comfortably placed at the top of the Fatah list. This has enraged members of the young guard like Nasser Goma, leader of the al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigade in Nablus. "[The old guard] have occupied the guaranteed seats," he said. "They have used their control of the list to marginalise us. The mouse who calls himself Shaath has reserved the number four place for himself."

A mass of green bunting and banners floats over Gaza, often adorned with pictures of <u>Hamas</u> "martyrs." The organisation claims the credit for driving the Israelis out.

But it is in political mode, promising "change and reform". Since entering local politics <u>Hamas</u> has built up a reputation for probity and sincerity. Many of its candidates are well-educated. At least six are <u>women</u>. The party has the discipline and coherence that Fatah lacks. Polls predict that it could attract a third of the votes. A small band of Palestinian optimists hopes that an influx of vigorous newcomers may scare the old guard into being persuaded that the PA must reform or collapse.

But they had what was billed as their chance after Mr Abbas's election last year and failed to take it. Mr Abbas himself seems to have had enough. He has said he will serve his remaining three years, then retire.

Load-Date: January 17, 2006



Incoming PM says he won't allow U.S. to be involved in Arctic issues

The Guardian (Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island)

January 27, 2006 Friday

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Section: CANADA; Pg. A8

Length: 614 words

Byline: CP

Body

Stephen Harper moved quickly to dispel the notion he'll be too cozy with the United States, using his first news conference as prime minister-designate to warn the Americans to butt out of Canada's Arctic affairs.

Harper raised the issue without prompting Thursday in an indication of his eagerness to stake his political turf.

He wasn't asked about comments from U.S. Ambassador David Wilkins this week but offered a response anyway.

Wilkins warned that the waters around Canada's Arctic are international territory and questioned Harper's plan to place military icebreakers there.

Harper shrugged off the ambassador's complaint.

"It is the Canadian people we get our mandate from, not the ambassador of the United States," he said.

"I was very clear about this in the election campaign: the United States defends its sovereignty. The Canadian government will defend our sovereignty."

Moments before asserting his independence from U.S. foreign policy, Harper described a friendly phone call he received from President George W. Bush earlier this week.

International issues figured prominently in Harper's 15-minute appearance in the foyer of the Commons, his first question-and- answer session since winning Monday's election. He also said he received congratulatory calls from the leaders of Mexico, Britain and Australia.

Harper hinted strongly that Canada will not recognize the new militant Palestinian *Hamas* government.

Harper did not commit to an official position but pointed out that Canada supports Israel's right to exist - which *Hamas* militants do not.

He added: "For a nation to be truly democratic, that nation must renounce terrorism."

Harper said he will outline Canada's official position closer to Feb. 6, the date his Conservative government gets sworn in.

In the meantime, he has already started transition briefings with senior bureaucrats and the head of the Bank of Canada. He will meet in the coming days with the RCMP commissioner and military's chief of defence staff.

Incoming PM says he won't allow U.S. to be involved in Arctic issues

Harper discussed the cabinet he intends to form and hinted it would include as many <u>women</u> and central Canadians as possible.

"The cabinet will reflect the unity and diversity of the country," he said more than once.

Few <u>women</u> - just 14 in all - were elected under the Conservative banner, and the party is under-represented in the country's largest urban areas and Quebec.

Once a cabinet is named, Harper will set about producing a policy- setting throne speech for the opening of Parliament several weeks later.

He said he will consult opposition parties and listen to their suggestions for the speech. But he said Canadians expect him to act on his own key election promises: cutting the GST, a new government- ethics bill, a crackdown on crime, a \$1,200 child-care subsidy and a health care wait-times guarantee.

His ethics bill will be perhaps the most sweeping of its kind ever introduced in Canada. The proposed Federal Accountability Act will rewrite the rules for party fundraising, lobbying, and access to information.

It was suggested to Harper that all those new accountability measures would become a political millstone for him.

Would cabinet ministers be forced to resign every time the new access-to-information law unearthed details of a blunder or an ethical lapse?

He said his tolerance for ministerial miscues would be middle-of- the-road between recent Conservative and Liberal governments.

"In that (Mulroney) government I thought the trigger was often pulled too quickly," he said.

"But in this past (Liberal) government we saw what happened when nobody was ever forced to leave. The problems just got bigger and bigger as time went on.

"So we want to find some kind of a reasonable medium."

Graphic

Prime Minister-designate Stephen Harper smiles during a news conference on Parliament Hill in Ottawa Thursday.

Load-Date: January 27, 2006



The Gazette (Montreal)
February 23, 2006 Thursday
Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A2

Length: 617 words **Byline:** The Gazette

Body

Plot twists, characters in Ugandan campaign

Ugandans joke that the campaign leading up to their first multiparty election in 25 years has had all the plot twists and heated emotions of the melodramatic Nigerian soap operas that are beloved across Africa. Ex-lovers and former friends are among the colourful characters vying for power in presidential and parliamentary elections today. Details, Page A20

Serbia: We have Mladic

Serb security officials insist that talks are under way for the surrender of top war crimes suspect General Ratko Mladic, despite denials by the government and the chief United Nations war crimes prosecutor. Details, Page A16

Iran vows to fund *Hamas*

A senior Iranian official pledged yesterday to provide financial support to a <u>Hamas</u>-controlled Palestinian Authority, already in budgetary difficulties and facing further cuts in aid. Israel said it will try all legal means to block the aid. Details, Page A16

No legal aid for ex-judge

A former Immigration and Refugee Board judge has lost his bid to have the federal government fund his legal bills as he battles criminal charges stemming from a bribery scandal. Yves Bourbonnais, 63, is scheduled to go on trial Sept. 12 on 97 counts. Details, Page A5

Casino takes another hit

The Point St. Charles community clinic adds its voice to the chorus objecting to a Loto-Quebec plan to move the Montreal Casino to the Peel Basin from its site on Ile Notre Dame. The clinic says the Point has enough to worry about without a potential rise in problem gambling.

Details, Page A6

Memo outs CIA flights

Internal government briefing notes show the number of Canadian landings by planes tied to the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency far exceeds previously known figures and also reveal senior intelligence officials from six federal agencies, including Canada's spy agency, met in late November to discuss the flights. Details, Page A11

Murder suspects women

Mexican police believe two Canadian <u>women</u> were responsible for the deaths of a Toronto couple who were visiting a resort in Cancun, Mexico, to attend their daughter's wedding. Details, Page A12

Business

Rona's profit up 26.8%

Acquisitions and newly-built stores helped home-renovation retailer Rona Inc. ring up a 26.1-per-cent jump in profit during the fourth quarter and 26.8 per cent for the year. Details, Page B1

Record home resales

Montreal's resale housing market has scored its best year on record, with 36,571 transactions, beating the previous record set in 2002. Still, there are signs the market is softening. Details, Page B3

Sports

Habs go with Huet, Danis

Montreal Canadiens general manager/coach Bob Gainey says he'll stick with Cristobal Huet and Yann Danis in goal as Jose Theodore recovers from his broken heel. Details, Page C5

From war to basketball

Basketball player Rastko Popovic has come a long way to play at Concordia, from war-torn Sarajevo, which he left as a young child after witnessing bombings and shootings. Details, Page C5

Arts & Life

Finding a big, new sound

With its new album, The Life Pursuit, Belle and Sebastian has escaped its inner turmoil, shed the shackles of its earlier sound and is feeling freer than ever, according to Sarah Martin, the septet's lone <u>female</u> member. Details, Page D1

Blind actors in spotlight

Martin Duckworth's NFB documentary Acting Blind follows a cast of visually impaired Montrealers as they prepare to perform a play at Place des Arts. The film screens during this week's Rendez-vous du cinema quebecois. Details, Page D3

Follow-Ups

Missile defence not cheap: Canada better have deep pockets if it gets involved in the U.S. missile defence system, with costs rising by billions, warns a former U.S. assistant secretary of defence. Page A13

Graphic

Photo: (Plot twists, characters in Ugandan campaign)

Load-Date: February 23, 2006



After Sharon: In Israel: 'Fighting father' took unilateral steps to peace

The Vancouver Sun (British Columbia)

January 6, 2006 Friday

FINAL C Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A8

Length: 566 words

Byline: Anton La Guardia, Daily Telegraph

Dateline: LONDON

Body

LONDON -- The huge stroke that felled Ariel Sharon has left Israel orphaned for the second time in a decade and wondering what might have been.

Early this morning Sharon's vital signs, including cranial pressure, were steady, following emergency brain surgery, and his doctors said he would remain in a medically induced coma for at least two more days.

It was in 1995 that Yitzhak Rabin -- like Sharon, a hawkish general who became a political dove or, at least, a pragmatist -- was killed by a Jewish extremist.

Sharon is the last of Israel's "fighting fathers" -- the larger-than-life soldiers who fought to create Israel in 1948 and then built the Jewish state.

He said he understood the need for peace better than anyone. Nobody knows what he would have done had he remained healthy and won the election due in March. But many Israelis trusted him to lead them to some kind of peace with the Palestinians.

Wounded repeatedly in fighting against the British-led Arab Legion in 1948, Sharon rose through the ranks to become a ruthless commander of counter-insurgency operations.

As general, he spearheaded the victory against Egypt during the 1967 Six Day War, and helped save the day against the Egyptian and Syrian onslaught in 1973.

As defence minister, however, he presided over the tragedy of the 1982 invasion of Lebanon and was tainted by the blood of Palestinians massacred by his Lebanese Christian allies in the Sabra and Chatila refugee camps in Beirut.

He was disgraced by a subsequent inquiry, but his friend, Uri Dan, predicted: "Those who did not want Sharon as defence minister will see him as prime minister." Nearly two decades later, this forecast came true.

Sharon became Likud leader in 1999 after years on the right of Israeli politics, earning the nickname of "the Bulldozer" for his sponsorship of Jewish settlements.

After Sharon: In Israel: 'Fighting father' took unilateral steps to peace

In September 2000, he made a provocative visit to al-Aqsa mosque compound in Jerusalem, regarded by Jews as the site of their ancient temple. Having thus ignited the Palestinian uprising, he was propelled to power five months later on a promise to crush the revolt. At first, he resorted to ever more military force -- ordering the assassination of suspected militants, cutting off traffic between Palestinian cities, besieging Yasser Arafat's headquarters, reinvading the autonomous cities of the West Bank and erecting a long security barrier there.

But two years into his premiership, Sharon began a remarkable transformation. He floated the idea of a Palestinian state, then spoke of "painful compromises" for peace. In early 2004, he unveiled his Gaza "disengagement" plan.

Last September, the Israeli army evacuated all 8,000 settlers from the Gaza Strip, and the old warrior was hailed as a man of peace.

Sharon then performed his own swift act of disengagement from Likud, abandoning it to launch the new Kadima party.

Drawing major figures from both left and right, and soaring in opinion polls, Sharon was set to succeed where many others had failed -- creating a centre party to break the mould of Labour and Likud.

Kadima may win the sympathy vote, but many factors could sway Israelis back to the right.

Palestinian militants have declared the end of their ceasefire, Gaza is descending into chaos and <u>Hamas</u> is poised to do well in this month's Palestinian polls. Not for the first time, the deciding vote in Israeli politics may be cast by the Palestinians.

Graphic

Colour Photo: Vadim Ghirda, AFP, Getty Images files; Hardline Ariel Sharon became a pragmatist as prime minister.; Colour

Photo: Hatem Moussa, Associated Press files; Palestinian <u>women</u> listen to speeches during <u>Hamas</u> campaign rally Thursday in Gaza City. Elections in the West Bank and Gaza are set for Jan. 25.

Load-Date: January 6, 2006



'Gaza is a jail. Nobody is allowed to leave. We are all starving now'; FORGOTTEN PEOPLE

The Independent (London)
September 8, 2006 Friday
Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 2

Length: 1372 words

Byline: By Patrick Cockburn in Gaza

Body

Gaza is dying. The Israeli siege of the Palestinian enclave is so tight that its people are on the edge of starvation. Here on the shores of the Mediterranean a great tragedy is taking place that is being ignored because the world's attention has been diverted by wars in Lebanon and Iraq.

A whole society is being destroyed. There are 1.5 million Palestinians imprisoned in the most heavily populated area in the world. Israel has stopped all trade. It has even forbidden fishermen to go far from the shore so they wade into the surf to try vainly to catch fish with hand-thrown nets.

Many people are being killed by Israeli incursions that occur every day by land and air. A total of 262 people have been killed and 1,200 wounded, of whom 60 had arms or legs amputated, since 25 June, says Dr Juma al-Saqa, the director of the al-Shifa Hospital in Gaza City which is fast running out of medicine. Of these, 64 were children and 26 **women**. This bloody conflict in Gaza has so far received only a fraction of the attention given by the international media to the war in Lebanon.

It was on 25 June that the Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit was taken captive and two other soldiers were killed by Palestinian militants who used a tunnel to get out of the Gaza Strip. In the aftermath of this, writes Gideon Levy in the daily Haaretz, the Israeli army "has been rampaging through Gaza - there's no other word to describe it -killing and demolishing, bombing and shelling, indiscriminately". Gaza has essentially been reoccupied since Israeli troops and tanks come and go at will. In the northern district of Shajhayeh they took over several houses last week and stayed five days. By the time they withdrew, 22 Palestinians had been killed, three houses were destroyed and groves of olive, citrus and almond trees had been bulldozed.

Fuad al-Tuba, the 61-year-old farmer who owned a farm here, said: "They even destroyed 22 of my beehives and killed four sheep." He pointed sadly to a field, its brown sandy earth churned up by tracks of bulldozers, where the stumps of trees and broken branches with wilting leaves lay in heaps. Near by a yellow car was standing on its nose in the middle of a heap of concrete blocks that had once been a small house.

His son Baher al-Tuba described how for five days Israeli soldiers confined him and his relatives to one room in his house where they survived by drinking water from a fish pond. "Snipers took up positions in the windows and shot at anybody who came near," he said. "They killed one of my neighbours called Fathi Abu Gumbuz who was 56 years old and just went out to get water."

Sometimes the Israeli army gives a warning before a house is destroyed. The sound that Palestinians most dread is an unknown voice on their cell phone saying they have half an hour to leave their home before it is hit by bombs or missiles. There is no appeal.

But it is not the Israeli incursions alone that are destroying Gaza and its people. In the understated prose of a World Bank report published last month, the West Bank and Gaza face "a year of unprecedented economic recession. Real incomes may contract by at least a third in 2006 and poverty to affect close to two thirds of the population." Poverty in this case means a per capita income of under \$2 (pounds 1.06) a day.

There are signs of desperation everywhere. Crime is increasing. People do anything to feed their families. Israeli troops entered the Gaza industrial zone to search for tunnels and kicked out the Palestinian police. When the Israelis withdrew they were replaced not by the police but by looters. On one day this week there were three donkey carts removing twisted scrap metal from the remains of factories that once employed thousands.

"It is the worst year for us since 1948 [when Palestinian refugees first poured into Gaza]," says Dr Maged Abu-Ramadan, a former ophthalmologist who is mayor of Gaza City. "Gaza is a jail. Neither people nor goods are allowed to leave it. People are already starving. They try to live on bread and falafel and a few tomatoes and cucumbers they grow themselves."

The few ways that Gazans had of making money have disappeared. Dr Abu-Ramadan says the Israelis "have destroyed 70 per cent of our orange groves in order to create security zones." Carnations and strawberries, two of Gaza's main exports, were thrown away or left to rot. An Israeli air strike destroyed the electric power station so 55 per cent of power was lost. Electricity supply is now becoming almost as intermittent as in Baghdad.

The Israeli assault over the past two months struck a society already hit by the withdrawal of EU subsidies after the election of <u>Hamas</u> as the Palestinian government in March. Israel is withholding taxes owed on goods entering Gaza. Under US pressure, Arab banks abroad will not transfer funds to the government.

Two thirds of people are unemployed and the remaining third who mostly work for the state are not being paid. Gaza is now by far the poorest region on the Mediterranean. Per capita annual income is \$700, compared with \$20,000 in Israel. Conditions are much worse than in Lebanon where Hizbollah liberally compensates war victims for loss of their houses. If Gaza did not have enough troubles this week there were protest strikes and marches by unpaid soldiers, police and security men. These were organised by Fatah, the movement of the Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, also known as Abu Mazen, which lost the election to *Hamas* in January. His supporters marched through the streets waving their Kalashnikovs in the air. "Abu Mazen you are brave," they shouted. "Save us from this disaster." Sour-looking *Hamas* gunmen kept a low profile during the demonstration but the two sides are not far from fighting it out in the streets.

The Israeli siege and the European boycott are a collective punishment of everybody in Gaza. The gunmen are unlikely to be deterred. In abed in Shifa Hospital was a sturdy young man called Ala Hejairi with wounds to his neck, legs, chest and stomach. "I was laying an anti-tank mine last week in Shajhayeh when I was hit by fire from an Israeli drone," he said. "I will return to the resistance when I am better. Why should I worry? If I die I will die a martyr and go to paradise."

His father, Adel, said he was proud of what his son had done adding that three of his nephews were already martyrs. He supported the <u>Hamas</u> government: "Arab and Western countries want to destroy this government because it is the government of the resistance."

'Gaza is a jail. Nobody is allowed to leave. We are all starving now' FORGOTTEN PEOPLE

Asthe economy collapses there will be many more young men in Gaza willing to take Ala Hejairi's place. Untrained and ill-armed most will be killed. But the destruction of Gaza, now under way, will ensure that no peace is possible in the Middle East for generations to come.

The deadly toll

After the kidnap of Cpl Gilad Shalit by Palestinians on 25 June, Israel launched a massive offensive and blockade of Gaza under the operation name Summer Rains.

The Gaza Strip's 1.3 million inhabitants, 33 per cent of whom live in refugee camps, have been under attack for 74 days.

More than 260 Palestinians, including 64 children and 26 <u>women</u>, have been killed since 25 June. One Israeli soldier has been killed and 26 have been wounded.

1,200 Palestinians have been injured, including up to 60 amputations. A third of victims brought to hospital are children.

Israeli warplanes have launched more than 250 raids on Gaza, hitting the two power stations and the foreign and Information ministries.

At least 120 Palestinian structures including houses, workshops and greenhouses have been destroyed and 160 damaged by the Israelis.

The UN has criticised Israel's bombing, which has caused an estimated \$1.8bn in damage to the electricity grid and left more than a million people without regular access to clean drinking water.

The Israeli human rights group B'Tselem says 76 Palestinians, including 19 children, were killed by Israeli forces in August alone. Evidence shows at least 53 per cent were not participating in hostilities.

In the latest outbreak of violence, three Palestinians were killed yesterday when Israeli troops raided a West Bank town in search of a wanted militant. Two of those killed were unarmed, according to witnesses.

Graphic

Relatives mourn Ahmed Ashoor, 30, killed in an Israeli air strike this week ABID KATIB' Israeli army troops have in effect reoccupied Gaza since Corporal Gilad Shalit was taken hostage by Palestinian militants in June AP

Load-Date: September 8, 2006



Towards war

The Times (London)
July 17, 2006, Monday

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Section: OVERSEAS NEWS; Pg. 6

Length: 248 words

Body

JUNE 25 Militants from <u>Hamas</u>, Popular Resistance Committees and Jish al-Islam use a tunnel to cross the border between Gaza and Israel. Two Israeli soldiers are killed in the ambush, four injured and one, Corporal Gilad Shalit, kidnapped.

JUNE 28 Israel launches airstrikes against Gaza, with its troops entering southern Gaza for the first time since the withdrawal ten months before.

JULY 12 Hezbollah launches rockets and mortars on Israeli towns along the Lebanese border. A force then moves into Israel, attacking two armoured Humvees near the Israeli village of Zar'it. Three Israeli soldiers are killed, two taken hostage Israel retaliates with airstrikes, destroying bridges and civilian infrastructure in southern Lebanon. Lebanese TV channel al-Manar reports 55 civilians killed.

JULY 13 Israeli jets bomb Lebanon's international airport near Beirut, forcing its closure. Hezbollah bombards Israeli towns Nahariya and Safed, killing two and wounding 29.

JULY 14 Two Israeli civilians killed in rocket attacks in Meron. Hezbollah leader Sheikh Nasrallah declares "open war"

JULY 15 Three Patriot missile defence batteries deployed by in Haifa. At least 15 Lebanese villagers, including nine **women** and children, are killed by an Israeli airstrike on vehicles fleeing a village in southern Lebanon.

JULY 16 Eight people are killed after Hezbollah fire rockets at Haifa; an Israeli airstrike in response kills 23 Lebanese.

In five days of fighting, 148 Lebanese and 24 Israelis have been killed

Load-Date: July 17, 2006



'Gaza is a jail. Nobody is allowed to leave. We are all starving now'; FORGOTTEN PEOPLE

The Independent (London)
September 8, 2006 Friday
Fourth Edition

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Section: NEWS / FORGOTTEN PEOPLE; Pg. 2

Length: 1372 words

Byline: Patrick Cockburn in Gaza

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Sometimes the Israeli army gives a warning before a house is destroyed. The sound that Palestinians most dread is an unknown voice on their cell phone saying they have half an hour to leave their home before it is hit by bombs or missiles. There is no appeal. But it is not the Israeli incursions alone that are destroying Gaza and its people. In the understated prose of a World Bank report published last month, the West Bank and Gaza face "a year of unprecedented economic recession. Real incomes may contract by at least a third in 2006 and poverty to affect close to two thirds of the population." Poverty in this case means a per capita income of under \$2 (£1.06) a day.

There are signs of desperation everywhere. Crime is increasing. People do anything to feed their families. Israeli troops entered the Gaza industrial zone to search for tunnels and kicked out the Palestinian police. When the Israelis withdrew they were replaced not by the police but by looters. On one day this week there were three donkey carts removing twisted scrap metal from the remains of factories that once employed thousands.

"It is the worst year for us since 1948 [when Palestinian refugees first poured into Gaza]," says Dr Maged Abu-Ramadan, a former ophthalmologist who is mayor of Gaza City. "Gaza is a jail. Neither people nor goods are allowed to leave it. People are already starving. They try to live on bread and falafel and a few tomatoes and cucumbers they grow themselves." The few ways that Gazans had of making money have disappeared. Dr Abu-Ramadan says the Israelis "have destroyed 70 per cent of our orange groves in order to create security zones." Carnations and strawberries, two of Gaza's main exports, were thrown away or left to rot. An Israeli air strike destroyed the electric power station so 55 per cent of power was lost. Electricity supply is now becoming almost as intermittent as in Baghdad.

The Israeli assault over the past two months struck a society already hit by the withdrawal of EU subsidies after the election of <u>Hamas</u> as the Palestinian government in March. Israel is withholding taxes owed on goods entering Gaza. Under US pressure, Arab banks abroad will not transfer funds to the government.

Two thirds of people are unemployed and the remaining third who mostly work for the state are not being paid. Gaza is now by far the poorest region on the Mediterranean. Per capita annual income is \$700, compared with \$20,000 in Israel. Conditions are much worse than in Lebanon where Hizbollah liberally compensates war victims for loss of their houses. If Gaza did not have enough troubles this week there were protest strikes and marches by unpaid soldiers, police and security men.

These were or-ganised by Fatah, the movement of the Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, also known as Abu Mazen, which lost the election to <u>Hamas</u> in January. His supporters marched through the streets waving their Kalashnikovs in the air. "Abu Mazen you are brave," they shouted. "Save us from this disaster." Sour-looking <u>Hamas</u> gunmen kept a low profile during the demonstration but the two sides are not far from fighting it out in the streets.

The Israeli siege and the European boycott are a collective punishment of everybody in Gaza. The gunmen are unlikely to be deterred. In a bed in Shifa Hospital was a sturdy young man called Ala Hejairi with wounds to his neck, legs, chest and stomach. "I was laying an anti-tank mine last week in Shajhayeh when I was hit by fire from an Israeli drone," he said. "I will return to the resistance when I am better. Why should I worry? If I die I will die a martyr and go to paradise."

His father, Adel, said he was proud of what his son had done adding that three of his nephews were already martyrs. He supported the <u>Hamas</u> government: "Arab and Western countries want to destroy this government because it is the government of the resistance."

As the economy collapses there will be many more young men in Gaza willing to take Ala Hejairi's place. Untrained and ill-armed most will be killed. But the destruction of Gaza, now under way, will ensure that no peace is possible in the Middle East for generations to come.

Page 3 of 3

'Gaza is a jail. Nobody is allowed to leave. We are all starving now' FORGOTTEN PEOPLE

The deadly toll

After the kidnap of Cpl Gilad Shalit by Palestinians on 25 June, Israel launched a massive offensive and blockade of Gaza under the operation name Summer Rains.

The Gaza Strip's 1.3 million inhabitants, 33 per cent of whom live in refugee camps, have been under attack for 74 days.

More than 260 Palestinians, including 64 children and 26 <u>women</u>, have been killed since 25 June. One Israeli soldier has been killed and 26 have been wounded.

1,200 Palestinians have been injured, including up to 60 amputations. A third of victims brought to hospital are children.

Israeli warplanes have launched more than 250 raids on Gaza, hitting the two power stations and the foreign and information ministries.

At least 120 Palestinian structures including houses, workshops and greenhouses have been destroyed and 160 damaged by the Israelis.

The UN has criticised Israel's bombing, which has caused an estimated \$1.8bn in damage to the electricity grid and left more than a million people without regular access to clean drinking water.

The Israeli human rights group B'Tselem says 76 Palestinians, including 19 children, were killed by Israeli forces in August alone. Evidence shows at least 53 per cent were not participating in hostilities.

In the latest outbreak of violence, three Palestinians were killed yesterday when Israeli troops raided a West Bank town in search of a wanted militant. Two of those killed were unarmed, according to witnesses.

Load-Date: September 27, 2006



Guardian Weekly: International news: Who really killed girl's family on Gaza beach?: Guardian investigation casts doubt on Israeli claim that army was not to blame for deadly explosion

Guardian Weekly

June 23, 2006 Friday

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*The*GuardianWeekly

Section: Pg. 13

Length: 1443 words

Byline: Chris McGreal in Beit Lahia, Gaza Strip

Body

Heart-rending pictures of 10-year-old Huda Ghalia running wildly along a Gaza beach, crying, "Father, father, father" and falling weeping beside his body turned her into an instant icon of the Palestinian struggle even before she fully grasped that much of her family was dead.

But the images of the distraught girl who lost her father, stepmother and five of her siblings as picnicking families fled a barrage of Israeli shells two weeks ago have become their own battleground.

Who and what killed the Ghalia family and badly injured a score of other people has been the subject of a bitter struggle for truth amid accusations that an Israeli military investigation clearing the army was a cover-up, that *Hamas* was really responsible and even that the pictures of Huda's grief were an act.

However, a Guardian investigation raises questions about the Israeli military probe that cleared the army of responsibility. Evidence from hospital records, doctors' testimony and witness accounts challenges the central assertion that the shelling had stopped by the time seven members of the Ghalia family were killed.

Evidence from the US group Human Rights Watch, which offered the first forensic questioning of the army's account, casts doubt on another key claim - that shrapnel taken from the wounded was not from the kind of artillery used to shell Gaza.

The pictures of Huda's traumatic hunt for her father garnered instant sympathy around the world and focused attention on Israel's tactic of firing thousands of shells into Gaza over recent weeks, killing more than 20 civilians, to deter Palestinian rocket attacks.

The Israeli prime minister, Ehud Olmert, initially apologised for the killings, but the military realised it was confronting a PR disaster. The army quickly convened a committee to investigate the deaths on the beach and almost as swiftly absolved itself of responsibility.

Guardian Weekly: International news: Who really killed girl's family on Gaza beach?: Guardian investigation casts doubt on Israeli claim that army was not to bl....

The committee acknowledged that the army fired six shells on and around Beit Lahia beach from artillery inside Israel. But it said that by coincidence a separate explosion - probably a mine planted by <u>Hamas</u> or a buried old shell - occurred in the same area at about the same time, killing the family.

The army admitted that one of the six shells was unaccounted for, but said it was "impossible", based on location and timings, for the sixth shell to have done the killing. The investigation also concluded that shrapnel taken from the wounded was not from artillery.

The military declared its version of events definitive. Others went further and saw a Palestinian conspiracy. An American pro-Israel pressure group, Camera, which seeks to influence media coverage, went so far as to suggest that the film of Huda Ghalia's trauma was faked: "Were the bodies moved, was the girl asked to re-enact her discovery for the camera, was the video staged?"

The army's account quickly came in for criticism, led by a former Pentagon battlefield analyst, Marc Garlasco, investigating for Human Rights Watch. "You have the crater size, the shrapnel, the types of injuries, their location on the bodies. That all points to a shell dropping from the sky, not explosives under the sand," he said. "I've been to hospital and seen the injuries. The doctors say they are primarily to the head and torso. That is consistent with a shell exploding above the ground, not a mine under it."

Mr Garlasco also produced shrap nel from the site, apparently marked as a 155mm shell used by the Israeli army that day.

The key part of the military's defence hinged on timings. It says it fired shells towards the beach between 4.30pm and 4.48pm, and that the artillery barrage stopped nine minutes before the explosion that killed the Ghalia family. The army concluded that the deadly explosion occurred between 4.57pm and 5.10pm, based on surveillance of the beach by a drone aircraft that shows people relaxing until just before 5pm and the arrival of an ambulance at 5.15pm.

Major General Meir Kalifi, who headed the investigation committee, said the nine-minute gap is too wide for Israel to have been responsible for the deaths. "I can without doubt say that no means used by the Israeli Defence Force during this time period caused the incident," he said.

However, the evidence suggests that the military has the timing of the explosion wrong, and that it occurred while the army was still shelling the beach. Palestinian officials also question the timing of video showing people relaxing on the beach just before 5pm if the Israeli army, by its own admission, was dropping shells close by.

Several of those who survived the explosion say it came shortly after two or three other blasts consistent with a pattern of shells falling on the beach.

Among the survivors was Hani Asania. When the shelling began, he grabbed his two young daughters and moved towards his car on the edge of the beach. The Ghalia family was on the sand nearby, waiting for a taxi.

"There was an explosion, maybe 500 metres away. Then there was a second, much closer, about two minutes later. People were running from the beach," said Mr Asania. "Maybe two minutes later there was a third shell. I could feel the pressure of the blast on my face, it was so strong. I saw pieces of people."

This sequence is backed by others, including Huda's brother, Eyham, 20. Annan Ghalia, Huda's uncle, called an ambulance. "We were sitting on the sand waiting for the taxis, the men on one side and the <u>women</u> on the other. The shell landed closer to the girls," he said. "I was screaming for people to help us. No one was coming. After about two minutes I called the ambulance."

The first ambulance took children to the Kamal Odwan hospital. Its registration book records that five children wounded in the blast were admitted at 5.05pm. The book contains entries before and after the casualties from the beach, all of whom are named. It shows no sign of having been tampered with. The hospital's computer records a

Guardian Weekly: International news: Who really killed girl's family on Gaza beach?: Guardian investigation casts doubt on Israeli claim that army was not to bl....

blood test taken from a victim at 5.12pm. Human Rights Watch said altering the records would require resetting the computer's clock.

The distance from the beach to the hospital is 6km. Even at speed, the drive through Beit Lahia's crowded back streets and rough roads would not take less than five minutes and would be slower with injured patients on board.

Dr Bassam al-Masri, who treated the first wounded at Kamal Odwan, said that allowing for a round trip of at least 10 minutes and time to load them, the ambulance would have left the hospital no later than 4.50pm - just two minutes after the Israelis say they stopped shelling.

Factoring in additional time for emergency calls and the ambulances to be dispatched, the timings undermine the military's claim that the killer explosion occurred after the shelling stopped.

Khaled Abu Sada, the first ambulance man to leave another Beid Lahia hospital, the Alwada, said he received a call from the emergency control room between 4.45pm and 4.50pm. "I went to look for a nurse to come with me," he said. "I left the hospital at 4.50pm and was at the beach by 5pm."

The Alwada's anaesthetist, Dr Ahmed Mouhana, was woken by a call from a fellow doctor calling him to the hospital. "I looked at the time. That's what you do when someone wakes you up. It was 4.55pm," he said. Dr Mouhana left for the hospital immediately. "It only takes 10 minutes from my house, so I was there by 5.10pm or 5.15pm at the latest. I went to reception and they had already done triage on the children."

If the hospital records and medical professionals are right, the emergency call from the beach could not have come in much later than 4.45pm, still during the Israeli shelling.

From the number of shells counted beforehand by the survivors, Mr Garlasco believes the killer shell was one that the army records as fired at 4.34pm.

Israel has suggested that the explosion was rigged by <u>Hamas</u> against possible army landings. Palestinian officials say that would be an effective strategy only if there were a series of mines or if <u>Hamas</u> knew exactly where the Israelis would land.

Mr Garlasco said the metal taken from the victims could be detritus thrown up by the explosion or shards from cars. He said shrapnel collected at the site of the explosion by Human Rights Watch and the Palestinian police was fresh and from artillery shells.

The former Pentagon analyst said that after examining a blood-encrusted piece of shrapnel given to him by the father of a 19-year-old man wounded in the beach explosion, he determined that it was a piece of fuse from an artillery shell. "The likelihood that the Ghalia family was killed by an explosive other than one of the shells fired by the Israeli army is remote," he said.

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Body

INTERNATIONAL A3-12

28 Die as Iraqi Forces Clash with Shiite Militia

At least 20 gunmen and 8 civilians were killed when the Iraqi Army battled fiercely for hours with members of a militia loyal to Moktada al-Sadr, the radical Shiite cleric, in the southern city of Diwaniya, Iraqi officials said. The violence amounted to the most brazen clashes in recent memory between Iraqi government forces and Mr. Sadr's militia. A1

Mexican Court Affirms Election

A tribunal in Mexico ruled unanimously that the leftist presidential candidate, Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, had failed to prove that irregularities in many of the polling places stemmed from fraud, or that tabulation errors affected him more than the winner, Felipe Calderon. A10

Lebanon Asserts Border Control

The prime minister of Lebanon, Fouad Siniora, said in an interview that his country could control its border with Syria without the assistance of international troops and had already confiscated illegal arms in southern Lebanon. A6

Palestinian Criticizes His Own

In an unusual instance of self-criticism for <u>Hamas</u>, Ghazi Hamad, a former <u>Hamas</u> newspaper editor and the spokesman for the current <u>Hamas</u> government, has deplored the collapse of Gazan life into chaos in an article published in Al Ayyam, the Palestinian newspaper. A6

Afghan Suicide Bomber Kills 17

In one of the bloodiest attacks this year, a suicide bomber killed 17 civilians and wounded 47, including 15 children in Helmand Province, Afghan officials said. A12

Iraqis Refuse Deployment Order

A group of Iraqi soldiers refused to go to Baghdad to participate in the effort to restore order in the capital, said Brig. Gen. Dana Pittard, a senior American military officer who oversees the American-led effort to train Iraq's security forces. A12

Explosion in Turkey Kills 3

A blast in the center of Antalya, a popular resort town on Turkey's Mediterranean coast, killed three people and wounded 20, just hours after three explosions in another popular tourist destination wounded 21 people, including 10 Britons. A10

NATIONAL A14-17

Suspect Not Charged In Ramsey Murder Case

The case against John M. Karr for the murder of 6-year-old JonBenet Ramsey in 1996 collapsed when DNA tests refuted Mr. Karr's own claims that he had committed the crime. A1

Drought Recalls 30's Dust Bowl

With parts of South Dakota at its epicenter, a severe drought has slowly sizzled a large swath of the Plains States, tumbling farmers and ranchers into conditions they say are comparable to the Dust Bowl of the 1930's. A1

Bush Returns to Gulf Coast

On the eve of the first anniversary of Hurricane Katrina, President Bush returned to the devastated region promising to continue federal assistance and, with his presidency still under the shadow of the slow response to the storm, eagerly pointed out signs of progress. A17

Rising Star Stirs Rancor

In just three terms, Representative Mike Pence, Republican of Indiana, turned 100 House allies into a vanguard and himself into one of his party's rising stars. Or that was the case until this spring when he sought compromise in the rancorous immigration debate. A1

Runway Short by a Few Feet

A Comair commuter plane that took off on the wrong runway in Lexington, Ky., may have crashed because of a miscalculation of a few feet and a few seconds, according to information released by a member of the National Transportation Safety Board. A14

Storm Closes In on Florida

South Floridians began hoarding gas and other emergency supplies as Tropical Storm Ernesto threatened to strike today or tomorrow, possibly as a hurricane, tonight or early tomorrow. A17

New Test Speeds Diagnosis

In an advance that speeds up diagnosis of the most dangerous avian flu, scientists have developed a new detailed influenza test that takes less than 12 hours, federal health officials announced. A14

NEW YORK/REGION B1-5

2nd Firefighter Dies In Bronx Store Fire

Fire officials revealed the details of the fire at a 99-cent store in the Bronx that has now claimed the life of a second firefighter who fell through a collapsing floor. A1

Deaths and Injuries in Bus Crash

Several people were reported killed and many were injured when a Greyhound bus heading from New York City to Montreal drove off an Interstate highway and rolled over, Greyhound officials and the New York State police said. B1

Mother Cleared in Suicide

The Connecticut Supreme Court overturned the conviction of Judith Scruggs. She had been found guilty of leaving her home so messy that it endangered the safety and mental health of her 12-year-old son, who killed himself in 2002. B1

SCIENCE TIMES F1-8

Halt in Loss of Bird Species

Efforts to protect imperiled bird species have blunted a centuries-long acceleration of human-caused bird extinctions, biologists say. F3

Health & Fitness F5

SPORTSTUESDAY C14-18

Agassi Wins in First Round

Andre Agassi, who is planning to retire, struggled for a 6-7 (4), 7-6 (8), 7-6 (6), 6-2 victory over Andrei Pavel of Romania in the first round of the United States Open. D1

ARTS E1-10

New Imprint Will Aim at Women

Hyperion is planning to start an imprint aimed at women called Voice, which will publish its first title in April. E1

OBITUARIES B6

Leopold Simoneau

A Canadian lyric tenor who dominated international Mozart performance in the 1950's, he was 90. B6

BUSINESS DAY C1-11

Prudential Settles Charges

Prudential Financial, the life insurance company, agreed to pay \$600 million to settle charges with federal and state regulators that a unit engaged in inappropriate mutual fund trading. C1

Automakers and Gas Prices

The Chrysler Group, which depends more heavily on sales of pickup trucks and sport utility vehicles than any other Detroit automaker, said that it expected gasoline prices to remain at \$3 to \$4 a gallon for the rest of this decade. C1

Suit Airs BMW-Clemson Ties

After Clemson University received \$10 million from the German automaker BMW in 2002, some critics wondered whether it was blurring the line between academia and business. Details about the arrangement have emerged from a lawsuit brought last year by a Florida developer. C1

Met Opens Ad Campaign

The Metropolitan Opera, which for 30 years has solicited sales by phone and direct mail, is entering the mass-marketing fray next week with ads in the most conventional places: telephone kiosks, lamp posts, subway entrances and the sides of city buses. C1

Business Digest C2

EDITORIAL A18-19

Editorials: A tribute for the living; Mexico's recount; the falling paycheck; death of a supercentenarian.

Columns: John Tierney, Thomas Frank.

Crossword E2 TV Listings E9 Weather D7

http://www.nytimes.com

Graphic

Photo

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All-round Country Edition

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Section: FEATURES; Letters; Pg. 13

Length: 2611 words

Body

MATP

Summit would allow full debate on discipline's direction

MOST TALKED ABOUT

HISTORY WARS

THE debate about the condition of historical research and teaching in Australia has been going for quite some time. Perhaps it is time for action. The Prime Minister's recent intervention and the appointment of a new Minister for Education indicates the moment may have arrived for interested parties to move the debate to another level and sponsor the formation of the "coalition of the willing" that Gregory Melleuish talks of ("A better way of looking at our past, 30/1) to take the lead in reforming the profession. Such an initiative could have various components. First, a sponsored conference or conferences allowing interested parties to fully air and explore the key issues of research and teaching in a neutral environment.

Second, the establishment of a new professional historical journal. This should be tasked with the responsibility to promote research and publish articles of a suitable standard of objectivity and scholarship that explore issues at the centre of the debate. The editor and a significant number of the editorial board should be from parties found outside the current acrimony. Finally, the establishment of a centre of excellence in history at a suitable university. This would allow researchers and teachers working at both tertiary and secondary level to study and interact in an environment dedicated to the values of objective scholarship and civility. Again, it is essential that it not be stacked with ideologically committed parties. Australia will suffer greatly if the opportunity is not taken to address this ongoing crisis in concrete and constructive ways.

Mervyn F. Bendle Ph.D

Senior lecturer, history and communications

James Cook University

I'M sick of the postmodernists' sneer that history and its teaching was so awful and biased in their mythical 1950s. For five years, in the real 1950s, I was taught by outstanding history and classics graduates at Sydney Boys High and Ultimo Technical College. I sat for the NSW leaving certificate in 1955 and was examined on two extremely rigorous honours courses, in ancient and modern history respectively. Fast forward to 2005 and I was teaching

land-use history at a rural university. The subject: damage caused to soils by the practices of gold diggers. I'm too old to be shocked by the ignorant products of modern schools, but even I was taken aback when not a single student could tell me the decade in which the great east Australian gold rushes took place. I rarely agree with anything John Howard says, but he might have a point about the unappetising "fragmented stew" being served up to our school students as history.

Bob Haworth

Armidale, NSW

HISTORY is fundamentally a chronology of politics and is consequently perverted by the handprint of politicians and subject to spin, misinformation and self-interest. It therefore comes as no surprise that Howard would like to see a more conservative and traditional history curriculum in schools while simultaneously attacking critical thinking and critical literacy. It's time Howard and his advisers woke up to the fact that knowledge has increased way beyond the means for a person to possess all of it and that the demands of contemporary society make it impossible to keep shoe-horning irrelevant traditional material into the curriculum. Critical thinking enables an audience to reveal the subtext, cant and bias in media and undo political spin to reveal what are often less palatable versions. From this they can form their own opinions rather than follow the mindless official line. It is therefore anathema to politicians. How we apportion time within the curriculum determines what the student doesn't learn as much as what they do and to dedicate valuable resources to promulgate the racist, sexist and colonial past as important character-forming aspects of contemporary Australia is to deny the true nature of Australia and the context of our place in the world.

Roger Bridgland

West Hobart, Tas

IF John Howard prefers the way history was taught in the past, I wonder what he'd make of this quote from my history text on the late 1950s. When alluding to the White Australia Policy, which was still in force at that time, the author, a professor of history from the University of Sydney, said: "For the Australian blacks hardly matter. They are so few in number, they keep to themselves, and they are fast dying out." The text was titled Australia since 1606 -- a History for Young Australians, by G.V. Portus.

Roy Stall

Mount Claremont, WA

JOHN Travers' suggestion (Letters, 30/1) that "the German General Blucher was the major player" at Waterloo may be arguable but he is a bit sloppy regarding facts and detail. The Battle of Waterloo was fought in 1814. Germany is a more modern state and was not officially proclaimed until 1871. Born in Rostock Mecklenburg, General Blucher would be better described as a Pomeranian who originally joined the Swedish army. He was later recruited by the Prussians. Blucher led the Prussian army at Waterloo, more than 50 years before Germany came into being. Factual historical components such as a timeline provide the basics that underpin rational historical debate. Let's teach the undisputed facts first and deal with dispute later.

Roger Dutton

Wangaratta, Vic

Complexity of inquiry will let Government off

FULL credit to The Australian for its determination in pursuing questions being raised by the Cole inquiry. But the Howard Government will never widen the inquiry if it has anything to hide. Frankly I would be surprised if it did have anything to hide, as there would have been little in such mischief for the Government. Sadly, I suggest the whole business is too difficult for the general public to grasp and it will sink without trace leaving the Government unmarked. For the punters in pubs and tea rooms, Aussie apathy and a distaste for questioning will win out.

John Dobinson

North Balwyn, Vic

WHILE Jock Munro was eulogising the single desk for wheat (Letters, 30/1), he failed to mention a couple of things. First, every other industry that deals with the Arabs in the areas of agriculture, minerals, oil or wool, seems to survive, prosper and make profits without resorting to monopoly status. Second, the wool industry has suffered recently because they have faced stiff competition from cotton and synthetic materials, and not because they no longer trade through a monopoly marketer. To my palate and, I'm sure, Arab palates too, bread made with wheat tastes better than bread made from competitor grains or synthetics. Hence the product's dominance; not because of the anachronistic single desk, AWB or its bully-boy sanction-busting tactics.

V.E. Collins

Killcare Heights, NSW

WITH reference to the debacle in which the AWB finds itself and the possibility the Prime Minister may panic and cancel the monopoly single desk for marketing grain. First, the single desk operates for the benefit of all Australians, not just a few farmers. It increases our export national revenue creating jobs. Second, it eliminates competitive selling of our export wheat. Competitive selling constantly reduces the price. Why must we reduce our export revenue from sales to suit the multinational grain traders, whose only objective is to make an offshore tax-free profit? Only in times of no supply does the market rise. These variations can range from \$145 per tonne in surplus to near \$600 per tonne in shortage. Thanks to the single desk, our industry does not suffer these violent price changes. If it did, production would have to cease, denying our economy of about \$10billion annually. America wants Australia out of the Iraq grain market and will do almost anything to achieve it.

Jack Vallance

Tempy, Vic

YOUR articles on the AWB inquiry refer repeatedly to "kickbacks" when they should refer to "commissions". In the 1980s, the same question came before the British parliament when it was discovered Leyland was paying Middle Eastern countries huge sums of money ahead of their contracts to sell cars. The parliament understood that commissions were a normal way of doing business and the matter was dropped. History shows that to move through desert country, tribes of the area received a payment.

Marjorie Brown

Glenunga, SA

Hamas has no military

CONCERN about <u>Hamas</u> winning the Palestinian elections and the likely consequences for Israel is overstated given that <u>Hamas</u> has been around for years. Moreover, <u>Hamas</u> does not possess any military capability to attack Israel irrespective of its stated objective. It does not really matter who leads the Palestinians because Israel will only negotiate on its own terms and that means giving nothing away; the Gaza pull-out, notwithstanding, was done with Israeli interests in mind. The worry now is that anti-<u>Hamas</u> sentiment by the US, Europe and Israel will further inflame Middle Eastern politics and ignite a conflagration which will end in disaster for all of us. Get ready to pay \$3 per litre for petrol.

Doug Cadioli

Victoria Point, Qld

SHARAM Akbarzadeh's article ("US can't brush off <u>Hamas</u> landslide", 30/1) is erroneous and naive. How can the US accept a terrorist organisation bent on the destruction of the sovereign country, Israel? He should take to heart

Daniel Pipes's observation ("Region not ripe for democracy", 30/1) that "Western capitals need to show Palestinians that, like Germans electing Adolf Hitler in 1933, they have made a decision gravely unacceptable to civilised opinion". Of course, should *Hamas* renounce its terrorist bent and change its attitude to Israel, the situation may be different. Unfortunately, however, this is highly unlikely.

Rachel Birati

North Balwyn, Vic

HOW can you print such letters as Daniel Lewis's (Letters, 30/1) which talks of the murder of Jewish <u>women</u> and Jewish babies being blown-up? There have been many more Palestinian <u>women</u> and Palestinian babies killed by their occupiers. The difference is that the people who kill Palestinian <u>women</u> and babies do not die, but come back day after day to kill again. Are we to deduce that Palestinians are not important to him because they are not Jewish, or because they were killed by Jewish people?

Patricia Philippou

Waverley, NSW

Talent grown at home

SO the Business Council of Australia says super-high remuneration for CEOs is needed to attract world-class talent ("Workers losing in CEO pay bonaza", 30/1). What nonsense. Why can't they pay more modest salaries and use some of the oodles of money saved to train up a pool of genuine local talent, rather than pay massive salaries to someone from the international market. Sure, such local talent may eventually go for more highly paid jobs overseas but that's the point of proper succession planning. Are we still suffering from cultural cringe by saying that ready-made, overseas talent is always better?

Helen Olivieri

Glendalough, WA

Judges at the ready

I WISH to clarify some statements made in your article ("Judges adjourn abridged holiday", 16/1). This year, and every year since 1983, the County Court has opened on the third Monday of January. All judges are "on board". The only judges who are not at work are those who are taking their leave entitlement now rather than at any other time of year. In the Melbourne sittings, 19 judges were rostered to commence in the criminal jurisdiction and 12 judges were rostered to commence in the civil jurisdiction on 16 January. A further 12 judges were rostered to commence sitting at circuit locations throughout regional Victoria. In addition the Children's Court president and the deputy president of Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal, both of whom are County Court judges, have been sitting as of 16 January. In total, 45 County Court judges were rostered as of 16 January.

Michael Rozenes

Chief judge

County Court of Victoria

Climate requires facts

LEE Hudson (Letters 25/1), in his claim that satellites prove the atmosphere is warming, is attempting to make a silk purse from a pig's ear. The satellite observations clearly demonstrate that the major fluctuations of low atmosphere temperature are associated with El Nino events. Any trend that is analysed cannot be separated from chance because of this large background natural variability. Peter Walsh (Opinion, 24/1) is correct in his assessment that satellites "show little if any (temperature) increase in the lower troposphere". Notwithstanding Hudson's claim,

NASA's satellites unequivocally demonstrate that longwave radiation to space increased over the last two decades, the opposite to what global warmers predict from increasing CO2 concentrations in the atmosphere. Let's put aside the rhetoric and calmly look at the facts.

William Kininmonth

Kew, Vic

Gay element a bold claim

DAVID Stratton's review of Brokeback Mountain (Review, 28-29/1) wants us to believe that "there's always been an unstated gay element in Hollywood westerns". The rationale for the bold claim is that "the best westerns have been about friendships between men". Doesn't David know that men can be friends without being gay? Is he homo-obsessed or simply trying to drag homosexuality into the mainstream where it has never belonged?

David Devine

Rowville, Vic

FIRST BYTE

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IF Glenn Milne knew all about the underhand deals going on in Tasmania before the last election ("PM out of the woods", 30/1), he had a duty as a journalist to report this important information to The Australian's readers before the election, not wait until the Liberal minister for forestry Ian Macdonald got the sack. It seems he has let his loyalty overcome his journalistic principles.

John Doherty

Richmond, Vic

SO doctors' groups have dismissed the proposed nurses triage hotline as a gimmick. They would say that wouldn't they? Come on guys, let's get over the gender/power thing. Some of us want to live in the 21st century. If the system's not working, change it.

Candy Scown

Strathalbyn, SA

I SUSPECT Adam Gilchrist's fluctuating form stems from when he bats. When he keeps wicket in the first innings, the ball would look like a soccer ball by the time he bats, whereas when Australia opens he struggles for runs because his eye is not in. Is there a cricket stats fan who can confirm my theory?

Grant Gascoigne

Mitchelton, Qld

FOR five years Peter Costello has accepted inaccurate and wrong estimates from Treasury. This alone should preclude him from any future position of responsibility.

David Bookallil

Glebe, NSW

BEFORE Sol Trujillo is forced to answer questions at a senate inquiry, angry shareholders would like their own chance to pop a few at him.

Sandra Eckersley

Marrickville, NSW

CONSTITUTIONAL clauses aside, the Nationals should be careful what they wish for. If they force the Liberals to refuse entry to Julian McGauran, and he is left an independent, that ole "brutal arithmetic" may see another Nat dumped from the ministry.

David William Hall

Southport, Qld

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Load-Date: January 30, 2006



Israeli air force pounds Lebanon

St. Louis Post-Dispatch (Missouri)

July 16, 2006 Sunday

FOURTH EDITION

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A1

Length: 1089 words

Byline: By Sam F. Ghattas THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dateline: BEIRUT, LEBANON

Body

WHAT'S NEW

- * Israeli jets pound Beirut and Hezbollah targets.
- * Hezbollah rockets strike deeper into Israel.
- * Lebanon's prime minister indicates he might send army to confront Hezbollah.
- * Israel says Iran helped Hezbollah fire missile at ship.
- * Western nations make plans for evacuations.
- * Israel bombs target in Gaza City.

Warplanes bombed Beirut's southern suburbs for hours early Sunday, a day after Hezbollah missiles landed deeper inside Israel and Israel staged the heaviest airstrikes yet in the four-day-old conflict.

The Israeli air force on Saturday hit strongholds of the Hezbollah Shiite Muslim guerrilla group, bombed central Beirut for the first time, and pounded seaports and a key bridge. Then, before dawn Sunday, 18 thunderous explosions shook southern Beirut, where Hezbollah is based.

Hezbollah's TV aired footage showing two long columns of smoke rising from buildings into the night sky. Much of Shiite-populated southern Beirut was deserted, its residents having fled east to Lebanon's Bekaa Valley.

Lebanon's prime minister indicated he might send his army to take control of southern Lebanon from Hezbollah -- a move that might risk civil war.

In a more ominous sign, Israel accused Iran of helping fire a missile that damaged an Israeli warship, a charge both Hezbollah and Iran denied.

Israeli air force pounds Lebanon

Hezbollah, meanwhile, fired waves of rockets ever deeper into Israel, and Israeli officials warned that Tel Aviv, 70 miles inside Israel, could be hit.

The death toll in the conflict rose above 100 in Lebanon, and stood at 15 in Israel. The fighting broke out Wednesday when Hezbollah captured two Israeli soldiers and killed eight others in a cross-border raid.

Choking back tears, Lebanese Prime Minister Fuad Saniora went on television to plead with the United Nations to broker a cease-fire for his "disaster-stricken nation."

The prime minister, criticizing both Israel and Hezbollah, also pledged to reassert government authority over all Lebanese territory.

But any effort by Saniora's Sunni Muslim-led government to use force against the Shiite Muslim Hezbollah guerrillas could trigger another bloody civil war in Lebanon. Many fear the 70,000-strong army itself might break up along sectarian lines, as it did in the civil war from 1975-1990.

Reacting to Saniora's statements, Israel's Vice Premier Shimon Peres said Lebanon must prove it was serious by putting its troops on the border.

"We have to see what they do and not what they say," Peres told Israel's Channel 2 TV.

Iran, meanwhile, denied any role in the fighting. It disputed Israeli claims that 100 Iranian soldiers had helped Hezbollah attack an Israeli warship late Friday.

There has been no sign in Lebanon of Iranian Revolutionary Guards for 15 years. But Iran is one of Hezbollah's principal backers along with Syria, providing weapons, money and political support. Many believe Iran and Syria are fueling the battle to show their strength in the region.

In Cairo, Arab foreign ministers met and adopted a resolution calling for U.N. Security Council intervention. But moderates led by Saudi Arabia, bickering with Syria and other backers of Hezbollah, denounced the Lebanese guerrilla group's actions in provoking the latest fighting.

West studies evacuations

In one sign the West expects a drawn-out battle, the U.S. Embassy said it was looking into ways to get Americans in Lebanon to Cyprus. France said it had already decided to send a ferry from Cyprus to evacuate thousands of its citizens. The British were sending two warships, including the carrier Illustrious, toward Lebanon, in apparent preparation for evacuations.

In all, 33 people were killed in Lebanon on Saturday, police said. That raised the Lebanese death toll in the four-day Israeli offensive to 106, most of them civilians. On the Israeli side, at least 15 have been killed, four civilians and 11 soldiers.

Israeli warplanes demolished the last bridge on the main Beirut-Damascus highway -- over the Litani River, six miles from the Syrian border -- trying to shut routes out of Lebanon.

In other Israeli attacks Saturday:

Near the southern Lebanon border, fleeing refugees, including <u>women</u> and children, were cut down by an airstrike as they left the village of Marwaheen. The bodies of several children, one headless, were sprawled on the ground. Police said 15 were killed in the afternoon attack, and an Associated Press photographer counted 12 bodies in the two cars.

Near the Syrian border, at least three civilians were killed when planes attacked a bridge, cutting the last land link on the main road to Syria and its capital, Damascus.

Israeli air force pounds Lebanon

In central Beirut, jets struck the port and a lighthouse on the seafront boulevard, a few hundred yards from the campus of the American University of Beirut. The seaport is adjacent to downtown Beirut, a district rebuilt at a cost of billions of dollars after the 1975-1990 civil war.

The brunt of the onslaught focused more and more on Hezbollah's top leadership in south Beirut and the eastern city of Baalbek. Ambulances raced to a Baalbek residential neighborhood where black smoke rose from airstrikes. Israel also targeted the headquarters compound of Hezbollah's leadership in a crowded Shiite neighborhood of south Beirut for the second straight day.

Hezbollah in turn struck out repeatedly at Israel. Its rockets hit Tiberias three times on Saturday, the first attack on the city since the 1973 Mideast war. At least two houses were directly hit, but only a few light injuries were reported, medics said. The town is 22 miles from Lebanon.

Residents were ordered into bomb shelters, and Israeli news media reported that hundreds of tourists were fleeing the city. Police used megaphones to urge bathers at the Sea of Galilee to seek shelter.

Gaza developments

On Israel's second front, against Palestinian militants in the Gaza Strip, Israeli aircraft struck on Saturday the Economy Ministry of the <u>Hamas</u>-led Palestinian government and three other targets, killing two people, Palestinian and Israeli officials reported.

Early Sunday, Israeli tanks approached the town of Beit Hanoun in northern Gaza, across the border from an Israeli town, Sderot, frequently hit by <u>Hamas</u> rockets, residents and Palestinian security officials reported. Palestinian hospital officials said two people were wounded by Israeli artillery fire in the area.

Israel attacked Gaza on June 28, three days after <u>Hamas</u>-backed militants killed two Israeli soldiers and captured a third at an army post just inside Israel.

Is the region headed for all-out war? NewsWatch | B1

Notes

Middle East crisis

Graphic

PHOTO

PHOTO - U.N. peacekeepers cover the bodies of people killed when their vehicles were hit Saturday by Israeli warplanes on the main road near the southern border village of Ter Harfa, Lebanon. At least 12 Lebanese villagers, including <u>women</u> and children, were killed. Witnesses said a convoy was leaving the village of Marwaheen, which abuts the border, when it was struck. The Associated Press

Load-Date: July 16, 2006



THE AUSTRALIAN
February 1, 2006 Wednesday
All-round Country Edition

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Section: FEATURES; Letters; Pg. 15

Length: 2602 words

Body

MATP

Education has always played a part in social change

MOST TALKED ABOUT

HISTORY WARS

I NOTE that the great researcher Kevin Donnelly has again taken a portion of the available information about courses in teacher education ("Let's go back to the basics, beginning with the three R's", 31/1) and used it to justify his peculiar view of schools of teacher education. He quotes, apparently as the only aim of Flinders University teacher education, that its graduates will act as "agents for social change and justice". Let me set the record straight. First, the course aims for teacher eduction to produce graduates who "are flexible, literate, independent and well-informed, equipped with transferable skills, highly valued in the workforce". (The full course aims can be found on the Flinders website www.flinders.edu.au). Second, all undergraduate teacher education courses are combined degrees -- education with arts or science or health science -- because Flinders University considers that academic mastery of disciplines other than, and including, education is essential for a teacher. Literacy and numeracy are cornerstones of our teacher education programs, including graduate-entry programs.

Students who do not reach a high standard, as well as demonstrating teaching competence, do not graduate. With respect to being "agents of social change and justice" as part of the total package of outcomes, I would support this. Flinders University considers that teachers need to understand and respect cultural difference, disability and disadvantage. Education has always been part of social change and it is important that students understand how it works.

Professor Faith Trent, AM

Executive dean and professor of education

Faculty of Education

Flinders University, SA

WHILE higher minds than mine are, no doubt, debating the history teaching issue, it has given me pause to ponder my high school modern history education in Brisbane during the late 1970s. I carried the subject through to Year 12,

liked it very much and was lucky to have a teacher who kept the classroom atmosphere lively, but I'm blowed if I could rattle off the top of my head the important dates associated with significant events of the two World Wars, other than the declaration and cessation of hostilities. Our textbook was Frankfurt to Fra Mauro: a thematic history of the modern world and while I have no doubt the text included plenty of dates, I can't help but think now that the course was somehow deficient. On the other hand, our geography lessons were almost a grilling on the capitals of the world. I can still hear our class chanting our times tables but don't ask me about the numbers for the Crimean War.

Peter Graham

Enmore, NSW

THE teaching of history should include an appreciation of the way historians work. I suspect that John Howard prefers the triumphalist version, with plenty of rote learning. Of course, one must learn basic facts and dates, and children should learn of our nation's achievements. However, they should also learn to be critical and they should know about the darker sides of our history as well. I wonder how many of those now in power were taught in their history lessons about how Australia treated Kanakas virtually as slaves. If we are to import temporary workers from the Pacific Islands, I hope they will not be treated, as the Kanakas were, as cheap, expendable labour.

David Hutchison

Fremantle, WA

I UNDERTOOK history honours in the 1956 NSW leaving certificate, a year after Bob Haworth (Letters, 31/1). I read two texts, Roberts's Modern European History and a thick volume by someone called Carlton-Hayes. I think I was awarded first class honours because I suggested that Japan had some justification for Pearl Harbor because no one would trade with her and that Bob Menzies's action in selling pig iron to the Japanese was far-sighted statesmanship rather than toadying to the capitalist class. Neither suggestion was particularly insightful, but in those days, anything that diverged from the standard text and perceived wisdom stood out like a sore thumb. By contrast, when I look at the papers written by matricularion students of history these days, I am very conscious of the shallow and narrow knowledge that I had. But my chronology and dates were spot on. My knowledge of lists good. My knowledge of history virtually was non-existent. My schoolboy history and its teaching was awful and biased.

Mick Hawkins

Warradale, SA

KEVIN Donnelly may be expert at clipping university education course blurbs but he obviously doesn't spend much time in schools or with teachers. His article displays a high degree of confected fear, and assumes our school teachers are a breed apart. Teachers may well be given a so-called "left-wing" view at college but much clearly falls on stony ground, as they say, since most teachers I meet are not the least bit revolutionary in their thinking, any more than nurses or truck drivers. Teachers appear to be very much like the rest of the population, sharing the same prejudices and fears as everyone else. I would hope, though, that teachers do promote a sense of social justice. What does Donnelly want? Injustice? And why would anyone enter teaching unless they wanted to help young people think about the world about them, so they can start thinking how to improve the many deficiences in our society? Does this amount to promoting armed insurrection?

Hugh Wilson

Toowoomba, Qld

Bribes hobble business

and sting end users

REGARDING your feature ("Dirty deals don't come cheap", 31/1), it seems that too many business people, including some farmers, do not understand the basic concepts when they speak of "everyone does it". Well, they don't actually. Further, they seem to dismiss the fact that, to make trade fairer, it is considered an illegal activity almost everywhere. By paying bribes you disadvantage those who cannot, and make the product more expensive for the end user. If, after 50 years of trading with a country, we haven't established any basis to be valued apart from being the biggest payer of bribes, we need to get out of the game. It's illegal and immoral.

Brian Monger

Marketing Association of

Australia and New Zealand

Carnegie, Vic

THE concerns of AWB's lawyers about the Cole commission are laughable. They have complained about witnesses being ambushed. News flash, you can't be ambushed if you tell the truth. The only reason AWB managers are being caught out is because they are failing to disclose what they know. They say they want access to witness statements and documents held by the commission before they take the stand. Now why would that be? It wouldn't be so they can get their story straight? They say Commissioner Cole's expectations are "unreasonable". As far as I can tell, his expectations are that witnesses will tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. This is not merely the commission's expectation, it is everybody's and about time AWB started to meet it.

Kelvin Thomson

Shadow Minister for Public Accountability

AWB legal counsel, James Judd, contends that witnesses to the wheatgate inquiry have been victims of procedural unfairness ("Inquiry may urge criminal charges", 31/1). Surely any sense of ridicule experienced by witnesses is more a function of their embarrassing answers to inquiry questions, rather than the questions themselves?

John Richardson

Collaroy, NSW

Ming wrestled with unity

THE current federal political scene prompts memories of Sir Robert Menzies's last Canberra press conference on January 26, 1966, when he announced his retirement as prime minister after a record 16 continuous years in office. Veteran journalist Alan Reid had asked him what he considered his greatest political achievement. Menzies replied: "Maintaining the Liberal-Country Party coalition."

Stewart Cockburn AM

St Georges, SA

I LIKE the idea of three-cornered contests in the bush. Effectively, the Nationals would be saying to their electorate: "Do you want a real man of the land, with dirt under his fingernails, or a Pitt St farmer with a Toorak tractor to represent you?"

V.E.Collins

Killcare Heights, NSW

Vote for 'vitriolic hatred'

SHAHRAM Akbarzadeh's opinion piece ("US can't brush off <u>Hamas</u> landslide", 30/1) misses the point in its call not to "blame Palestinian voters for the election of <u>Hamas</u>". It is precisely because of the democratic process by which <u>Hamas</u> has come to power that Palestinians should be blamed: they have chosen a government which is at war with Israel and expresses a vitriolic hatred of the West in general. There are consequences for that choice, the West will regard them as enemies. The sentiments expressed in the article betray two almost axiomatic tenets of the thinking of much of the Islamic world. First, the West should respect their societies and treat them as equals regardless of how they behave. Second, if their endeavours are unsuccessful, it's never their fault. In reality, there are adverse consequences if you elect a government which openly expresses its enmity toward significant aid donors.

Matthew Hardman

Wahroonga, NSW

<u>HAMAS</u>'S election victory could have more far-reaching consequences than a challenge to the US and Israel, as suggested by some commentators. A Palestinian society led by radical Islamists not only destroys any possible Israel/Palestinian peace plans but is also a threat to its own secular and Christian populations. It also strengthens the influence of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the region and encourages the growing radical Islamist movements in many neighbouring countries, whose aspirations are to overthrow less-radical regimes such as Jordan, Egypt and Lebanon to create extremist Islamic states. It's amazing that some commentators are readily prepared to accept <u>Hamas</u> by deluding themselves that responsibilities of government could be a powerful moderating force on the organisation.

Rachel Merhav

Bentleigh, Vic

PATRICIA Philippou (Letters 31/1) claims that there have been many more Palestinian <u>women</u> and babies killed by their occupiers than Jewish <u>women</u> and babies killed by Palestinians. Could she please direct us to some verifiable statistics to support this claim.

Stuart Robertson-Fox

Drouin, Vic

ALP hand in trades shortage

THE federal ALP's plan to pay all TAFE fees for apprentices in traditional trades is in stark contrast to ALP education policy for many years. When I trained as a secondary teacher under a Labor government, we were told that trades education "set working class kids up to be failures, all children needed to complete the same 12 years of education". When I raised concerns about these views I was told by an education lecturer and a trade union official that if I raised these concerns at my employment interview, I had better enjoy working in the private system. Australia now has a catastrophic shortage of trained workers at the same time as we have a 5 per cent long-term unemployment rate and an explosion in prisoner numbers (more than 90 per cent male and largely failed by the state education system). The dead hand of the ALP and their Australian Education Union buddies has caused long-term damage to the Australians they purport to represent and our society as a whole.

Andrew Humphreys

Narrawallee, NSW

Brough's indigenous claims

ONE of Indigenous Affairs Minister Mal Brough's great grandparents was an Aborigine and so he is said to be oneeighth Aboriginal. Similarly, one of my great-grandparents was Prussian and thus it may be said that I am oneeighth Germanic. In both cases, so what? Does the small percentage of "foreign" blood in each of us entitle us to

identify as Aboriginal and German respectively? The proposition is ridiculous; yet that is exactly what so many self-proclaimed Aborigines have done, at no small cost to the taxpayer over the years. It beggars belief that our so-called educated and advanced society continues to tolerate such an absurdity.

Richard Congram

Carindale, Qld

Query health breakthroughs

YOUR editorial (31/1) lauding the "medical breakthrough" of the development of insulin delivery via inhalation seems to be written from the ill-informed perspective of the non-insulin dependent diabetic. Insulin injections are no big deal, as any diabetic will tell you, the real hassle is the constant pricking of the fingertip to obtain blood samples to determine blood-sugar levels. I'll be impressed when the super-clever drug companies come up with a solution to that rather than grandstanding about insulin delivery.

Gerard McEwen

Glandore, SA

I REFER to your story ("Arthritis drugs 'cut breast cancer risk", 31/1). But do they really? This study, part-funded by a maker of the drugs, needs closer examination. Many <u>women</u> suffer arthritis as they age and their oestrogen levels drop. Quite a few find that taking oestrogen, through hormone replacement therapy, relieves their joint aches as well as their hot flushes. However oestrogen is a carcinogen, which is why the contraceptive pill and HRT are linked with higher rates of breast cancer. <u>Women</u> with lower levels of oestrogen have a lower breast cancer risk but may have more arthritis pain and, hence, are more likely to take drugs to relieve it.

Roslyn Phillips

Tea Tree Gully, SA

FIRST BYTE

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I ENJOYED the "Melbourne" Open tennis championships. I would, however, prefer to support an Australian event. For years we have observed "Melbourne" on the walls of the courts at Melbourne Park but now we must also be treated to the city promoting itself on the court surface. I have not noticed such a preoccupation in the French, US or Wimbledon tournaments. Their host cities clearly being proud of their nationality.

B. Deane

Woodbridge, Tas

THE new buzzwords for 2006: "Terrorism Democracy", brought to you by *Hamas*.

Joe Cahill

Asquith, NSW

SOMEONE should tell Condoleezza Rice ("<u>Hamas</u> blindsided us, Rice admits" 31/1) that the US pulse reading on world affairs she claims has not been good enough had stopped beating several years ago.

Richard Paulin

North Ryde

DAVID Devine (Letters, 31/1) and David Stratton are wrong about the underlying homosexuality of Hollywood westerns. Horses were also part of that myth. Can we read something into that?

Randolph Magri-Overend

Point Clare, NSW

IF Roger Dutton (Letters, 31/1) wants to be historically accurate he should get his dates correct. The Battle of Waterloo was fought on June 18, 1815.

I.B. Bates

Bribie Island, Qld

GRANT Gascoigne's suspicions regarding Adam Gilchrist's fluctuating form (Letters, 31/1) turn out to be correct. Gilchrist averages 40.96 from 107 one-day matches when Australia bats second but only 32.20 from 122 matches when it bats first.

Shane Abood

Clayfield, Qld

INSTEAD of going through the expense of taking carbon out of the ground, turning it into carbon monoxide or carbon dioxide and stuffing it back into the ground, why not just leave it there?

Gregory T. Van Aacken

Armidale, NSW

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Load-Date: January 31, 2006



On the Beach

New York Sun (Archive)
June 16, 2006 Friday

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Section: EDITORIAL & OPINION; Pg. 11

Length: 1068 words

Byline: By DAVID TWERSKY

Body

As a former member of the Israeli artillery corps, I wanted to comment on the latest brouhaha over the recent explosion on a northern Gaza Strip beach that killed seven, capturing in the process video footage of a young girl running from the water to the body of her dead father, watching her world shatter into a thousand pieces.

The Israeli military has conducted a review and declared quite categorically that the culprit was not an errant Israeli 155 mm. artillery shell.

The Israel Defense Force has been shelling areas from which terrorists have been launching rocket attacks into Israel. These attacks follow Israel's withdrawal last summer to the international border, that is, the 1967 lines separating it from the Gaza Strip.

Of course, firing a shell from a 155 mm howitzer is more precise an exercise than, say, "I shot an arrow in the air, it fell to earth I know not where?" Before firing, artillery units consult forward positioned scouts, wind speed and direction, humidity, topography, and trajectory, to help acquire a desired target.

Not that a mistake couldn't happen. On April 18, 1996, Israel mistakenly shelled a U.N. peacekeeping compound in Qana, southern Lebanon, killing 102 Arab civilians. This was a terrible incident, and it had a major political impact: When combined with the stepped up pace of *Hamas* suicide bombings that February (four in eight days in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem), it eroded the enormous popular sentiment that had attached to Shimon Peres when he succeeded the slain Yitzhak Rabin as prime minister. Tens of thousand Jewish voters switched over to support the ultimately successful Likud candidate, Benjamin Netanyahu, while Arab voters (who would have voted against Netanyahu) sat on their hands to protest what they saw as Mr. Peres's complicity in Qana.

For now, the forensic evidence cited by Israel to prove its lack of involvement is being refuted by a Human Rights Watch investigator who found that the injuries suffered by the Palestinians were inconsistent with a mine-blast as suggested by Israeli authorities in earlier statements. A former Pentagon senior intelligence analyst and battle damage assessment expert, Marc Garlasco, believes the evidence points to an Israeli artillery shell although he doesn't rule out another cause. Mr. Garlasco has said that the evidence points to a 155 mm shell, but he admits his conclusions are far from conclusive and await further investigation.

Mr. Garlasco found what the HRW report calls "a large piece of unoxidized jagged shrapnel, stamped '155mm'" which would be consistent with an artillery shell fired by the IDF's M-109 Self-Propelled Artillery.

On the Beach

Moreover, HRW reports that according to global positioning satellite readings, the crater where the victims were killed was nearby and the same shape and size as craters caused by the six other Israeli shells fired on June 9 and which are accounted for. (One was as close as 100 meters away from the beach crater.)

Finally, HRW insists that "The craters are too large to be made by bounding mines, the only type of landmines capable of producing head and torso injuries of the type suffered by the victims on June 9."

Better send in the CSI teams. This is all about the width and tensile strength of shrapnel fragments, crater dimensions, and dispersal patterns. But to whom will crime-scene investigators report? Most likely: some institution or body at the United Nations.

U.N. Secretary-General Annan is calling for "a full investigation." But has the judge decided on the outcome of the proceeding before setting it in motion?

On June 9 Mr. Annan was "deeply disturbed at the killing of civilians, including <u>women</u> and children, on a beach in Gaza earlier today," refusing to assign blame except to say that it was "reportedly by Israeli forces."

During a June 14 Q &A at the United Nations, Mr. Annan told reporters that that the possibility that Palestinian-planted mine was responsible for the Gaza beach fatalities struck him as "odd."

"Mine on a beach? That's odd," the secretary-general said. At a June 15 press conference, he repeated his observation: "I did say it was odd."

The June 14 London-based Al-Hayat newspaper reported that Mr. Annan reasoned that Palestinians wouldn't plant "charges in a place where civilians often spend their time."

In other words, responsible Palestinians (like the <u>Hamas</u> government) who send children with bombs strapped to their chests to blow themselves up and take some Jews with them couldn't possibly have endangered Palestinian civilians by allowing them to picnic on a mine-sown beach.

Alternatively, there must be no words in Arabic for "snafu" or "fubar." After all, responsible Palestinians (like the *Hamas* government) who send children with bombs strapped to their chests to blow themselves up and who are killing and being killed by their Fatah rivals, couldn't possibly fail to notice whether a competitor planted mines along the beach to stop Israeli troops from using the beach as a landing zone. No way. Too strange. Only the Israeli military could make a mistake like that.

The flare-up couldn't have come at a worse time. Divided against themselves, often violently, Palestinians were suddenly given a reminder of their common enemy. This reminder came in an almost mythic form - the suffering Palestinian child.

If the Israeli version of events has not been universally accepted, it is still better to have a disputed verdict than a lynch mob. Just look at some of the headlines that followed the initial blast: Lebanon's Daily Star: "Israeli fire rakes Gaza beach," while Drudge reported that "Israeli Artillery Barrage Hits Packed Gaza Beach." Assuming the worst, that it was an Israeli shell, how does one shell "rake" or get transformed into a "barrage"?

There are those of us who have reached a point in this struggle where we have long since stopped worrying about how "unfair" our detractors are. The thing to watch is the political impact. If the verdict ultimately rendered here goes against Israel and if that judgment is backed by strong forensic evidence, it would trigger a major political problem for Israel's untested defense minister. Amir Peretz is also leader of the second largest party, Labor, so the political fallout for Prime Minister Olmert's government, and everything that depends on Israeli political stability, would be severe.

Mr. Twersky is a contributing editor of The New York Sun.

Load-Date: June 16, 2006



On bleak terrain, hope in a Palestinian school; Letter from Gaza

The International Herald Tribune June 23, 2006 Friday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 2

Length: 1075 words

Byline: Steven Erlanger

Dateline: GAZA

Body

APalestinian college is growing from the rubble of an uprooted Israeli settlement.

Nearly a year ago, the Israelis pulled all their 9,000 settlers and military forces out of the Gaza Strip and then took bulldozers and backhoes to what used to be homes, schools, shops and clinics, leaving a few gutted synagogues, a few hundred greenhouses and tons of rubble.

Throughout most of the former settlements, Palestinians have thoroughly mined the debris for metal, wiring, fixtures and almost anything usable or sellable. But despite promises at the time, not an ounce of rubble has been removed or reprocessed, leaving a post-apocalyptic landscape baking in the unforgiving sun.

Except in the former settlement of Neve Dekalim. On nearly 14 hectares, or 40 acres, surrounding what used to be the largest school in what used to be called the Gush Katif bloc, the Palestinian president, Mahmoud Abbas, decreed a campus. He granted it to Al Aksa University, affiliated with his Fatah party, which lost elections this year to *Hamas*.

With seed money of \$1.5 million from the sheik of Sharjah, one of the United Arab Emirates, the university hired its own security guards, built its own wall and started clearing and rebuilding.

The first students appeared in March, as construction went on around them, and now some 2,000 men drawn from cramped branches of the overcrowded university all over southern Gaza are taking their exams here. A new classroom building is going up to house 4,000 **women**, who are taught separately in this conservative society.

Mahmoud al-Shami, the deputy dean of student affairs, said he hoped that the <u>women</u> could be part of the campus by September for at least two days a week as building continued.

Shami showed off his office, with its satellite Internet connections, new desk, fixtures and fittings. "Now we're focusing on creating scholars, not fighters," he said.

Hosam Abu Zeit, 22, was between exams in the social sciences.

"Before, we would be shot if we entered this place," he said of the once heavily guarded settlement. "Now, in less than a year, we've succeeded in studying here. It gives me a sense of pride to be studying in a liberated place."

On bleak terrain, hope in a Palestinian school Letter from Gaza

Previously, he studied in the Khan Younis refugee camp, about a kilometer and a world away across the cement barrier 15 meters, or 50 feet, high that the Israelis built between the camp and Neve Dekalim.

Al Aksa's campus in Khan Younis, said Tamim Dheir, the assistant to the president in charge of renovation, was on half a hectare, or about 4 percent of the area of this campus. Classrooms were so scarce that students studied only three days a week, with men alternating days with <u>women</u>.

"We were on top of one another there," Zeit said, and then, almost giddy, swung his arm in an arc, to indicate a new sense of space. On the walls are a few posters of dead militants considered to be martyrs, like Muhammad Abdel Hadi of the Abu Rish Brigades, but students pass by them this day without a glance.

His friend Wael Balaawi, 21, ran a hand through his gelled hair.

"After 38 years of occupation!" he said excitedly.

"We couldn't even come here for a picnic or go to the beach, and we were cramped into the refugee camps, and the settlers had these huge places," he said with some wonder. "Now we can go where we want in a land that's ours."

In Gaza the Israelis largely built on empty sand dunes, displacing few Palestinians. But the network of walls, checkpoints, military sites and Israeli-only roads made it extremely difficult for Palestinians to travel freely. Now a trip from Gaza City to Rafah, which was often impossible, can be made in less than an hour.

Dheir, in his own freshly painted office, serving tea in new china cups, took out an architect's rendering of what the campus might look like in the future and displayed it proudly. Some of the nicest features were in red.

"It's only a plan," he finally said. "The red means it's part of the 10-year plan." But the intention is to bring the colleges of education, art and science here in their entirety within the next two years.

He added: "This is one of the symbols of freedom after the humiliation imposed on the Palestinians. It's a national project."

But as a state university normally financed by the Palestinian Authority, now led by *Hamas*, the employees here, like Dheir, have also not received their salaries for the last four months.

"It's very difficult," he said with a sigh. "The whole situation is difficult. It's a big preoccupation for everyone. No one's paying their bills, and everyone is calling for unity and fearing civil war."

When <u>Hamas</u> supporters in Gaza's Islamic University clashed with Fatah supporters in Al Azhar University, there were some fistfights here, but they were quelled. "It nearly touched us, too, but we managed to stop it," Dheir said. "We said that this is a presidential place and we must have unity."

Still, Fatah flags fly next to the Palestinian one, and Palestinians still call the area by its former Israeli name, Neve Dekalim.

Walking around the campus, Dheir explained that there had been much salvaging and looting after the Israelis left, when even many of the trees were cut down. But Abbas soon ordered Fatah security guards to patrol the area and to stop the seizing of land that had taken place in a number of other former settlements, where some clans, militant groups and business interests had taken over what was supposed to be Palestinian Authority land devoted to the interests of Gazans as a whole.

"After we put up the wall, things became easier," said the registrar, Ahmed al-Mabhouh.

The old Neve Dekalim supermarket is being turned into a two-story cafeteria for students and teachers, and a row of shops nearby, one of which used to serve a serviceable espresso, has been remodeled into one large hall for the

On bleak terrain, hope in a Palestinian school Letter from Gaza

registrar. But the campus excludes the former synagogues, mostly gutted and fire-charred, which remain on the horizon.

A group of students wandered on the repaved walkways, chatting excitedly after finishing a linguistics exam. Almutaz Abu Sittah, 19, tall and handsome, was proud of the campus but dour about the future.

"There's little optimism," he said. "The world is besieging us. And there's no real government, and no real state to govern." Does he feel freer? "We've grown up," he said, "with vengeance in our hearts."

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TOMORROW: Roger Cohen on the World Cup how you play is who you are.

Load-Date: June 27, 2006



St. Petersburg Times (Florida)

March 19, 2006 Sunday

0 South Pinellas Edition

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Section: NATIONAL; Pg. 1A

Length: 1814 words

Byline: SUSAN TAYLOR MARTIN

Dateline: BELFAST, Northern Ireland

Body

Sun and snow vie for control of the weather as a guide with the distinctly Irish name of Caoimhin Mac Giolla Mhin points out legacies of the "Troubles."

Here is Divis Tower, the ugly high-rise from which British soldiers used to spy on Catholics living along Falls Road. And St. Comgall's Primary School, scarred by gunbattles between Protestants and Catholics. And the memorial garden, honoring those who made the "supreme sacrifice for Irish freedom."

Then, unexpectedly, allusions to a far-off conflict.

Free Palestine. Boycott Israeli goods, reads one wall mural. Our day will come, vows another in Arabic and Irish.

"We bring Palestinians over here to explain what is happening in our country," says Mac Giolla Mhin, who organizes "political tours" of Belfast. "We have common issues, relationships have developed."

For years, a bond has existed between two relatively small groups that have captured a huge amount of world attention. Mac Giolla Mhin and 750,000 other Catholics in Northern Ireland want to end British rule and unite the province with the mainly Catholic Republic of Ireland. And 3.8-million Palestinians want to end Israeli occupation and establish their own state.

Something else the two groups have had in common: the use of violence to achieve their aims. Since 2000, <u>Hamas</u> and other Palestinian organizations have killed more than 1,000 Israelis.

Over three decades, the Irish Republican Army, a Catholic paramilitary group, shot and blew up some 1,800 people, most of them Protestants in Northern Ireland. Then in 1998, the IRA's political wing - Sinn Fein - vowed to work for peace and agreed to a historic power-sharing deal between Catholics and Protestants.

Today, Northern Ireland is largely quiet and Belfast, its handsome capital, is thriving. Almost everyone agrees there's little likelihood of a return to the "Troubles."

"I don't want me kids going through what I went through - police stopping you, searching you and all that malarkey," says John O'Neill, a Catholic barman.

"We don't have a peace process. Peace is here and the economy is booming," says Brendan Mullan, who runs Belfast's redevelopment agency. "What we're in the process of finalizing is the political process."

Could the changes in Northern Ireland presage what might happen in the Mideast, where <u>Hamas</u> won January elections and now controls the Palestinian government? Despite the group's fiery rhetoric and calls for Israel's destruction, some experts think <u>Hamas</u>, like Sinn Fein, could eventually renounce violence in favor of a political settlement.

"The evidence is quite hopeful," says Adrian Guelke, a professor of comparative politics at Queen's University in Belfast.

"Sinn Fein is the political outgrowth of a group of people committed in the first instance to violence, but there is evidence that involvement in the political process has changed their behavior. Likewise, *Hamas* is a group feeling its way into politics."

The solidarity with Palestinians was evident at a recent Sinn Fein conference, <u>Women</u> in International Struggle. Among the speakers: a young Palestinian. Among the flags: that of the Palestinian Authority.

"Sinn Fein believes in the right to self determination and obviously that includes the people of Palestine," said the group's leader, Gerry Adams, as he posed for pictures.

"We want to see the conflict in the Mideast settled through dialogue. There are situations where conflicts appear to be intractable, but we proved in our situation that's not the case."

Others are skeptical. Despite the progress, Northern Ireland is hardly an exemplar of conflict resolution. The power-sharing deal collapsed, partly over doubts about the IRA's willingness to give up its weapons. Protestant paramilitaries, meanwhile, are so involved in organized crime that one newspaper dubbed their leaders the "New Godfathers."

Drug dealing, smuggling and counterfeiting are rampant. Last year, the value of fake DVDs and other items seized in Northern Ireland exceeded the total for England, Scotland and Wales combined.

Like Israelis and Palestinians, Catholics and Protestants here continue to view each other with suspicion. And many distrust Northern Ireland's police force, which has battled both groups.

"I genuinely don't think we'll go back to war as such," says Gary White, who heads the police district in tough northern Belfast. "But as commander for this area, I don't need to go back to war to be worried."

"A con job?'

Faced with growing rebellion, Britain decided in 1920 to split its Irish colony in two: an independent state in the south and a smaller, mainly Protestant area in the north that remained part of the United Kingdom.

Protestants, or "unionists" as they are known, owned most of the major businesses including the huge Belfast shipyard where Titanic was built. They had the best jobs, the best housing, the best of everything, as the Catholic minority saw it.

"My grandfather was ushered out of the shipyards," says Mac Giolla Mhin. "Our people were attacked on a daily basis, people had hammers dropped on them. Employment was for the unionist population."

There were complaints of housing discrimination: unmarried Protestant <u>women</u> getting big houses ahead of Catholic families with several children.

Decades of anger erupted in sectarian rioting in 1969, and swelled support for the IRA and its guerrilla attacks on British soldiers and police. On Jan. 30, 1972 - "Bloody Sunday" - British paratroopers killed 13 unarmed Catholics and accelerated a cycle of violence that would last nearly 30 years.

Among the many spectacular IRA attacks - including one in England that nearly killed Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in 1984 - were many smaller ones that made life a dice roll in working-class areas of Belfast.

"The troubles reflect class," says Mina Wardle, a Protestant who runs a nonsectarian counseling center. "Some classes never heard a shot, never heard a bomb going off. It was in the particular class where you had poverty and deprivation."

One IRA bombing killed a close family friend. Another killed a neighbor and badly damaged Wardle's hearing. Yet another destroyed her husband's supermarket.

Still, she acknowledges Catholics had legitimate grievances. "Nobody denies it - history will tell you there was discrimination."

Realizing they could not win militarily against the British, Catholics turned to the political arena. On Good Friday 1998, Sinn Fein, other major parties and the British and Irish governments agreed to create a Northern Ireland assembly in which Catholics and Protestants would share power.

The assembly lasted less than three years before the British suspended it in 2002 over allegations of republican spying.

There were other incidents that raised doubts about the commitment to peace: the 2000 convictions in South Florida of an IRA member and three others for illegal weapons. The 2001 arrest of three IRA members for training Marxist rebels in Colombia. And a \$53-million bank robbery in 2004 that police blamed on the IRA.

"I voted "yes' for the Good Friday agreement but now I think it was a con job," says Lindy McDowell, a Protestant and a Belfast Telegraph columnist. "What we've done with terrorism in Northern Ireland is institutionalize it."

To help spur the peace process, the United States no longer lists the IRA as a terrorist organization, and the republican movement continues to enjoy substantial support from Irish Americans. This year again, Gerry Adams was invited to the White House St. Patrick's Day party although he had to share the spotlight with two <u>women</u> who believe the IRA murdered their brothers.

McDowell wonders if the Bush administration hasn't felt pressure from those who think America is "soft on white Christians and harder on black Muslims."

"I have this view of terrorism that it's not a box of chocolates where you pick the ones you like. Aside from a global network, there is a loose network where they all learn from each other. Has Osama learned from Irish terrorism that you can go so far and then go into the political process?"

Last summer, the IRA announced an end to its armed campaign. The independent commission monitoring the peace agreement says the group no longer is a terrorist threat and seems to be "moving in the right direction."

However, unionists still balk at joining a government with republicans, casting a shadow on the assembly's future. As in the Mideast with <u>Hamas'</u> ascendancy, Northern Ireland's fate rests with political parties at opposite extremes.

"Their whole raison d'etre is demonizing the other as a way of mobilizing votes," says Stephen Farry, a leader of the nonsectarian Alliance Party. "I have great difficulty seeing how they would actually do a deal and how that deal would stick."

Though major terrorism has stopped, both Catholics and Protestants are engaged in what some call "low-level nastiness." An IRA splinter group was blamed for rioting in Dublin last month that injured several police offers and scuttled a Protestant march.

Authorities say the main IRA has grown rich from illegal activities, including the manufacture of fake Smirnoff vodka and "dodgy diesel" - agricultural diesel doctored to run in cars.

The IRA "tried to bomb Ireland, now they're trying to buy it," says Lindy McDowell's husband, Jim, an editor with Ireland's best-selling paper, the Sunday World.

The paper has also done exposes of Protestant paramilitaries, now considered more dangerous than their Catholic counterparts. A reporter was murdered in 2001 and McDowell has had numerous threats, including one so serious he and his wife went to Florida and another that forced them to send their son to Spain to escape a kidnapping plot.

While civic leaders and even many residents say life has improved greatly since the Good Friday agreement, distrust between Catholics and Protestants is still apparent.

Aggressive recruiting has boosted the Catholic makeup of the police force to 19 percent, from 8 percent, but many Catholics still see it as pro-British.

"If I joined it, I couldn't live in this area because Catholics don't like the police," says O'Neill, the bartender.

In Protestant areas, homes proudly fly the British Union Jack, and residents wonder what the IRA is doing with all its money.

"Are they getting more weapons, because they're not putting it in the community," says a taxi driver who gave only his first name - Roy - "because me being a driver, I'm vulnerable." A few hours after he spoke, Protestant paramilitaries nearly killed another driver.

But there are positive signs. Since 2003, Mac Giolla Mhin has run his tours in conjunction with Protestants or "loyalists," as he calls them. The goal is to publicize the plight of political prisoners on both sides, who were released as part of the peace agreement but have limited rights.

"I never thought I'd be working with loyalists," says Mhin, a Sinn Fein member. "It was a pleasant surprise."

Graphic

PHOTO, SUSAN TAYLOR MARTIN, (4)

Two Catholic schoolgirls head home past a mural accusing Northern Ireland's police force of colluding with Protestant paramilitaries.; Caoimhin Mac Giolla Mhin; A sign painted on a wall supports Palestinians' quest for independence.; Sinn Fein leader

Gerry Adams, Northern Ireland's most famous Catholic, poses with Ibtihaj El-Halabi, a Palestinian speaker at a Sinn Fein conference.

Load-Date: March 19, 2006



Bombs targeted tourist strip

The Toronto Star

April 25, 2006 Tuesday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A01

Length: 921 words

Byline: Steven R. Hurst, Associated Press WITH FILES FROM STAR WIRE Services

Dateline: CAIRO

Body

Three nearly simultaneous bombings hit an Egyptian beach resort popular with foreigners yesterday at the height of the tourist season, killing at least 23 people and wounding more than 60 a day after Osama bin Laden issued a taped warning against Westerners.

The bombers struck the Sinai seaside city of Dahab in the early evening along a crowded promenade of shops, restaurants and bars. Authorities said 20 of the dead were Egyptian and that three foreigners, including a Russian and a Swiss citizen, were also killed.

The Foreign Affairs Department in Ottawa said there were no immediate reports of any Canadians among the casualties.

The explosions - the third terror strike on a Sinai resort in less than two years - hit Dahab at 7: 15 p.m. when the streets were jammed with tourists strolling, shopping or looking for a restaurant or bar for evening festivities by the tranquil waters of the Gulf of Aqaba.

"Egyptians were stumbling back from the scene of the blasts, crying in the arms of their friends," said Tracy Kennedy of Red Deer, Alta., who was in Dahab when the explosions occurred.

"The bombs struck at the heart of the pedestrian strip. It was right at a footbridge that we all crossed a few times today ... part of its railing blown right off," said Kennedy, who works as a news director at an Alberta radio station. "Another bomb struck outside a grocery market, glass storefront there shattered, spewing debris everywhere."

"Egyptians here can't understand why it would happen here. Dahab is so quiet, and a peaceful tourist town," Kennedy added.

"There were just three loud bangs and people rushing around," British tourist Paul McBeath told Sky News. "Everybody is shaken."

Another witness said the Al Capone restaurant, one of the area's most popular spots, was destroyed.

"The tables and chairs have gone, there is nothing left," Joseph Nazir, who owns a safari company in Dahab, told Britain's Press Association. "Everybody is panicking, a lot of people are crying. We will be affected by this for a long, long time."

Bombs targeted tourist strip

Hotels and guesthouses were filled with foreigners and with Egyptians celebrating the long Coptic Christian Easter weekend that coincided this year with Shem al-Nessim, the ancient holiday marking the first day of spring.

For years, Dahab has been a popular, low-key haven for young Western and Israeli backpackers drawn by prime scuba diving and cheap hotels, which mainly consisted of huts set up along the beach. In recent years, a number of more upscale hotels have been built, including a five-star Hilton resort.

At least three Israelis were hurt in the attack, which sent a steady stream of cars back to Israel some 100 kilometres to the north. Israeli authorities said 1,800 of their citizens were in the Sinai at the time of the blasts. However, there were far fewer Israelis vacationing in Sinai than during last week's Passover holiday.

Israel's ambassador in Cairo, Shalom Cohen, said the Israeli government had warned repeatedly against visiting the Sinai. "Unfortunately, the warnings came true," he told Israel's Channel 10 TV.

Israel said it offered to send medical assistance to Dahab but received no immediate reply from Egyptian authorities.

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, whose economy is heavily dependent on tourism, called the blasts a "sinful terrorist action."

U.S. President George W. Bush also condemned the attacks and vowed to bring the terrorists to justice.

"Today we saw again that the terrorists are willing to try to define the world the way they want to see it," Bush said in Las Vegas.

In Ottawa, Foreign Affairs Minister Peter MacKay issued a statement expressing sadness and condemning the attack.

"We offer our heartfelt condolences to Egypt and to all other countries affected by this tragedy," he said. "Our thoughts are with the victims and their families."

Egypt's Interior Ministry said the wounded included 42 Egyptians and 17 foreigners - including three Americans - while police put the number of wounded at more than 150. The discrepancy could not be immediately explained.

Terrorist attacks have killed nearly 100 people at several tourist resorts in the Sinai Peninsula in the past two years.

Bombings at the resorts of Taba and Ras Shitan, near the Israeli border, killed 34 people in October 2004. Suicide attackers in July in the resort of Sharm el-Sheik killed at least 64 people, mainly tourists.

The Egyptian government has said the militants who carried out the bombings were locals without international connections, but other security agencies have said they suspect Al Qaeda.

In Washington, a U.S. counter-terrorism expert said it was unclear who was behind the blasts, but said officials have not ruled out the possibility Al Qaeda may be involved.

In his taped warning Sunday, bin Laden accused the United States and Europe of supporting a "Zionist" war on Islam by cutting off funds to the <u>Hamas</u>-led Palestinian government.

Ghazi Hamad, spokesperson for the <u>Hamas</u>-run Palestinian cabinet, condemned yesterday's bombings as a "criminal attack which is against all human values." By contrast, <u>Hamas</u> had refused to condemn last week's bombing that killed nine people in an Israeli restaurant.

After yesterday's attack, Egyptian television footage showed body parts scattered on the streets, bloodstained pavement and destroyed shops littered with broken glass.

"We saw many dead people. People were screaming," said a cafe worker near the scene.

Bombs targeted tourist strip

One Dahab resident said: "There were body parts and debris in the street."

WITH FILES FROM STAR WIRE Services

Graphic

MOHAMED AL-SEHETY AP FILE PHOTO Aleksander Rabij reuters Two <u>women</u> help an injured tourist after explosions shook the Egyptian resort city of Dahab yesterday. The blasts came in the early evening along a crowded promenade.ALEKSANDER RABIJ REUTERS Rescuers carry an injured victim after three explosions rocked the Egyptian resort city of Dahab yesterday, killing at least 23 people and wounding more than 60.AP PHOTO EGYPT TV The Egyptian beach resort of Dahab, long popular with foreign tourists, is seen in this undated file photo, above left. At right, an image taken from Egyptian television shows the damage to Dahab's popular Al Capone restaurant caused by the blasts.ALEKSANDER RABIJ REUTERS Rescuers carry an injured victim after three explosions rocked the Egyptian resort city of Dahab yesterday, killing at least 23 people and wounding more than 60.AP PHOTO EGYPT TV The Egyptian beach resort of Dahab, long popular with foreign tourists, is seen in this undated file photo, above left. At right, an image taken from Egyptian television shows the damage to Dahab's popular Al Capone restaurant caused by the blasts.

Load-Date: April 25, 2006



Bin Laden's bluff

Guardian.com January 20, 2006

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theguardian

Length: 1351 words

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

Body

BLUFF CALLED ON BIN LADEN TRUCE OFFER

A couple of days ago, the press were speculating that Osama bin Laden might be too sick to broadcast a message from al-Qaida. The last time he released a tape was in December 2004. Now he has offered the US a "long truce" if it withdraws from Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Herald Tribune says the tape was probably made in early December and that it is almost certainly authentic, although Bin Laden sounds "short-winded" and lacks the "charismatic tone" of previous broadcasts. He "mixes defiant threats with a sometimes conciliatory tone that appeared to be part of a calculated effort to appeal to ordinary Americans", the paper says. Bin Laden says the lack of attacks on US territory since 9/11 is not the result of security measures, but the time needed to prepare a strike.

"It's a game," says Robert Fisk in the Independent. "Bin Laden has no intention of calling an end to his own war and nor has George Bush and nor has Tony Blair. The Bin Laden offer, almost certainly, is intended to be rejected. He wants Bush and Blair to refuse it. Then, after the next attack, will come the next audio tape. See what happens when you reject our ceasefire? We warned you."

"The two things that stand out here are the al-Qaida carrot and stick," says the Guardian. "The carrot is a so-called truce offer, in which the United States and its allies apparently withdraw from Iraq and Afghanistan in return for some kind of al-Qaida ceasefire in the west. This will not be to be treated as a genuine truce offer, for it would provide al-Qaida with the time, space and place to resume planning a renewed terror campaign. There is, though, a political claim in this message that cannot be completely disregarded, designed to play into a naive belief in some parts of the west that negotiations with Bin Laden may offer a way out of the terror and security-dominated world in which we now live."

The paper adds that Bin Laden's message should not be used as an excuse to let Britain and the US off the hook over the transport of terror suspects to third countries where they may be tortured.

The FT splashes with Jacques Chirac's threat to deploy nuclear weapons against any country that supported attacks on France or considered using WMDs.

Bin Laden's bluff

"Every few years French leaders feel the need to make a major statement to proclaim the force de frappe's continued relevance to French security," says the FT. "Yet there is a definite downside to vaunting nuclear weapons' usefulness when France and other established nuclear powers should be playing down the value of atomic arsenals if they ever want to dissuade countries such as Iran and North Korea from turning atoms into bombs."

- * Bin Laden threatens new attacks
- * In the shadow of Bin Laden
- * FT: France delivers nuclear threat
- * IHT: Bin Laden warns of attacks on the US

TOTAL TEACHING BAN FOR OFFENDERS

"Eighty-eight school .word omitted. offenders," splashes the Mail, citing the number of offenders who have been allowed to take up jobs in schools since 1997, according to Ruth Kelly. The education secretary said a further 210 people on List 99 were not completely banned from teaching, but subject to certain restrictions: "They were not necessarily all .word omitted. offenders," says the Telegraph.

It is not altogether clear whether the "150 PAEDOS IN YOUR SCHOOLS" on the front of the Sun are among these 210. The paper says it has dug up 150 people still working in schools: "All are perverts convicted before 2000 and given partial bans. Because they had a lust for boys, they were allowed to carry on working with GIRLS - or vice versa."

The education secretary told the Commons yesterday that, in future, anyone convicted of or cautioned for such an offence against a child would be automatically added to List 99 and banned from teaching.

"She is not off the hook," warns the Sun.

"Paedophilia is an issue that preoccupies Britain almost like no other," observes the Herald Tribune, quoting a professor of sociology at the University of Kent: "This is a level of hysteria that makes McCarthyism look benign."

- * All .word omitted. offenders face schools ban
- * Telegraph: Guidelines reversed
- * Sun: 150 paedos in your school

RAIL SAVER TICKETS ON THE LINE

"YOUR LOCAL POST OFFICE WILL SOON BE EXTINCT," splashes the Express. Automated benefits payments - which cost the government only 1p each to process - are to blame. "The local post office is a crucial public amenity," says the paper's editorial, which evidently believes they should enjoy a hefty subsidy at public expense.

Meanwhile, the Times has wind of plans to abolish saver tickets on the railways. "Passengers who are unable to book ahead will have to pay a substantial premium even if they travel during off-peak hours," says the paper. "Many will be forced to buy a standard open return ticket, which, in the case of the London to Manchester route, will cost 202, compared with the saver price of 57.10. ... The companies argue that they offer even cheaper tickets bookable up to 6pm the night before. But numbers for these are very restricted and passengers are forced to stick to specific trains for both outward and return journeys."

- * Loss of benefits contract 'threat to post offices'
- * Times: Rail fares will treble

Bin Laden's bluff

GALLOWAY CHARITY 'HAS HAMAS LINKS'

With George Galloway still firmly ensconced in the Big Brother house, the Mail alerts readers to his "disturbing" choice of charity. "His appearance is acting as a fundraising mechanism for an organisation which the US authorities allege is a front for terrorism and has been banned there." Interpal is not banned in the UK, the paper says, but US intelligence claims that some of the Palestinian causes it funds are linked to <u>Hamas</u>.

In an otherwise unrelated story, the Guardian reports that <u>Hamas</u> is "paying a spin doctor USD180,000 to persuade Europeans and Americans that it is not a group of religious fanatics who relish suicide bombings and hate Jews."

* *Hamas* in image makeover

MACHISMO V MASOCHISM VIA MOSCOW

"Sir," writes a Telegraph reader, "I am continually reading, particularly of late, that prostitution is the 'oldest profession'. This is not so. The oldest profession is that of a gardener, or horticulturist. In the Bible, Genesis 2:8 reads, 'God planted a garden eastward in Eden', and 2:15: 'Then the Lord God took the man .Adam. and put him in the garden to tend and keep it'. I rest my case."

The Times reports on the curious Russian practice of immersing oneself in freezing water to mark the Orthodox festival of Epiphany. The paper's Moscow correspondent bravely takes the plunge "to become a true Russian man".

"Now I cursed my vanity as I stared down at the sinister oblong hole carved into the ice on Lake Bezdonnoye (Bottomless) on the outskirts of Moscow. A rusty red ladder clung to the edge, leading the way into the glacial depths. Beside it lay an ominous inflatable life ring and a hooked pole. Every few minutes, the ice had to be smashed again to stop the pool freezing over. ... Then, as if on cue, a pair of svelte young <u>women</u> in bikinis lowered themselves sedately into the pool, splashed around for 30 seconds, and emerged with barely a shiver.

"I contemplated the potential loss of face. ... I can handle this, I thought, as I submerged for the first time. But when I went down again, I began to feel lightheaded and numb. And as I plunged for the third time, I became disorientated and sluggish.

The real shock, however, came when I got out. The water on my body froze instantly. My hair became a matted mop of ice, my swimming trunks frosty cardboard."

Dr Thomas Stuttaford warns readers not to emulate Jeremy Page. Acute hypothermia and even a heart attack could result.

* Times: Taking the plunge at -35C

* The Herald Tribune's slideshow of the cold snap in Russia

COMING UP ON GUARDIAN UNLIMITED TODAY

Ruth Kelly today insisted the government would be pressing ahead with school reforms despite growing unrest on its own backbenches.

Two teenagers are to appear in court charged with the murder of City lawyer Tom ap Rhys Pryce.

A teenager has been stabbed to death outside an Underground station.

Load-Date: January 20, 2006



Hate flows on Muslim 'day of anger': U.S. urges 'press responsibility'

Ottawa Citizen February 4, 2006 Saturday

Final Edition

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Length: 1021 words

Byline: David Rennie, Julian Isherwood and Jack Barton, The Daily Telegraph; with files from The Times, London

Dateline: BRUSSELS

Body

BRUSSELS - The United States and Britain sided with tens of thousands of Muslims who protested worldwide yesterday over cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad published in European newspapers.

In its first comment on the furore, the U.S. State Department said, "These cartoons are indeed offensive to the belief of Muslims."

Answering a reporter's question, State Department spokesman Kurtis Cooper, said, "We all fully respect freedom of the press and expression, but it must be coupled with press responsibility. Inciting religious or ethnic hatred in this manner is not acceptable."

Crowds of Muslims answered calls for "an international day of anger" over the cartoons -- one showing Muhammad with a turban in the shape of a bomb -- which were first published in Denmark last September.

Fiery sermons were preached in mosques in several European cities during Friday prayers.

A crowd of several hundred demonstrated outside the Danish Embassy in central London, with protesters repeatedly shouting, "U.K. you must pray, 7/7 is on its way."

British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw condemned the decision by some media companies in Europe to republish the cartoons, calling it "insensitive, disrespectful and wrong."

He said freedom of speech did not mean an "open season" on religious taboos, and he praised the British media for what he called its "considerable responsibility and sensitivity" for not publishing them.

The British Broadcasting Corporation, however, did publish visuals of the cartoons reproduced in a French newspaper.

A radical Islamic cleric who lived in London until he was banned from Britain called for the execution of broadcasters and newspaper editors who showed insulting cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad.

Omar Bakri Mohammed issued his instructions in a religious fatwa from his hideout in Lebanon. He said the first to be murdered should be the editor of the Danish newspaper that first published the drawings.

Hate flows on Muslim 'day of anger': U.S. urges 'press responsibility'

His followers in Britain who helped to organize yesterday's rowdy demonstration in London supported his demands as they called for more terror attacks to emulate the July 7 suicide bombers. However, the number of protesters was less than organizers expected and there were no other significant protests in the capital.

A Danish imam, Ahmed Abu Laban, told worshippers in Copenhagen, "In the West freedom of speech is sacred; to us, the Prophet is sacred."

Mullah Krekar, a radical imam living in Norway, was quoted by the Dagbladet daily as saying, "These drawings are a declaration of war."

But other Muslim community groups called for moderation and calm. Norway's Islamic Council said in a statement, "Muslims in Norway feel violated twice in this case -- first through the caricatures, then by the Norwegian flag being burned."

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Anders Fogh Rasmussen, the Danish prime minister, launched a diplomatic offensive to quell Muslim protests over the caricatures, telling foreign ambassadors in Copenhagen he needed their help to prevent the crisis from growing out of control.

But he said, "A Danish government can never apologize on behalf of a free and independent newspaper."

Denmark's intelligence service expressed fears that far-right extremists were trying to create "a conflict situation," after the radical Dansk Front Network called a demonstration to protest the burning of Danish flags in the Middle East.

Hate flows on Muslim 'day of anger': U.S. urges 'press responsibility'

Some Muslim ambassadors expressed anger that the Danish government could go no further, repeating earlier distaste at any "expression, action or indication that attempts to demonize groups of people on the basis of their religion or ethnic background."

Jyllands-Posten has already apologized for having caused offence to Muslims, but not for printing the caricatures and exercising its rights of freedom of speech.

Since September, the cartoons have been reprinted in more than a dozen newspapers in France, Germany, Norway, Italy, Spain, Switzerland and other nations, provoking protests against Europeans of all nationalities. The editor of a Norwegian paper apologized for publishing them and in France, the managing editor of France-Soir was fired for printing the 12 cartoons this week.

Philippe Douste-Blazy, the French foreign minister, said: "It is not normal to caricature a whole religion as an extremist or terrorist movement."

Graphic

Photo: Adel Hana, The Associated Press; <u>Female</u> supporters of <u>Hamas</u> hold copies of the Koran during a rally in front of the Palestinian parliament building in Gaza City yesterday. Thousands protested against the publication of cartoons in European newspapers depicting the Prophet Muhammad.

Load-Date: February 4, 2006



Uproar grows on prophet images; Gaza gunmen threaten EU headquarters

The International Herald Tribune February 3, 2006 Friday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 1 Length: 1082 words

Byline: Craig S. Smith and Ian Fisher

Dateline: PARIS

Body

Craig S. Smith reported from Paris and Ian Fisher from Gaza.

*

An international dispute over European newspaper cartoons deemed blasphemous by some Muslims gained momentum Thursday as gunmen threatened the European Union offices in the Gaza Strip and more European papers published the drawings as an affirmation of their freedom of speech.

In Gaza, masked gunmen swarmed the European Union headquarters on Thursday in protest of cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad, amid threats to Europeans from countries where the cartoons had been reprinted. The gunmen stayed about 45 minutes.

Meantime, a newly elected legislator from <u>Hamas</u>, the radical Islamic group that swept the Palestinian elections last week, said large rallies were planned in Gaza in the next few days to protest the cartoons.

"We are angry very, very, very angry," said Jamila Al Shanty, one of six <u>women</u> elected to represent <u>Hamas</u> in the Palestinian Parliament. "No one can say a bad word about our prophet."

The cartoons which include a drawing of the Prophet Muhammad wearing a turban shaped like a bomb first appeared in a Danish newspaper in September and have since been reprinted in France, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, Spain and Norway. BBC televised them on Thursday

France Soir, the only French daily to reprint the cartoons, fired its managing editor late Wednesday as "a strong sign of respect for the beliefs and intimate convictions of every individual," according to a statement from its owner, Raymond Lakah, an Egyptian-born French businessman. Nevertheless, the newspaper defended its right to print the cartoons.

The incident is causing diplomatic strains. Saudi Arabia and Syria have recalled their ambassadors to Denmark, and the Danish government has summoned foreign envoys in Copenhagen to talks on Friday over the issue, having already explained that it does not control the press.

The Danish prime minister, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, told the Copenhagen daily Politiken, "We are talking about an issue with fundamental significance to how democracies work."

Uproar grows on prophet images Gaza gunmen threaten EU headquarters

Many European commentators concede that the cartoons were provocative, even insensitive, but argue that the conservative Muslim world must learn to accept Western standards of free speech and pluralism.

Many Muslims complain that the cartoons reinforce a dangerous confusion between Islam and the Islamist terrorism that the vast majority of Muslims abhor. Dalil Boubakeur, head of France's Muslim Council, called the cartoons a new sign of Europe's growing "Islamophobia."

The conflict is just the latest manifestation of growing tension between Europe and the Muslim world as the Continent struggles to absorb a fast-expanding Muslim population whose customs and values are often at odds with Europe's secular, liberal societies. The tension has been exacerbated by racial and religious discrimination against Muslim immigrants and their children in Europe's weakest economies.

The trouble began in September when the Danish newspaper Jyllands-Posten published 12 cartoons lampooning Islam's intolerance and its links to terrorism. The cartoons were published again by a Norwegian magazine last month, and the issue erupted internationally this month after diplomatic efforts failed to assuage demands by several angry Arab countries that the publications be punished.

Jyllands-Posten has received two bomb threats in the past few days, though it earlier apologized for any hurt feelings the drawings may have caused.

France Soir was the first French periodical to publish the cartoons, printing on its front page the headline, "Yes, we have the right to caricature God," above a cartoon that depicted religious figures representing Buddhism, Judaism, Islam and Christianity sitting on a cloud. In the cartoon, the Christian figure is telling the Muslim one, "Stop complaining, Muhammad, we were ALL caricatured here."

The Afghan president, Hamid Karzai, issued a statement condemning "in the strongest terms" France Soir's publication of the cartoons. "Any insult to the Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) is an insult to more than 1 billion Muslims and an act like this must never be allowed to be repeated," his statement read.

On Wednesday, France's foreign minister, Philippe Douste-Blazy, said that press freedom should be exercised "in a spirit of tolerance," and on Thursday the country's embassy in its former colony Algeria issued a statement condemning the publication, saying that the French government is "deeply attached to the spirit of tolerance and to respect of religious belief as we are to the principle of freedom of the press."

The statement also read, "In this light, France condemns all those who hurt individuals in their beliefs or religious convictions."

The cartoons have ignited a general debate over freedom of expression and a cultural clash between the West and Islam, but in Gaza they have injected another element of uncertainty into the already tense atmosphere since <u>Hamas</u> won its sweeping victory last week.

Late Wednesday morning about a dozen gunmen from two armed groups appeared at the EU headquarters in Gaza, firing off automatic weapons and spray-painting a warning on the outside gate: "Closed until an apology is sent to Muslims." The men handed out a pamphlet warning Denmark, Norway and France that they had 48 hours to apologize.

The office, staffed only by Palestinians at the time, reportedly received a telephone warning that the gunmen were coming and was quickly closed.

Later, two armed masked men from one of the groups held a press conference on a sidewalk in Gaza warning of consequences if the nations did not apologize.

"It will be a suitable reaction, and it won't be predictable," said one of the men, Abu Hafss, identified as a commander of the Al Quds Brigade, an armed offshoot of the radical group Islamic Jihad. The other group is the Al Yasser Brigades, connected to the Fatah party, which was badly beaten in last week's elections.

Uproar grows on prophet images Gaza gunmen threaten EU headquarters

Another armed group connected to Fatah, the Abu el-Reesh Brigades, said that Norway, Denmark, France and Germany must apologize within 10 hours or their citizens in Gaza would be "in danger."

Both Abu Hafss and Shanty, the legislator, said their groups did not endorse harming any foreigners in Gaza. All the same, the threat emptied Gazan hotels of Europeans, most of them foreign journalists. The manager of the popular Al Diera Hotel said 12 of his 22 rooms had been cleared out by late afternoon.

"It's terrible for our business," said the hotel manager, Samir Skaik.

Load-Date: February 3, 2006



At least seven Canadians killed in Lebanon

The Star Phoenix (Saskatoon, Saskatchewan)

July 17, 2006 Monday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A1

Length: 699 words

Byline: Michelle Lalonde in MontrealJanice Tibbetts in Ottawaand Matthew Fisher in Jerusalem, CanWest News

Service

Body

The raging conflict in the Middle East killed at least seven Canadians as the federal government scrambled Sunday to work out plans to evacuate citizens from Lebanon.

The Canadians visiting the country, all members of a Montreal family, were killed Sunday in the bombing of Aitaroun, a village in southern Lebanon, according to family members in Montreal, who said four children between the ages of one and eight were among the dead.

Family members had initially said eight had died, but Foreign Affairs could only confirm the deaths of seven Canadians.

Family members in Montreal received the devastating news by cellphone while they were taking part in a demonstration against the Israeli attacks on Lebanon.

Weeping <u>women</u>, teenaged girls and children embraced each other on the sidewalk, while several young men called other family members on cellphones.

"My cousin just called me to say my father is dead, my mother is in hospital, two of my aunts, my uncle and his son and his grandson . . . they are all martyrs," said Hassan El-Akhras, 31.

Later in the afternoon, El-Akhras received another call from his cousin in Lebanon confirming that his father, Ali El-Akhras, 70, his uncle Ahmad Al-Akhras, 60, his aunt Haniya Al-Akhras, his cousin's wife Amira Al-Akhras, 23, and their four children, Saja, 8, Zeinab, 6, Ahmad, 4, and Salam, 1, were dead.

Five days of violence in the Middle East escalated Sunday when Israel responded to an unprecedented and deadly Hezbollah rocket attack on the main train station in the northern city of Haifa with a ferocious bombardment of more than 130 targets in Lebanon.

The conflict was triggered by Hezbollah's kidnapping of two Israeli soldiers on Israeli soil last Wednesday.

There are an estimated 40,000 Canadians in Lebanon, but only 16,000 were registered with the embassy as of Sunday.

At least seven Canadians killed in Lebanon

Foreign Affairs Minister Peter MacKay said the government has hired vessels to pick up Canadian evacuees off the coast, and was considering helicopters to airlift other Canadians out of Lebanon.

The government will seek to remove everyone who wants to leave, MacKay said.

The government faced criticism that it should have acted faster instead of mulling over evacuation prospects over the weekend while several other countries went ahead and lined up transportation to remove their citizens.

For the third time in four days, Israeli aircraft attacked the Beirut airport. Other aircraft hit a main power station earlier in the day, causing widespread electricity outages in the capital and spreading huge black clouds across the city.

"Nothing will deter us, whatever far-reaching ramifications regarding our relations on the northern border and in the region may be," Prime Minister Ehud Olmert told his cabinet after the Haifa attack by Hezbollah, which killed eight Israeli railway workers and wounded 20 others.

The attack on Israel's third largest city was made using about 10 220 mm Syrian-made rockets with a much larger warhead and a much greater range than any previous missile had. Their use represented another significant escalation in the conflict.

A total of 24 Israelis have been killed in the fighting since last week, including 12 civilians. Hundreds have been wounded.

Meanwhile, Israel's campaign in Lebanon has killed 145 people, all but four of them civilians.

Israel's Home Front Command responded to the attack on Haifa, which is 30 kilometres south of the Lebanese border, by extending a special alert as far south as Tel Aviv, which gives the authorities powers to close schools and businesses and order citizens to take refuge in bomb shelters.

World leaders meeting In St. Petersburg, Russia, overcame significant differences to unanimously denounce Hezbollah and *Hamas* terrorists while urging Israel to exercise restraint in its military assault on Lebanon.

The G-8 leaders produced their strongly worded statement Sunday after a marathon day of talks on the Israel-Lebanon crisis, demanding Hezbollah terrorists abandon shelling attacks on Israel and to join with <u>Hamas</u> in Gaza in freeing three Israeli soldiers captured by the two groups.

The G8 also called on Israel to "exercise utmost restraint"in its five-day-old military campaign against Lebanon.

Load-Date: July 17, 2006



Muslim 'day of anger' targets embassies: Protesters burn Danish flag, goods at rallies

Ottawa Citizen
February 4, 2006 Saturday
EARLY Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A3

Length: 1021 words

Byline: David Rennie, Julian Isherwood and Jack Barton, The Daily Telegraph; with files from The Times, London

Dateline: BRUSSELS

Body

BRUSSELS - The United States and Britain sided with tens of thousands of Muslims who protested worldwide yesterday over cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad published in European newspapers.

In its first comment on the furore, the U.S. State Department said, "These cartoons are indeed offensive to the belief of Muslims."

Answering a reporter's question, State Department spokesman Kurtis Cooper, said, "We all fully respect freedom of the press and expression, but it must be coupled with press responsibility. Inciting religious or ethnic hatred in this manner is not acceptable."

Crowds of Muslims answered calls for "an international day of anger" over the cartoons -- one showing Muhammad with a turban in the shape of a bomb -- which were first published in Denmark last September.

Fiery sermons were preached in mosques in several European cities during Friday prayers.

A crowd of several hundred demonstrated outside the Danish Embassy in central London, with protesters repeatedly shouting, "U.K. you must pray, 7/7 is on its way."

British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw condemned the decision by some media companies in Europe to republish the cartoons, calling it "insensitive, disrespectful and wrong."

He said freedom of speech did not mean an "open season" on religious taboos, and he praised the British media for what he called its "considerable responsibility and sensitivity" for not publishing them.

The British Broadcasting Corporation, however, did publish visuals of the cartoons reproduced in a French newspaper.

A radical Islamic cleric who lived in London until he was banned from Britain called for the execution of broadcasters and newspaper editors who showed insulting cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad.

Muslim 'day of anger' targets embassies: Protesters burn Danish flag, goods at rallies

Omar Bakri Mohammed issued his instructions in a religious fatwa from his hideout in Lebanon. He said the first to be murdered should be the editor of the Danish newspaper that first published the drawings.

His followers in Britain who helped to organize yesterday's rowdy demonstration in London supported his demands as they called for more terror attacks to emulate the July 7 suicide bombers. However, the number of protesters was less than organizers expected and there were no other significant protests in the capital.

A Danish imam, Ahmed Abu Laban, told worshippers in Copenhagen, "In the West freedom of speech is sacred; to us, the Prophet is sacred."

Mullah Krekar, a radical imam living in Norway, was quoted by the Dagbladet daily as saying, "These drawings are a declaration of war."

But other Muslim community groups called for moderation and calm. Norway's Islamic Council said in a statement, "Muslims in Norway feel violated twice in this case -- first through the caricatures, then by the Norwegian flag being burned."

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Load-Date: February 4, 2006



News Summary

The New York Times

June 11, 2006 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2006 The New York Times Company

Section: Section 1; Column 3; Metropolitan Desk; Pg. 2

Length: 682 words

Body

INTERNATIONAL 3-20

Taliban Surges in Afghanistan

A large springtime offensive by the Taliban has turned into their strongest show of force since American forces chased them from power in late 2001, and Afghan and foreign officials and local villagers blamed a scarcity of United States-led coalition forces for the resurgence. 1

Hamas Rockets Hit Israel

<u>Hamas</u> fired at least 15 Qassam rockets from Gaza into Israel, ending a 16-month truce with Israel, a day after eight Palestinians, including four children, were killed on a Gaza beach, apparently by an errant Israeli shell. 8

Iran to Present Counteroffer

Iran's foreign minister said that the government would issue a counteroffer to an proposal by Europe, China and the United States to get Iran give up enriching uranium in the short term. 26

Iraq Delays Decision on Troops

The new government of Iraq has decided to postpone any demand for negotiations to establish a more formal legal basis for the presence of American and other foreign troops on its soil, Iraqi and American officials said. 20

Concern Over China's Coal Use

China uses more coal than the United States, the European Union and Japan combined, and the increase in global-warming gases from China's coal use will probably exceed that for all industrialized countries combined over the next 25 years, surpassing by five times the reduction in such emissions that the Kyoto Protocol seeks. 1

Progress in Hariri Inquiry

The head of the United Nations inquiry into the assassination of Rafik Hariri, the former Lebanese prime minister, said he was making "considerable progress" and had established the case was probably a suicide bombing, but he revealed nothing new about who was behind the killing. 27

Zarqawi Planned Expansion

News Summary

At the time of his death, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi was still trying to transform his organization into a global operation capable of striking far beyond Iraq's borders, recruiting terrorists both in Iraq and abroad, intelligence experts agree.

Venezuela Forges New Force

President Hugo Chavez is attempting to create Latin America's largest civilian reserve force as part of Venezuela's rising military profile, in preparation for what Mr. Chavez insists is the threat of invasion by the United States. 3

NATIONAL 28-37

Suicides at Guantanamo

Three detainees being held at the United States military prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, apparently committed suicide, the first deaths of detainees to be reported at the military prison since it opened in early 2002, American military officials said. 1

Medicare Problems Continue

Bush administration officials say Medicare's new prescription drug program is humming along smoothly, but many patients still say they have difficulty getting the drugs they need. 32

Democrats Courting Bloggers

If there is an emerging consensus among much of the Democratic Party establishment, it is that blogs are an important emerging power in American politics. What is less clear is how mainstream politicians grapple with an audience that has defined itself in part by its dissatisfaction with mainstream politicians. 37

Recruiters Look to MySpace

Many companies that recruit on college campuses have been using search engines to conduct background checks on seniors looking for their first job. But now, college career counselors and other experts say, some recruiters are also looking up applicants on social networking sites like Facebook and MySpace. 1

OBITUARIES 45

Charles F. Brush III

An archaeologist who as president of the Explorers Club persuaded members to admit women, he was 83. 45

HEALTH/SCIENCE

Teenage Smoking Holds Steady

After long steady decline, a new survey shows that smoking among high school students held steady at around one in four teenagers from 2003 to 2005. 28

NEW YORK/REGION 39-44

9/11 Memorial Unveiled

The first large-scale 9/11 monument at ground zero -- a bold, literal and almost neo-Classical 56-foot-long bronze relief -- was unveiled at "10 House," the firehouse across Liberty Street from the World Trade Center site. 39

Chess 44 TV Section 2 TV Update 44 Weather 34

News Summary

http://www.nytimes.com

Load-Date: June 11, 2006



Sisters win "Lion Sleeps Tonight' royalties

St. Petersburg Times (Florida)

March 23, 2006 Thursday

0 South Pinellas Edition

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Section: NATIONAL; Pg. 2A

Length: 696 words

Dateline: JOHANNESBURG, South Africa; KABUL, Afghanistan

Body

Three impoverished South African <u>women</u>, whose father wrote The Lion Sleeps Tonight, have won a six-year battle for royalties in a landmark case that could affect musicians worldwide.

No one is saying how many millions will go to the daughters of the late composer Solomon Linda, who died in poverty from a curable kidney disease in 1962 at age 53. But the family's settlement with New York-based Abilene Music, giving Linda's heirs 25 percent of past and future royalties, has broad implications.

Linda composed his now-famous song in 1939. According to family lore, he wrote the song in a matter of minutes and was inspired by his childhood tasks of chasing prowling lions from the cattle he herded.

The song sold more than 100,000 copies over a decade, probably making it Africa's first big pop hit.

In the 1950s, at a time when apartheid laws robbed blacks of negotiating rights, Linda sold worldwide copyright to Gallo Records of South Africa for 10 shillings - less than \$1.70.

Gallo also tried to sell the work in the United States, but American folk singer Pete Seeger had adapted a version that he called Wimoweh.

Then it became one of the best known songs in the world as The Lion Sleeps Tonight, attributed to George Weiss, Hugo Peretti and Luigi Creatore.

Owen Dean, South Africa's leading copyright lawyer, argued successfully for Linda's family that under the British Imperial Copyright Act of 1911, which was in force in South Africa at the time Linda composed his song, all rights revert to the heirs, who are entitled to renegotiate royalties.

Of his three surviving daughters, only the youngest has a job, as a nurse, and she still lives in the family home in Soweto. Her sisters never reached high school.

The song's captivating rhythm poured from the soundtrack in Disney's blockbuster musical The Lion King - one of at least 15 movies in which it has been featured.

Dean's tactics included winning a court order last year freezing Disney's rights to income in South Africa from legendary trademarks including Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck and Winnie the Pooh pending resolution of the dispute. That appears to have been a turning point, though Disney never was sued in the case.

Afghans: Christian may be "unfit' for trial

KABUL, Afghanistan - An Afghan man facing a possible death penalty for converting from Islam to Christianity may be mentally unfit to stand trial, a state prosecutor said Wednesday amid growing international condemnation of the case.

Abdul Rahman, 41, has been charged with rejecting Islam, a crime under this country's Islamic laws. His trial started last week and he confessed to becoming a Christian 16 years ago. If convicted, he could be executed.

"We think he could be mad. He is not a normal person. He doesn't talk like a normal person," prosecutor Sarinwal Zamari told the Associated Press.

The United States, Britain and other countries that have troops in Afghanistan have voiced concern about Rahman's fate.

Elsewhere . . .

MIDEAST: The militant Islamic group <u>Hamas</u> moved closer to controlling the Palestinian government, calling a special session of Parliament to approve its new Cabinet despite objections from President Mahmoud Abbas over its refusal to recognize Israel. Abbas plans to state his complaints but in the end will give his blessing to the new <u>Hamas</u> governing team. Acting Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said that if there are no talks with the Palestinians, Israel will draw its own borders, annexing main settlement blocs.

WATER FORUM: Governments, not private companies, should take the lead in improving public access to safe drinking water, representatives of 148 countries said at the end of a forum in Mexico City on improving global water supplies. The seven-day forum focused much of its attention on the developing world's growing reliance on bottled water bought from private companies. Worldwide, the industry is now worth about \$100-billion per year.

LACOSTE DIES: Bernard Lacoste, who spent more than 40 years at the helm of the Lacoste clothing empire best known for its crocodile-embossed polo shirts, has died. Lacoste is widely credited with turning the family sportswear business into a major apparel company.

Load-Date: March 23, 2006



Reply Letters and emails: Rethinking relations with political Islam

The Guardian - Final Edition February 20, 2006 Monday

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Section: GUARDIAN LEADER PAGES; Pg. 35

Length: 261 words

Byline: David Mepham

Body

The government is right to be rethinking its approach to political Islam in Egypt by considering a dialogue with the Muslim Brotherhood (UK to build ties with banned Islamist group, February 17). But the issues go wider than relations with Egypt. In many other countries in the Middle East, political Islamists are now the largest and best-organised source of opposition to existing regimes. Over the last few years, some political Islamist groups have also moderated their positions. In Morocco, Jordan and Egypt, for example, the main Islamist groups have rejected violence and publicly endorsed the rule of law and pluralistic politics.

Of course, engaging with political Islamists does not mean endorsement of the positions taken by particular groups - even the more moderate ones. Some Islamists in the region have attitudes or policies towards <u>women</u> that run directly counter to universal principles of equality and non-discrimination. There are real concerns in respect of freedom of expression and the rights of minorities. And in the case of <u>Hamas</u>, there are critical issues about recognising Israel's right to exist and the practice of suicide bombings against Israeli civilians. But ignoring political Islamism is no longer a tenable policy. By refusing to differentiate between moderate and fundamentalist versions of Islamism, we may inadvertently strengthen the latter. Our own experience with Northern Ireland also suggests that opening a critical dialogue can be a more intelligent strategy than ostracism.

David Mepham

Institute for Public Policy Research

Load-Date: February 20, 2006



MEANWHILE IN... JERUSALEM

The Daily Telegraph (LONDON)
February 8, 2006 Wednesday

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Section: FEATURES; Telegraph Living; Pg. 22

Length: 261 words **Byline:** Tim Butcher

Body

It's not a good time for <u>women</u> travelling to Israel alone. In the eyes of some members of the Israeli security services, a solitary foreign <u>female</u> means potential danger and can lead to some pretty ungentlemanly behaviour at Ben Gurion International Airport.

Israel's long history of facing terrorist attack means all airport travellers face questioning by security personnel, who are specially trained to probe way beyond whether passengers have packed their own bags. Staff routinely demand to know whom visitors met in Israel and even expect to be given phone numbers so their stories can be checked out.

But for some reason, non-Israeli <u>women</u> seem to get picked on the most. My girlfriend was subjected to a barrage of increasingly intrusive questions when she passed through the airport for the first time. The fact that she was heavily pregnant did little to convince her inquisitors of her innocence.

And the questioning of an American friend got even worse; the sceptical security staff took her to a private room for a humiliating strip search, a grim experience made worse by a security camera capturing the entire event. When eventually left on her own to dress, she burst into tears, only for a security officer watching via the camera to rush back into the room shouting at her.

No wonder the <u>female</u> election monitors leaving Israel this weekend after the recent Palestinian election were given special instructions. Leave behind all paperwork, posters and memorabilia connected with <u>Hamas</u>, Israel's enemy, they were told. Or face a long wait for a flight home.

Load-Date: February 8, 2006



Bourguiba's legacy

Bangor Daily News (Maine)
February 15, 2006 Wednesday
All Editions

Copyright 2006 Bangor Daily News

Section: Pg. A10 Length: 264 words

Body

The late Habib Bourguiba was president of Tunisia from 1957 until 1987. Under his leadership, this North African country developed into one of the most liberal societies in the Arab world, characterized by political pluralism, enhanced **women**'s rights and broadly accessible secular education.

In international relations, Habib Bourguiba was pro-Western, insisting on close relations with Western Europe and the United States. In 1968, Bourguiba joined with the U.S. in advocating a phased solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict. Months before the 1973 Arab-Israeli war, he called for "just and last-ing peace" and insisted on Israel's right to exist. Unfortunately, Bourguiba's representations went unheeded by other Arab leaders.

In 1982, with some misgivings, Bourguiba yielded to U.S. pressure to offer safe haven to the Palestine Liberation Organization when the Palestinians were threatened by annihilation in an Israeli military intervention in Beirut.

If Bourguiba were alive today, probably he would be appealing to <u>Hamas</u> to moderate harsh positions on Israel, and he might call on all parties, not least of all the U.S., to proceed promptly with a sensible, meaningful peace process. In Bourguiba's absence, who might do so now? Bourguiba's successor, Tunisian President Zine el Abidine Ben Ali? Unlikely, though it could be useful to encourage Ben Ali to rise to the occasion. King Abdullah of Jordan? King Mohammed VI of Morocco?

Good opportunity for either of these young monarchs to show real leadership! An Iraqi leader yet to emerge?

Robert Sargent

former U.S. diplomat

Sargentville

Load-Date: February 15, 2006



Israel 'might free Palestinians' in return for captured soldier

Financial Times (London, England)

July 8, 2006 Saturday

London Edition 1

Copyright 2006 The Financial Times Limited

Section: MIDDLE EAST; Pg. 8

Length: 272 words

Byline: By FERRY BIEDERMANN

Dateline: JERUSALEM

Body

The Israeli government, coming under increasing international criticism for its continuing Gaza offensive, indicated for the first time yesterday that it might be willing to free Palestinian prisoners in exchange for the release of a capturedsoldier.

Public security minister Avi Dichter saidjailed Palestinians could be freed as a "reciprocal gesture" after the 19-year-old corporal Gilad Shalit was returned.

The European Union levelled its harshest criticism at Israel yet. "The EU condemns the loss of lives caused by disproportionate use of force by the Israeli Defence Forces and the humanitarian crisis it has aggravated," Finnish Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen, whose country holds the EU's rotating presidency, said in a statement.

He spoke after more than 20 people died on Thursday when Israeli forces moved into densely populated areas in the north of the strip to prevent the firing of rockets at Israeli towns and to exert more pressure over the captured soldier.

At least another six Palestinians died in the fighting yesterday, while the firing of rockets continued. Mr Dichter saidthe freeing of Palestinian prisoners was necessary to obtain the soldier's release. "Israel knows how to do this. Israel has done this more than once in the past." It was not clear if he was speaking with the approval of Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, who has ruled out negotiations until now.

Earlier, sources in the ruling Palestinian <u>Hamas</u> movement, whose members took part in the attack in which the corporal was seized, said the soldier could be released in exchange for all <u>female</u> Palestinian prisoners and some 20 men serving long sentences.

Load-Date: July 7, 2006



Guardian weekly: The roundup

Guardian Weekly September 8, 2006 Friday

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*The*GuardianWeekly

Section: Pg. 2

Length: 754 words

Body

Americas

Bush says sorry in New Orleans

President George Bush marked the anniversary of Hurricane Katrina's destruction of New Orleans by acknowledging his government's inadequate response to the disaster.

JonBenet prosecutor apologises

The prosecutor in the murder case of child beauty queen JonBenet Ramsey admitted she made mistakes in the investigation. DNA evidence cleared the prime suspect, John Mark Karr.

On-the-run polygamist caught

Much-married Warren Jeffs, 50, fugitive leader of a polygamist sect and one of the FBI's most wanted men, was arrested for a traffic violation near Las Vegas. He had been 114 days on the run, fleeing charges of sexual crimes against minors.

Anti-Bush T-shirt ruled legal

A 13-year-old student from Vermont, Zachary Guiles, won the right to wear a T-shirt that accused George Bush of being a war-mongering, draft-dodging drunkard. An appeals court in New York found that his constitutional rights had been violated by a school policy that had banned the shirt.

Warren Buffett weds ex-waitress

The world's second-richest man, Warren Buffett, 76, finally married his long-term companion, Astrid Menks, 60, whom he met when she was a waitress in an Omaha cafe.

Star wars hits something at last

The Pentagon claimed a victory for the US star wars missile defence system after a mock warhead was destroyed in a test in space. Total cost of the system so far: \$100bn.

Guardian weekly: The roundup

World's oldest person dies

Maria Esther de Capovilla, the oldest person on earth, has died in Guayaquil, Ecuador, aged 116.

Europe

Safe return of The Scream

Edvard Munch's paintings, The Scream and Madonna, which were stolen by armed robbers from an Oslo museum in 2004, have been recovered.

Chemical slick fouls Spanish river

A toxic coating has spread 4km along a river in Galicia, Spain's shellfish centre, after a fire in a chemical plant. It has cut off drinking water to 100,000 people and killed fish.

Chechen warlord's wife kidnapped

Pro-Russian forces in Grozny are believed to have kidnapped Elina Ersenoyeva, 26, secret and reluctant bride of the Chechen warlord, Shamil Basayev. He was killed in July.

Interpol follows up child abduction

Interpol will analyse the DNA of Wolfgang Prikipil, who abducted and held a girl for eight years in his Vienna basement before committing suicide, to ascertain if he committed crimes outside Austria.

Chechens flee Russian town

Several hundred Chechens and dark-skinned people from the Caucasus were forced to flee a town in northwest Russia after a brawl in a restaurant prompted a race riot. The incident happened in Kondopoga in the Karelia region.

Asia/Pacific

Bangladesh strike after shootings

Bangladesh faced a nationwide general strike after the fatal shootings of six people who were protesting against a \$1.1bn open-cast coal mine planned by a British company.

Baluch chieftain buried in a hurry

The rebellious Baluch chief, Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti, 79, was laid in a desert grave near his fortress. Days of rioting in Baluchistan ensued after he was killed by Pakistan's army.

Bomb in British forces HQ town

A suicide bomb killed 17 and wounded 47 in a market in Lashkar Gah, headquarters of British forces in Helmand province, Afghanistan.

China sentences 'spy' reporter

A Hong Kong reporter for a Singapore newspaper was sentenced by a Chinese court to five years in prison on charges of spying for Taiwan.

Left paw on the brakes

A woman in Hohhot, capital of Inner Mongolia, China, crashed a car while giving her dog a driving lesson.

Guardian weekly: The roundup

Africa

Arms shopping list for elections

Nigerian police plan to buy 80,000 assault rifles, plus ammo, to help them cope with violence in the run-up to next April's general election.

Middle East

Hamas leaders sent for trial

An Israeli military court ordered 15 <u>Hamas</u> leaders, including two cabinet ministers and the speakers of the Palestinian parliament, to go for trial charged with membership of an outlawed organisation.

Iraq fuel scavengers die in blast

At least 29 people were killed by a blast as they were scavenging petrol from pools around a breach in a disused pipeline in central Iraq.

Aircraft fire deaths in Iran

A Tupolev passenger plane caught fire after a tyre burst on its touchdown at Mashad airport, northern Iran: 29 people died in the fire.

Gunman kills tourist in Jordan

A gunman opened fire on a group of foreign tourists in the Roman amphitheatre in the Jordanian capital Amman, killing a British man, Christopher Stokes, aged 30. Five other people were injured - two British <u>women</u> as well as tourists from New Zealand, the Netherlands and Australia.

Load-Date: September 22, 2006



Israel threatens to invade Gaza

The Advertiser (Australia)

June 28, 2006 Wednesday

State Edition

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Section: FOREIGN; Pg. 36

Length: 280 words

Byline: JOSEF FEDERMAN, JERUSALEM

Body

AΡ

ISRAEL'S Prime Minister yesterday rejected a demand to release prisoners in exchange for information about a captured soldier, ordering instead preparations for a large-scale military push into Gaza.

On Monday the militants holding Corporal Gilad Shalit issued their first demands. The groups, all linked to the <u>Hamas</u>-led Palestinian government, called for the release of all Palestinian <u>women</u> and children under 18 held in Israeli prisons in return for information about Shalit.

Addressing Jewish leaders in Jerusalem Prime Minister Ehud Olmert charged that Sunday's Palestinian attack on an Israeli army post at a Gaza crossing and the abduction of the soldier were part of a "murderous, hateful, fanatical Islamic extremist desire to destroy the state of Israel".

He declared: "This is not a matter of negotiations, this is not a matter of bargaining . . . release of prisoners is absolutely not on the agenda."

Corporal Shalit, 19, was seized early on Sunday at a military post near the Gaza border by militants who infiltrated into Israel through a tunnel. The attack was the first of its kind since Israel withdrew from Gaza in September.

Mr Olmert said he held the Palestinian leadership responsible for Corporal Shalit's safety.

"I gave the orders to our military commanders to prepare the army for a broad and ongoing military operation to strike the terrorist leaders and all those involved," he said.

Egyptian security officials said they had posted 2500 police on the border to head off a flood of refugees if Israel invades Gaza.

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas was working with Egyptian mediators as well as Arab and Western leaders, in hopes of locating the soldier.

Load-Date: June 27, 2006



Tories seem to understand the crisis

The Guardian (Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island)

July 19, 2006 Wednesday

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Section: EDITORIAL; Pg. A6

Length: 746 words **Byline:** Barbara Yaffe

Body

The Harper government deserves credit for maintaining a well thought out, principled approach in reacting to the crisis in the Middle East.

Even in the face of sad news on the weekend that a Lebanese- Canadian family had been killed in the crossfire in southern Lebanon, and criticism from abroad of a perceived Israeli overreaction, Prime Minister Stephen Harper has shown political courage.

The Canadian Council for Israel and Jewish Advocacy on Monday applauded "the sense of clarity Prime Minister Harper has brought to the current situation and the principled positions adopted by his government."

Harper won't countenance terrorism in Afghanistan, and he won't countenance it in the Middle East.

Federal Liberals, meanwhile, continued their traditional practice of playing both sides of the fence in foreign-affairs matters, issuing a press release full of fluff and blather.

A statement by Liberal Leader Bill Graham said: "Peace can only be obtained on the foundation of respect for the security, well being and legitimacy of the states and peoples of Israel, Palestine and Lebanon."

The rest of his statement provided no indication of where Liberals stand on the confrontation.

The approach is reminiscent of the buffoonish utterance of then-PM Jean Chretien who, while in the ancient Israeli city in 2000, claimed not to know East from West Jerusalem.

By contrast, Conservatives appear to have a good understanding, not only of the ongoing dispute, but its genesis and complexity. And aren't afraid to express a position.

They're clear on the fact that <u>Hamas</u> and Hezbollah are proxy agents of Syria and Iran, from whence all the sophisticated weaponry derives.

Conservatives also appear to understand that the goal of those confronting Israel isn't a Palestinian state. Rather, it's obliteration of the UN-mandated Jewish state which occupies a miniscule slice of terrain in the Arab region.

Israel vacated south Lebanon in 2000, Gaza in 2005. The Olmert government had been planning to vacate the West Bank. In 2000, former Israeli prime minister Ehud Barak, in negotiations conducted under U.S. auspices, offered a starting point for a Palestinian state, promptly rejected by Yasser Arafat.

Tories seem to understand the crisis

Palestinians had a chance following Israel's withdrawal from Gaza to demonstrate they could build a state. Instead they used Gaza to launch 700 rockets at Israel, killing a dozen Israelis.

Likewise, in south Lebanon, Hezbollah, the Party of God - a terrorist organization - has been operating with the tacit approval of the Lebanese government. Indeed, like <u>Hamas</u> in the Palestinian Territories, Hezbollah is part of the Lebanese government, with 23 of 128 seats in the National Assembly.

Israel has suffered as a result. But not as much as the Lebanese and Palestinians, who lag behind Israelis in terms of every conceivable economic and social indicator.

As political analyst Barry Rubin astutely wrote in a column Monday from Tel Aviv, "Who needs peace, stability, economic progress, <u>women</u>'s rights, an independent judiciary, an accurately reporting media, controlling corruption, a good educational and health system, free speech or all the rest of that stuff when you can kidnap Israelis?"

By keeping their populations focused on Israel, Arab dictatorships for years have been able to avoid doing the harder work of worthy governments - bettering life for their populations.

In response to the recent kidnappings of Israeli soldiers, the Israeli Defence Force is operating with two specific strategic objectives: (1) Getting the kidnapped soldiers returned, and (2) Preventing the terrorists in Gaza and Lebanon from deploying missiles against Israeli civilians, and impeding flow of more weaponry originating from Iran, delivered through Syria.

Israel is trying to do this as humanely as possible, dropping leaflets of warning in civilian-occupied areas before dispatching artillery. But war is never a precision game. On the other side, no precautions are taken.

If Canadian soldiers operating on Canadian soil were kidnapped and an adjacent nation was serving, unimpeded, as a staging ground from which terrorists were lobbing missiles into Toronto and Vancouver, what would Canada's government do in response?

It's tough to predict, or even imagine such a circumstance. But this much is clear; based on statements coming out of party headquarters in Ottawa, I'd much rather the Harper government be standing on guard for Canada than the Liberals.

Barbara Yaffe writes for the Vancouver Sun.

Load-Date: July 19, 2006



Palestinians killed on Gaza beach by Israeli gunboats

The Independent (London)

June 10, 2006 Saturday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 10

Length: 270 words

Byline: By Eric Silver in Jerusalem

Body

Israeli naval gunboatskilled at least 10 Palestinian civilians and wounded about 40 others as they relaxed in the summer heat on a beach in northern Gaza yesterday. Palestinian medical sources said that eight of the dead were from one family.

The total included six women and a three-year-old girl.

Lt-Gen Dan Halutz, the Israeli chief of staff, ordered an end to the shelling from land and sea, which had continued throughout the day in retaliation for Palestinian rocket fire into the western Negev. The army apologised for the incident, saying it "regretted the attack on innocent people".

The Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas condemned what he called a "bloody genocide" in Gaza and called on the international community, including the United States, Europe and the UN Security Council, to intervene.

Earlier yesterday, an Israeli air strike killed three gunmen. A military spokesman said they were hit minutes after firing a Qassam rocket into Israel.

Israeli forces had been alerted after Palestinian mil-itants vowed to avenge Thursday's killing of Jamal Abu Samhadana, who headed the <u>Hamas</u> government's security forces in the Gaza Strip. Mr Abu Samhadana died with at least three members of the umbrella Popular Resistance Committee when warplanes hit a military training camp.

Abu Abir, a Popular Resistance Committee spokesman, said: "Our rockets will rain into the Zionist entity and our heroes will blow themselves up among their dirty bodies," he said.

Israel accused Mr Abu Samhadana of planning and ordering many of the rocket attacks which have pounded the Negev since Israel withdrew from Gaza last August.

Load-Date: June 11, 2006



Crooks work for carnival

EVENING CHRONICLE (Newcastle, UK)

May 26, 2006 Friday

Edition 1

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 4

Length: 269 words

Byline: By The Evening Chronicle

Body

Criminals ordered to carry out unpaid work in the community have been placed on furniture restoration courses and costume-making for the Notting Hill Carnival.

In a report on the way "unpaid work" sentences are handled by the Probation Service, it also emerged that sessions were being cancelled because staff refuse to work at weekends.

Killing charge

A nightclub doorman accused of murdering gap-year student Marsha McDonnell was appearing at a London court today. Levi Bellfield, 38, is already facing trial charged with the murder of French student Amelie Delagrange, 22, who was killed as she crossed Twickenham Green following a night out in August 2004. Ms Delagrange died of severe head injuries.

Healthy drink

Having an alcoholic drink a day cuts the risk of heart disease for men but not for <u>women</u>, according to new research. A Danish study, published in the British Medical Journal, found that men who drink alcohol every day have a lower risk of heart disease than men who drink less frequently.

Militia move

<u>Hamas</u> withdrew a controversial private militia from the streets of the Gaza Strip today, saying it wanted to avoid further infighting with the rival Fatah movement. The militia, numbering about 3,000 armed fighters, took to the streets last week over the objections of President Mahmoud Abbas.

Boy, 8, dies

An eight-year-old boy, who was knocked down by alleged car thieves as he played in a park, has died in hospital. Daniel Conroy Curtin suffered head injuries when he was knocked down by a Rover Metro which was being driven erratically along a cycle path in Riverside Park, Middlesbrough, on May 16.

Load-Date: May 26, 2006



The Fever Is Winning

The New York Times
July 20, 2006 Thursday
Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2006 The New York Times Company

Section: Section A; Column 6; Editorial Desk; Pg. 21

Length: 762 words

Byline: By DAVID BROOKS

Body

It happened just over a year ago in Key West, of all places. We'd come down for a conference organized by the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, and one afternoon two friends, Reuel Gerecht and Jeffrey Goldberg, squared off for a debate on the prospects for democracy in the Middle East.

Gerecht and Goldberg are Americans whose fascination with Islam has taken them to ridiculous places. Gerecht, a former member of the C.I.A. clandestine service, spends an astonishing amount of time in spare rooms in Middle East backwaters talking fatwas in klatches with bearded fundamentalists.

Goldberg has lived in a madrasa in Pakistan. His pieces from inside Hezbollah won a National Magazine Award for The New Yorker. In the fall he has a book, "Prisoners," coming out about his time as a prison guard in the Israeli Army, and his friendships with the Palestinian detainees.

Having heard many of their stories, I have this image of Goldberg being kidnapped by some terrorist group and when he's thrown into the hide-out he finds Gerecht already there schmoozing with the local mullah.

But these two companions disagree utterly about the path to Arab democracy. Gerecht began their debate in Key West by reporting that a genuine wave of democratic thought is sweeping through the region. It's not only happening among the liberal secularists who are marginal to the Arab mainstream, he said. It's happening among the ayatollahs and the clerics.

The people who will do well in the first elections, Gerecht predicted a year ago, will not be to our liking. They will be anti-American and ferociously anti-Israeli. The first phase of Arab democracy will be extremely bumpy, he warned, with possible attacks on Israel, and crackdowns on <u>women</u>'s rights.

But it is better, he argued, to go through this phase than to wait for a religious reformation, which will never come. It is better to endure this phase than to preserve the old dictatorships, which feed extremism.

The only way to reform the Middle East, Gerecht concluded, is by changing political institutions and enduring as the spirit of democratic self-government slowly changes society. There will be a period of fever, but the fever will break the disease.

When it was Goldberg's turn (the transcript is available online at pewforum.org), his first observation was that sometimes fevers break the disease but sometimes they kill the patient. The only difference, he said, between the

The Fever Is Winning

terrorists and the "moderate" Islamic supremacists that Gerecht would empower is that the terrorists want to kill all Americans and all Jews whereas the moderates only want to kill all the Jews.

Morally, Goldberg, continued, the U.S. cannot champion democratic reforms that produce jihadist regimes that attack Israel and wink at the honor killings of teenage girls. And politically, how long are we supposed to endure this period of painful democratic birth? Fifty years? One hundred?

In Goldberg's view, cultural reform has to precede political reform. The West should continue to champion the Arab world's liberal modernizers, who believe in pluralism and human rights and who may have deeper roots in society than we think.

Fourteen months later, we're in the middle of the fever Gerecht and Goldberg were grappling with. Hezbollah, *Hamas* and Moktada al-Sadr have indeed benefited. But, Gerecht points out, so have a lot of real democrats who are resisting the extremists. Goldberg counters that organizations like *Hamas* and Hezbollah were always jihadi and will always be jihadi, and no amount of democratic participation will change that.

What this debate is really about is the mother of all chicken-and-egg problems. Can we use political reform to spark cultural change, or do we have to wait for cultural reformation before we can change politics?

The Bush administration's position is clear. In some of my best arguments with senior officials, they insist, a la Gerecht, that institutions shape behavior. And to their credit, even in this moment of turmoil they are hanging tough and pushing for more democratic reform.

But the truth is that at the moment neither the Goldberg nor the Gerecht thesis is winning. The fever Gerecht predicted has sent world opinion scurrying off for stability at any cost. World opinion is abandoning both Palestinian-style democratic transformation and the cultural modernizers who are being crushed in places like Egypt. People are rushing back toward the illusory stability of Mubarak and the House of Saud.

That, Goldberg and Gerecht both agree, is what brought us 9/11.

http://www.nytimes.com

Load-Date: July 20, 2006



Israel threatens to invade Gaza

The Advertiser (Australia)

June 28, 2006 Wednesday

Metro Edition

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Section: FOREIGN; Pg. 36

Length: 285 words

Byline: JOSEF FEDERMAN, JERUSALEM

Body

ISRAEL'S Prime Minister yesterday rejected a demand to release prisoners in exchange for information about a captured soldier, ordering instead preparations for a large-scale military push into Gaza.

The captured Israeli soldier - Corporal Gilad Shalit - is being held in a "secure place," according to a Palestinian militant leader yesterday.

It was the first acknowledgment by militants that they are holding the soldier and he is still alive.

The claims came from the Popular Resistance Committees.

On Monday the militants holding Corporal Shalit issued their first demands. The groups, all linked to the <u>Hamas</u>-led Palestinian government, called for the release of all Palestinian <u>women</u> and children under 18 held in Israeli prisons in return for information about Corporal Shalit.

Addressing Jewish leaders in Jerusalem, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert charged that Sunday's Palestinian attack on an Israeli army post at a Gaza crossing and the abduction of the soldier were part of a "murderous, hateful, fanatical Islamic extremist desire to destroy the state of Israel".

Corporal Shalit, 19, was seized early on Sunday at a military post near the Gaza border by militants who infiltrated into Israel through a tunnel. The attack was the first of its kind since Israel withdrew from Gaza in September.

Mr Olmert said he held the Palestinian leadership responsible for Corporal Shalit's safety.

"I gave the orders to our military commanders to prepare the army for a broad and ongoing military operation to strike the terrorist leaders and all those involved," he said. Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas was working with Egyptian mediators as well as Arab and Western leaders, in hopes of locating the soldier. - AP

Load-Date: June 28, 2006



Arab Majority May Not Stay Forever Silent

New York Sun (Archive)
July 17, 2006 Monday

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Section: FRONT PAGE; Pg. 1

Length: 742 words

Byline: Youssef Ibrahim

Body

Yes, world, there is a silent Arab majority that believes that seventh-century Islam is not fit for 21st-century challenges. That <u>women</u> do not have to look like walking black tents. That men do not have to wear beards and robes, act like lunatics, and run around blowing themselves up in order to enjoy 72 virgins in paradise. And that secular laws, not Islamic Shariah, should rule our day-to-day lives.

And yes, we, the silent Arab majority, do not believe that writers, secular or otherwise, should be killed or banned for expressing their views. Or that the rest of our creative elite - from moviemakers to playwrights, actors, painters, sculptors, and fashion models - should be vetted by Neanderthal Muslim imams who have never read a book in their dim. miserable lives.

Nor do we believe that little men with head wraps and disheveled beards can run amok in Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Iraq making decisions on our behalf, dragging us to war whenever they please, confiscating our rights to be adults, and flogging us for not praying five times a day or even for not believing in God.

More important, we are not silent any longer.

Rarely have I seen such an uprising, indeed an intifada, against those little turbaned, bearded men across the Muslim landscape as the one that took place last week. The leader of Hezbollah, Sheik Hassan Nasrallah, received a resounding "no" to pulling 350 million Arabs into a war with Israel on his clerical coattails.

The collective "nyet" was spoken by presidents, emirs, and kings at the highest level of government in Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Bahrain, Qatar, Jordan, Morocco, and at the Arab League's meeting of 22 foreign ministers in Cairo on Saturday. But it was even louder from pundits and ordinary people.

Perhaps the most remarkable and unexpected reaction came from Saudi Arabia, whose foreign minister, Prince Saud Al-Faisal, said bluntly and publicly that Hezbollah's decision to cross the Lebanese border, attack Israel, and kidnap its soldiers has left the Shiite group on its own to face Israel. The unspoken message here was, "We hope they blow you away."

The Arab League put it succinctly in its final communique in Cairo, declaring that "behavior undertaken by some groups [read: Hezbollah and *Hamas*] in apparent safeguarding of Arab interests does in fact harm those interests, allowing Israel and other parties from outside the Arab world [read: Iran] to wreck havoc with the security and safety of all Arab countries."

Arab Majority May Not Stay Forever Silent

As for Hezbollah and its few sup porters, who have pushed for an emergency Arab summit meeting, the response could not have been a bigger slap in the face. Take a listen:

- * Abdul Rahman al-Rashed, the general manager of Al-Arabiya, possibly the most influential Arab opinion-maker today, was categorical yesterday: "We have lost most of our causes and the largest portions of our lands following fiery speeches and empty promises of struggle coupled with hallucinating, drug-induced political fantasies." As for joining Hezbollah in its quest, his answer was basically, "you broke it, you own it."
- * Tariq Alhomayed, editor in chief of the Arab daily Asharq al-Awsat, stuck the dagger in deeper: "Mr. Nasrallah bombastically announced he consulted no one when he decided to attack Israel, nor did he measure Lebanon's need for security, prosperity, and the safety of its people. He said he needs no one's help but God's to fight the fight." Mr. Alhomayed's punch line was, in so many words: Go with God, Sheik Nasrallah, but count the rest of us out.

Several other Arab pundits, not necessarily coordinating their commentary, noted that today Sheik Nasrallah has been reduced to Osama bin Laden status, a fugitive from Israeli justice, sending out his tapes from unknown locations to, invariably, Al-Jazeera, the prime purveyor of Mr. bin Laden's communications.

All in all, it seems that when Israel decided to go to war against the priestly mafia of <u>Hamas</u> and Hezbollah, it opened a whole new chapter in the Greater Middle East discourse. And Israel is finding, to its surprise, that a vast, not-so-silent majority of Arabs agrees that enough is enough. To be sure, beneath the hostility toward Sheik Nasrallah in Sunni Muslim states lies the deep and bitter heritage of a 14-century Sunni-Shiite divide, propelled to greater heights now by fears of an ascendant Shiite "arc of menace" rising out of Iran and peddled in the Sunni world by Syria.

The sooner this is settled the better.

Load-Date: July 18, 2006



Tories seem to understand Middle East crisis

The Vancouver Sun (British Columbia)

July 18, 2006 Tuesday

Final Edition

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Section: EDITORIAL; Pg. A11; Barbara Yaffe

Length: 743 words

Byline: Barbara Yaffe, Vancouver Sun

Body

The Harper government deserves credit for maintaining a well thought out, principled approach in reacting to the crisis in the Middle East.

Even in the face of sad news on the weekend that a Lebanese-Canadian family had been killed in the crossfire in southern Lebanon, and criticism from abroad of a perceived Israeli overreaction, Prime Minister Stephen Harper has shown political courage.

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Tories seem to understand Middle East crisis

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It's tough to predict, or even imagine such a circumstance. But this much is clear; based on statements coming out of party headquarters in Ottawa, I'd much rather the Harper government be standing on guard for Canada than the Liberals.

byaffe@png.canwest.com

Load-Date: July 18, 2006



World Digest

The Toronto Star

June 15, 2006 Thursday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A16

Length: 291 words

Body

Sri Lanka

As many as 30 feared dead in bombing of bus full

of civilians, police say

Suspected Tamil Tiger rebels blasted a civilian bus today, officials said, with up to 30 feared dead in what looked likely to be the worst attack on civilians since a 2002 ceasefire.

"We believe 30 innocent civilians have been killed and many more wounded," said a spokesman for the government's national security media centre. "Definitely the LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam)."

The blast occurred in the north-central province of Anuradapura, police said.

United States

Homeless man arrested

as 4 hurt in stabbing spree

A homeless man was arrested yesterday in the stabbing of four people, including three tourists, who were attacked in a 12-hour span in Manhattan. Investigators were questioning the 21-year-old man but did not have a motive. Two of the wounded tourists were <u>female</u> students from Montreal, both in their 20s. Neither suffered life-threatening injuries.

Britain

Highest court rejects Sampson's bid to sue Saudis

The Law Lords, Britain's highest court, ruled yesterday Canadian William Sampson and three Britons who say they were tortured while imprisoned in Saudi Arabia cannot sue Saudi officials over their ordeal because foreign government officials are immune from prosecution in Britain.

Gaza

Cash arrives after civil servants storm parliament

World Digest

Hours after cash-starved civil servants stormed parliament, Palestinian Foreign Minister Mahmoud Zahar returned yesterday from a trip to Muslim nations with \$20 million (U.S.) in his luggage. The money was turned over to the Palestinian Authority's treasury. A financial boycott of the new <u>Hamas</u> government has prevented the authority from paying staff months' worth of salaries.

From the Star's wire services

Load-Date: June 15, 2006



Harper gov't response to crisis strikes right tone

The Star Phoenix (Saskatoon, Saskatchewan)

July 20, 2006 Thursday

Final Edition

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Section: FORUM; Pg. A9; Barbara Yaffe

Length: 741 words

Byline: Barbara Yaffe, Vancouver Sun

Body

The Harper government deserves credit for maintaining a well thought out, principled approach in reacting to the crisis in the Middle East.

Even in the face of sad news on the weekend that a Lebanese-Canadian family had been killed in the crossfi re in southern Lebanon, and criticism from abroad of a perceived Israeli overreaction, Prime Minister Stephen Harper has shown political courage.

The Canadian Council for Israel and Jewish Advocacy on Monday applauded "the sense of clarity Prime Minister Harper has brought to the current situation and the principled positions adopted by his government." Harper won't countenance terrorism in Afghanistan, and he won't countenance it in the Middle East.

Federal Liberals, meanwhile, continued their traditional practice of playing both sides of the fence in foreign affairs matters, issuing a press release full of fl uff and blather. A statement by Liberal leader Bill Graham said: "Peace can only be obtained on the foundation of respect for the security, well being and legitimacy of the states and peoples of Israel, Palestine and Lebanon." The rest of his statement provided no indication of where Liberals stand on the confrontation.

The approach is reminiscent of the buffoonish utterance of then-PM Jean Chretien who, while in the ancient Israeli city in 2000, claimed not to know East from West Jerusalem. By contrast, Conservatives appear to have a good understanding not only of the ongoing dispute but its genesis and complexity.

And they aren't afraid to express a position.

They're clear on the fact that <u>Hamas</u> and Hezbollah are proxy agents of Syria and Iran, from whence all the sophisticated weaponry derives. Conservatives also appear to understand that the goal of those confronting Israel isn't a Palestinian state but an obliteration of the UN-mandated Jewish state which occupies a minuscule slice of terrain in the Arab region.

Israel vacated south Lebanon in 2000 and Gaza in 2005. The Olmert government had been planning to vacate the West Bank. In 2000, former Israeli prime minister Ehud Barak, in negotiations conducted under U.S. auspices, offered a starting point for a Palestinian state, promptly rejected by Yasser Arafat.

Harper gov't response to crisis strikes right tone

Palestinians had a chance following Israel's withdrawal from Gaza to demonstrate they could build a state. Instead they used Gaza to launch 700 rockets at Israel, killing a dozen Israelis.

Likewise, in south Lebanon, Hezbollah, the Party of God -- a terrorist organization -- has been operating with the tacit approval of the Lebanese government. Indeed, like <u>Hamas</u> in the Palestinian Territories, Hezbollah is part of the Lebanese government, with 23 of 128 seats in the National Assembly.

Israel has suffered as a result. But not as much as the Lebanese and Palestinians who lag behind Israelis in terms of every conceivable economic and social indicator.

As political analyst Barry Rubin astutely wrote in a column Monday from Tel Aviv, "Who needs peace, stability, economic progress, <u>women</u>'s rights, an independent judiciary, an accurately reporting media, controlling corruption, a good educational and health system, free speech or all the rest of that stuff when you can kidnap Israelis?" By keeping their populations focused on Israel, Arab dictatorships for years have been able to avoid doing the harder work of worthy governments -- bettering life for their populations.

In response to the recent kidnappings of Israeli soldiers, the Israeli Defence Force is operating with two specific strategic objectives: (1) Getting the kidnapped soldiers returned, and (2) Preventing the terrorists in Gaza and Lebanon from deploying missiles against Israeli civilians, and impeding fl ow of more weaponry originating from Iran, delivered through Syria.

Israel is trying to do this as humanely as possible, dropping leafl ets of warning in civilian-occupied areas before dispatching artillery. But war is never a precision game. On the other side, no precautions are taken.

If Canadian soldiers operating on Canadian soil were kidnapped and an adjacent nation was serving, unimpeded, as a staging ground from which terrorists were lobbing missiles into Toronto and Vancouver, what would Canada's government do in response? It's tough to predict, or even imagine such a circumstance. But this much is clear; based on statements coming out of party headquarters in Ottawa, I'd much rather the Harper government be standing on guard for Canada than the Liberals.

Load-Date: July 20, 2006



Fighting Surges and Deaths Rise As Israel Drives Deeper in Gaza

The New York Times
July 7, 2006 Friday
Late Edition - Final

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Section: Section A; Column 5; Foreign Desk; Pg. 1

Length: 1156 words

Byline: By STEVEN ERLANGER and GREG MYRE; Steven Erlanger reported from Beit Lahiya for this article, and

Greg Myre from Jerusalem.

Dateline: BEIT LAHIYA, Gaza Strip, Friday, July 7

Body

A member of <u>Hamas</u> was reported killed in an airstrike Friday, less than 24 hours after Israeli troops and Palestinian militants had waged their most intense battles since Israel re-entered the Gaza Strip last week to secure the release of a captured soldier and stop rocket fire into Israel.

The death toll had risen throughout Thursday in sometimes fierce fighting involving everything from rifles to airborne missiles.

It was one of the bloodiest days in Gaza since the uprising began in 2000. The death toll varied and the Palestinians provided no official figures. The Associated Press counted at least 21 dead Palestinians, and Reuters 19. One Israeli soldier was reported killed by a sniper. Reuters reported Friday that the militant was killed after an Israeli plane fired at four armed men near the scene of the worst violence from the day before.

Most of the deaths Thursday were in northern Gaza, where after days of sporadic clashes Israeli forces moved south from the destroyed former Israeli settlements to the outskirts of Beit Lahiya. There, in the northwest corner of Gaza, Palestinian fighters had been preparing earthen barricades, explosive charges and positions for shooting.

Israel's defense minister, Amir Peretz, said that although Israel pulled out of Gaza last year, "no one should see that as a guarantee that we cannot reach territory in which we feel we have no choice but to operate."

Heavy fighting erupted in and around Beit Lahiya, especially in the western neighborhoods of Atatrah and Salatin near the sea, with Palestinian militants using light weapons like Kalashnikovs, M-16's and antitank grenades, fighting running battles with Israeli troops in armored personnel carriers, modern tanks and armored D-9 bulldozers.

Palestinians were seen planting explosives in manholes, hoping to blow up a vehicle as it drove by. One masked fighter rode away on a bicycle after laying such a charge, a spool of electrical wire unrolling from the back of his bike.

Israeli tanks fired shells at houses where Palestinian fighters sheltered, and soldiers fired at groups of armed Palestinians who fought in the streets, sometimes surrounded by curious and excited children. At times, Israeli soldiers fired near groups of children in what appeared to be an effort to get them to scatter.

Fighting Surges and Deaths Rise As Israel Drives Deeper in Gaza

The Palestinian interior minister, Said Siam, who is responsible for most of the security services, declared a state of emergency. His spokesman said the minister "called on all Palestinian security and military services to participate in the moral, national and religious duty to defend our people."

The Palestinian prime minister, Ismail Haniya, called on Arab and international groups to help the Palestinians and to press for an end to the Israeli offensive.

"Solving issues can't be through military escalation or expanding their scope, but through stopping the aggression, and respecting the will of the Palestinian people and answering to their just nationalist demands," Mr. Haniya said.

Three separate airstrikes accounted for the deaths of six Palestinians near Beit Lahiya. The Israeli military said all six were gunmen, while Palestinian officials, medical workers and witnesses gave conflicting information on how many were militants and how many were civilians.

In the same area, gunmen from various Palestinian factions fired automatic rifles and antitank rockets at the Israeli troops. Israeli tank fire killed two militants, Palestinians and the Israeli military reported.

About 30 Palestinians were wounded in the Beit Lahiya area, according to the Palestinian medics.

Also, an Israeli soldier was shot in the head and killed in Beit Lahiya, apparently by a sniper, the military said. The Popular Resistance Committees, a faction of gunmen from various groups, claimed responsibility. A second soldier was wounded in the area, the military added.

Before dawn, a *Hamas* militant and a Palestinian policeman were killed in an Israeli aerial attack on a beach in northern Gaza, the Palestinians and the Israelis said.

In southern Gaza, an Israeli airstrike killed two militants from Islamic Jihad in Abasan, near the southern town of Khan Yunis, Palestinian witnesses and security officials said. The men were firing an antitank rocket at Israeli tanks and troops positioned there.

Israel's military has re-entered both the north and the south of Gaza for what it says is a two-pronged mission.

In the south, the troops were sent in shortly after Cpl. Gilad Shalit, a tank gunner, was captured just inside Israel by militants and taken to Gaza on June 25. Ghazi Hamad, a spokesman for the Palestinian Authority, said the sides should seek a diplomatic solution that would lead to Corporal Shalit's release.

"We don't want Gaza destroyed, nor do we want attacks," Mr. Hamad told Israel radio. "And you want him to return to his family."

However, Israel says it will not negotiate for the release of the soldier, and has rejected Palestinian demands that large numbers of Palestinian prisoners be freed.

The militants have at various times demanded that all <u>women</u> and youths held by Israel be released, and they have also said that 1,000 prisoners of various nationalities must be freed. But the militants, and <u>Hamas</u> leaders, say that the corporal should not be released without some kind of Israeli prisoner release in return.

The Arabic-language newspaper Al Hayat, which is based in London, reported Thursday that militants had revised their demands, saying that Corporal Shalit could be freed if all Palestinian <u>women</u> are released from Israeli jails along with 30 men who are serving long-term sentences. There was no independent confirmation of that report.

The Israeli military said Palestinians fired eight rockets from Gaza at Israel on Thursday, but only four made it into Israeli territory and none caused injury. Three apparently landed inside Gaza and one fell in the sea, the military added.

In the north, Israeli troops began edging into the territory on Monday with the aim of preventing Palestinian rocket fire on southern Israel.

Fighting Surges and Deaths Rise As Israel Drives Deeper in Gaza

But until Thursday, the armored forces, consisting mostly of tanks and armored personnel carriers, had ventured only about half a mile into northern Gaza, remaining outside the Palestinian towns, and there was only occasional shooting.

As the Israeli troops moved on Beit Lahiya on Thursday, the fighting quickly escalated. Israeli tanks also entered three former Israeli settlements on the northern edge of Gaza that were evacuated last year.

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and his aides have said the current offensive is not an attempt to reoccupy Gaza. But Mr. Olmert, along with some political and security officials, has urged the Israeli public to be patient and suggested that the operation could be quite lengthy.

Over all, nearly 20 Palestinians have been killed since the Israeli incursion began, most of them militants.

http://www.nytimes.com

Graphic

Photos: Israeli armored personnel carriers entered Gaza after dawn yesterday. (Photo by Menahem Kahana/Agence France-Presse -- Getty Images)(pg. A1)

Palestinian militants fought Israeli troops in Beit Lahiya in northern Gaza yesterday, one of the bloodiest days since the latest uprising began in 2000. A Palestinian youth wounded in the fighting was evacuated. (Photo by Shawn Baldwin for The New York Times)(pg. A12)Chart: "Violence in Gaza"Palestinians and Israelis engaged in fierce fighting in northern Gaza yesterday. Israeli tanks moved from a staging area in former settlements to the neighborhoods of Atatrah and Salatin in Beit Lahiya, where the clashes occurred. Two Palestinians died in airstrikes in Abasan.Map of Israel highlighting the Gaza Strip. (pg. A12)

Load-Date: July 7, 2006



UNITY OF COMMAND

The Nation (AsiaNet)

August 3, 2006 Thursday

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Length: 1234 words **Byline:** M.A. Niazi

Body

The responses to the Israeli invasion of Lebanon illustrate the limits of international opinion on a determined state with backing from major powers, as well as the limits of military might when faced with a determined opposition, even if the resistance is outnumbered and outgunned.

While these theoretical issues are of great interest to students of political science, the Muslim world in particular has to absorb certain lessons from this crisis, lessons which have been derivable in the past, but which are now being rammed home with even greater force. International opinion is just words, in the last analysis. However, in the last couple of centuries, the leaders of the international system, which consisted of the European powers and the USA, have made a commendable effort to place checks on excessive behaviour by other states. Aggression, which used to be an accepted mode of behaviour by states, went out of fashion to the extent that even Hitlerine Germany had to create a fiction of a Polish attack before launching World War II. It is a symptom of this trend that the entire world's War Ministers (which actually meant Army Ministers) turned into Defence Ministers.

So Israel's second naked aggression against Lebanon in the last quarter of a century has been described as an act of self-defence. This is a little more tenable since the US conquests of Afghanistan and Iraq, where there was little self-defence involved. In the first case, it was punitive action, and in the second, it was simply dislike for the regime. Israel has relived this particular configuration, because whereas its attack on Hamas-ruled Palestine was because it detested the regime, its attack on Lebanon was punishment for its government's inability or refusal to rein in Hezbollah. In addition, while the USA might have won a certain amount of sympathy for attacking authoritarian regimes, Israel has hit the only two outposts of democracy in the Arab world.

Israel's attack on Lebanon led to some squawking by other countries, but it managed to obtain a free hand. The USA and other Western powers have not been condemnatory, as expected, but the interesting part is that this time around they have not even been critical. There is no pretence at fairness; they are on Israel's side. So who are they against? Why would the USA and other Western powers be so enthusiastic about the Israeli pounding of two democracies? *Hamas* is perhaps easier to understand. Western powers have never accepted the results of apparently democratic elections unless there was a certain degree of ideological conformity. Salvador Allende was as unacceptable in 1973 as the Sandinistas in 1979 and after the fall of the USSR, as the FIS in Algeria, or *Hamas* in 2006.

Those who believe that Western democracy is not just compatible with, but completely congruent with, Islam, need to ponder why this is the case. It should never be forgotten that democracy is not just a method of transfer of power, but also the political manifestation of capitalism, and constitutes part of an entire package. It is feasible to extract

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methods from democracy to ensure participatory government in some other system, such as Islam or socialism, but democracy is not just about elections and legitimacy through a popular mandate.

Is Lebanon a primarily Muslim issue? While it is indeed a humanitarian tragedy of huge proportions, with Israeli forces once again proving that they will give no quarter to <u>women</u> and children, Muslims are generally viewing it as an attack on 'themselves.' On the other hand, their governments are viewing it as an attack on a friendly country, but are distancing themselves from the whole episode.

Pakistan's reaction is typical. Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz thinks he has done his national and international duty by telephoning his Lebanese counterpart, assuring him of his deepest sympathies and promising more relief goods. Fawad Siniora probably would have preferred anti-tank weapons, anti-aircraft missiles and a couple of divisions of mechanized infantry thrown in, but all he is getting is sympathy and relief goods, as if his country was hit by an earthquake, as if his affliction has come from an act of God, not from men.

Siniora is caught in a nutcracker. He might wish to disarm the Hezbollah militia, but it is a political actor. The only force, which could keep it in check, the Syrian occupying forces, has been thrown out by US intervention, and now a small Lebanese army is supposed to do what the powerful Israeli army cannot. In addition, since the Israeli army is failing to achieve its military objectives, Lebanon is being punished. This is much like the USA's -do-more' tactics with Pakistan over Afghanistan, where its own military's professional failures are being covered up by blaming Pakistan for not doing enough.

Israel, the USA and India are all united by a wish to see other Muslims deal with their Muslim problems. Pakistan is involved in two of these problems, in Afghanistan and Kashmir. Condemnatory resolutions and sympathetic noises are not helping the Lebanese, any more than they helped the Palestinians, the Kashmiris, the Chechens, the Afghans and the Iraqis, or even the many Muslim victims of murder and massacre committed by other Muslims. The nearest to a practical solution came from Maulana Fazlur Rehman, who called on the Muslim governments to form a single military force to expel the Israelis from Lebanon. There is a certain sense in this. The 50-odd members of the OIC have more than four million men under arms, apart from something like 4000 military aircraft, over 20,000 tanks and heavens knows how many artillery pieces. A lot of this equipment is in horrible shape, but it is better than nothing is.

However, the problem is that there are more than 50 governments, and they will never act in unison. There we come to a concept, which our own President Pervez Musharraf has popularized in another context: unity of command. If there were a single government commanding these forces, then a rather different situation would prevail. Muslims, after a millennium of thinking of each other as essentially the same, had nationalism imposed on them by the colonial experience. The paradox is that while they have not developed vibrant nationalisms of their own, as the originators did, they have certainly developed a feeling of hostility towards other Muslim nationalities. We bemoan the failure to develop a true Pakistani nationalism, at the same time as we bemoan the Arab and Palestinian failure to do anything for us.

Yet these same Arabs have stopped fighting for their rights in the name of nationalism alone, as they did until 1982. Now the fighting is done in the name of Islam as well, and this automatically creates a stake throughout the Islamic world. Kashmir, Afghanistan. Iraq. Chechnya. All have had 'foreigners' laying down their lives not in the name of international brotherhood, but Islam.

Until Muslims themselves understand the phenomena that are at work in this readiness to sacrifice for 'others' who are actually 'ours', there is little chance of a resolution. There will continue to be bloodshed, humiliation and suffering. We come back to the need for unity of command. How is this to be achieved? That is, again to quote Musharraf, 'just tactics.' Once we agree on the strategy that will be easier than anyone could think. <u>E-mail:maniazi@nation.com.pk</u>

Load-Date: December 6, 2006

UNITY OF COMMAND



Mel Gibson isn't the only conspiracy theorist

The Independent (London)

August 4, 2006 Friday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 39

Length: 1100 words

Byline: DOMINIC LAWSON

Body

"Are you a Jew?" an extremely drunk Mel Gibson asked the Mal-ibu traffic cop who had pulled him over. Apparently without waiting for a response, the actor then declared: "Fucking Jews. The Jews are responsible for all the wars in the world."

If I had been the arresting officer, I might have been tempted to ask Gibson if he had forgotten about the conflicts in -for example - Algeria, Sudan, Southern Thailand, Somalia, Kashmir, Sri Lanka, Nigeria, Chechnya, and Uzbekistan. But officer James Mee did the sensible thing and just put the cuffs on. There is never any point in reasoning with conspiracy the-orists - their brains are like black holes, singularities incapable of emitting light.

On Tuesday I came up against another conspiracy theory, but the proponent was as different from Mel Gibson as it is possible to imagine. Professor Sheikh Dawud Noibi is a highly respected authority on Sharia law, and was recently awarded an OBE. He and I were on the panel of a public meeting which took place just round the corner from the East London Mosque. An admirable new organisation called Dialogue with Islam has had the idea of getting mainstream writers to debate the issues that concern the Muslim population - but on their own doorstep, rather than in the newspapers.

The subject of Afghanistan was, not surprisingly, raised by one of the audience. I argued that the Taliban would have been left in fundamentalist peace by the Americans, had that regime not given Osama bin-Laden and his followers the protection and security they needed to plan and carry out the attacks on the World Trade Center.

Professor Sheikh Dawud Noibi heard me out very politely, and then said the truth behind 9/11 had not been publicly revealed. That lay in the fact that the Americans had wanted a new oil pipeline to be laid across Afghanistan, which could not be guaranteed without seizing control of the country.

He was implying, at the least, that the Americans knew that attacks were being prepared on the World Trade Center but let them go ahead, in order to have a pretext to remove the Taliban. The Sheikh's remarks were listened to in respectful silence by the audience.

While not as popular as the "Jews are behind all the wars in the world" theory - few are - the argument put forward by the Sheikh can be read on many internet sites, both of the extreme right and the extreme left. It's true that the American company Unocal had wanted to build a pipeline from the Caspian across Afghanistan. However, it was for gas, not the oil required by America's SUVs. And in any case the main markets for Caspian gas are Russia and Europe.

But here I am, once again making the mistake of arguing. Anyone who believes that the American government provoked the attacks on the World Trade Center (and the Pentagon) in order to do a favour for Unocal is beyond reach of reason. I believe two things underlie most such 9/11 conspiracy theories: a belief that the "Zionist" American government - that is to say any American government - is the embodiment of evil, and an understandable desire to shift the blame for 9/11 away from co-religionists.

America's opponents are by no means unique in possessing such a Manichean mindset. One of the most depressing aspects of the current conflict in the Lebanon is the way in which some of Israel's supporters have tried similar tactics over the bombing of Qana by the Israel Defence Forces. A number of websites, based both here and America, have alleged that the pictures of the dead bodies of children pulled from the wreckage in that village are in some way fraudulent, and that therefore it could well be that the event never really took place.

Remarks such as "there seems to be a complete absence of dust on that child's body" are meant to prove that - who knows?-the dead baby was the victim of some other event in which Israel played no part. All this, even though the Israelis themselves have apologised for the attack and said that they never would have bombed the building had they realised children were sheltering in it.

Of course it's true that Hizbol-lah - which has a deep understanding of the 24-hour Western news media - saw the children's dead bodies as a prime-time opportunity. Of course it's true that the BBC and others immediately accepted Hizbollah's claims that 60 were killed, whereas the true number was 26. Of course it's true that Hizbollah deliberately uses <u>women</u> and children as sandbags in their guerrilla conflict with the IDF.

But in the same way that many Muslims can't accept the blind-ingly obvious truth of any event which puts those they admire in a bad light, so some in the West are beginning to suffer from the same disease. When that leads to us using the bodies of suffocated children as a means to win a political argument, then we are becoming as dehumanised as those we most despise.

Is therapy the answer to this condition? Mel Gibson apparently thinks so. In one of two lengthy apologies he announced that "I have begun an ongoing program of recovery... I am in the process of understanding where those vicious words came from and I am asking the Jewish community, whom I have personally offended, to help me on my journey to recovery."

Poor Mel - it's absolutely clear where these vicious words came from: his old man. The actor has been deeply influenced by his father, Hutton, the author of a number of books which paint the Jews in, shall we say, an unfavourable light. Three years ago, while his son was promoting The Passion of the Christ, Hutton Gibson gave an interview to The New York Times, in which he declared that "my whole family is with me, all 10 of them." He went on to say that the Second Vatican Council (which abandoned the Latin mass) was "a plot backed by the Jews", and that the Holocaust never happened: "Hitler had this deal where he was supposed to make it rough for the Jews, so they would then emigrate to Israel to fight the Arabs." Invited at the time to disown his father, Gibson refused.

It's possible to laugh at Mel Gibson, pathetic drunk that he is. But it's tragic that both Hizbollah and <u>Hamas</u> have an identical view of the Jews to that of Hutton Gibson. Article 22 of the <u>Hamas</u> Charter states "There was no war that broke out anywhere without their fingerprints on it." Meanwhile Nasrullah, Hizbollah's leader, declares "If all the Jews settle in Israel it will save us the trouble of going after them worldwide." As I say, it is impossible to reason with such people. The result is on your television screen.

It's tragic that Hizbolah and *Hamas* have an identical view of the Jews

Load-Date: August 4, 2006



Deaths in the Mideast should be blamed on terror groups

St. Petersburg Times (Florida)
August 2, 2006 Wednesday

0 Edition

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Section: NATIONAL; Pg. 10A

Length: 1216 words

Body

Re: Mideast violence.

For everyone bemoaning the killing of civilians in Lebanon, Palestine, Iraq and elsewhere, it must be reaffirmed that jihadists, terrorists, Hezbollah, <u>Hamas</u> and the rest of these radical armies do not fight as an army. They wear civilian clothes and operate their wars from among the civilian population of their country. They hide their armaments in mosques, hospitals, schools, etc. They fire their rockets and missiles from heavily populated areas assuming there will not be an attack against them. The cat-and-mouse game they are playing is fairly obvious, and Israel has known this for many years.

<u>Hamas</u> and Hezbollah have both crossed Israel's border to kill and kidnap soldiers. They then run back to intersperse with the general population and proceed to fire rockets and missiles across their borders with Israel, while being welcomed with open arms by their people.

Israel has every right to protect its borders and its people. If the Israelis do not make a stance, who will and what will happen to the state of Israel? These terrorists have made it clear they want Israel wiped off the map. Israel must do what it has to do to survive, plain and simple. If civilians die as a result, the blame should be leveled directly at the terrorists themselves for bringing civilians into the war by hiding among them. Israel should not be blamed for trying to protect itself from cross-border attacks.

I feel for the families in Lebanon and Palestine, but maybe they should redirect their energies to disarming and evicting the real and only root of the problem, Hezbollah and <u>Hamas</u>, instead of protesting against Israel and the United States. They then could sleep at night without the sounds of gunfire and bombs.

Don Mott, Largo

This is no longer our fight

Re: Horror in Lebanon, July 31.

Horror in Lebanon? What about the horror in Israel? For more than four decades, Lebanon has provided a staging ground for forces and factions that want to see Israel "wiped off the face of the earth." These hostile groups operate out of Lebanon with impunity. They are a movement of Hitler clones with only one aim in mind. Recently, one of their elite said they would not stop until they reached Spain! Is this the Crusades all over again?

Deaths in the Mideast should be blamed on terror groups

Israel has a right to survive and a right to fight for survival. But this is in the back yard of Europe and Russia. We've blown enough "foreign aid" over there, and now it's time for them to step up and protect what Churchill called "the soft underbelly." If they don't, then they deserve what they get. It is not our fight.

We've had 12/7/41 and 9/11/01. When the fanatics are through with Israel and Spain they'll come here again. We need to pull our troops out of Iraq and bring them home where they will be needed. With madmen guiding Islamic policy, it's just a matter of time until we are again at risk on our own ground.

Charles V. Scott, St. Petersburg

Providing destruction and relief

Talk about a schizophrenic foreign policy. We expedite the delivery of bombs to Israel to insure that it has the resources to destroy Lebanon and then our secretary of state slowly goes to Lebanon and offers U.S. aid to help rebuild what has been destroyed with the same U.S.-made ordnance.

We may be looking at another opportunity for the industrial-military complex to flex its power and make money on both sides of the conflict.

Has the noble pursuit of the blessed peacemakers been replaced by the greed of the arms-mongers to bleed the American treasury to spread pain and suffering for fun and profit?

Patrick J. Conrey, Spring Hill

A one-sided view of a tragedy

Re: Horror in Lebanon.

I was both sad and disappointed to see this headline and read the story that followed. Sad to learn about the tragic and heartbreaking loss of civilian life in the town of Qana, Lebanon, but equally disappointed to see what I consider biased and one-sided coverage of this tragic incident.

Nowhere in the article does it mentioned that Hezbollah (and other terror groups, for that matter) deliberately place military targets in the heart of civilian areas, a serious violation of international and humanitarian law. Even the United Nations' humanitarian chief, Jan Egeland, said: "Hezbollah must stop this cowardly blending ... among <u>women</u> and children. I heard they were proud because they lost very few fighters and that it was the civilians bearing the brunt of this."

Nowhere in the article does it mention that Israel dropped thousands of leaflets before the attack over the town, repeatedly warning its inhabitants to leave the area. When was the last time Hezbollah alerted Israeli civilians of an impending rocket barrage?

Absent from the article is the complete statement of Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, which said:

"I express my deep regret, shared by the entire State of Israel and the IDF, for the death of civilians in the village of Qana. Qana was used for launching rockets at Kiryat Shmona and Afula. All residents were warned to leave. There are hiding places for rockets inside the village, and the village itself constitutes a shelter for rocket launchers. We have no policy of killing innocent civilians. For 18 days thousands of missiles have been fired, aimed at murdering innocent civilians in the north (of Israel)."

Why didn't the author of the article ask why there were children in Qana, after all residents of south Lebanon were cautioned to leave? Did Hezbollah prevent civilians from leaving in order to maximize civilian casualties?

These are some of the facts the St. Petersburg Times failed to report, which is disappointing in view of its fair and balanced coverage of the conflict to this point.

Bruce A. Epstein, Pinellas Park

Deaths in the Mideast should be blamed on terror groups

Protection starts at home

Last week I read in your paper that America sent two planes full of missiles to Israel. En route they landed in Scotland for refueling.

Can you or anyone tell the American people why we as Americans, who try hard to love our children and bring them up as good Americans, are sending missiles to Israel to kill innocent children?

Have you all forgotten what it was like when the twin towers collapsed? Do you remember the feelings you all had watching them come down? Well, imagine if it was your children being blown up by our missiles. How would you feel about the people running America?

Shame on us. We are supposed to be civilized. Civilization starts with discussion and understanding, not attacking someone's country. Who gives us the right to attack someone else's country? You say terrorism, but protection starts from within. Protect our own borders, our own people, make us strong by securing our land first.

M. Adams, Spring Hill

Where are Hezbollah's apologies?

Its ironic how Israel has to apologize for bombing of civilians while Hezbollah, which only bombs civilian targets, doesn't have to apologize for anything.

I would like to see some fair reporting all around. Let us know which targets Hezbollah is hitting as well as the Israelis. The world is so ready to condemn Israel for defending itself. What would we do if rockets were landing on our shores?

Why doesn't Hezbollah just return the Israeli soldiers and let this "war" be over? The answer is because Iran wants Israel defeated and eliminated and will do anything, including killing innocent people, to get at that goal.

Load-Date: August 2, 2006



NEWSDESK

The Forward June 30, 2006

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Section: News; Pg. 9 Length: 1234 words

Body

Culture Group Taps Chief

The National Foundation for Jewish Culture named a new executive director. Elise Bernhardt, a curator, producer and adviser on arts programming and development, will take over the New York-based foundation from Richard Siegel, who resigned after 27 years.

Senate Passes *Hamas* Bill

The U.S. Senate overwhelmingly approved legislation that would end direct aid to and contact with the <u>Hamas</u>-run Palestinian Authority. The Senate passed the Palestinian Anti-Terrorism Act by voice vote last Friday, reflecting the bill's broad bipartisan support. According to the legislation, which still allows humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people, aid to the P.A. could be resumed if <u>Hamas</u> renounces violence, recognizes Israel's right to exist and abides by previous diplomatic agreements.

Museums Join Forces

A New York Holocaust museum plans to merge with a Jewish center near Auschwitz-Birkenau. The Board of Trustees of the Museum of Jewish Heritage - A Living Memorial to the Holocaust voted last week to enter into final negotiations with the Auschwitz Jewish Center, located in Poland. The center memorializes victims of the Holocaust and celebrates Jewish life in the area prior to World War II. Once the agreement is finalized, the New York museum will operate the center in Poland and will have overall responsibility for the combined institution.

JNF Tensions Ease

Jewish National Fund's Israeli and American branches reached an agreement aimed at easing tensions between them. The agreement, finalized Sunday, "will pave the way to new levels of cooperation in the coming years," according to a statement released by Keren Kayemet, as the Israeli branch is known. Observers said that the tensions stemmed from a belief among fund officials in Israel that their American counterparts were bypassing them on certain projects. Yehiel Leket, Keren Kayemet's world chairman, and Ronald Lauder, president of JNF-USA, expressed satisfaction with the understanding. They said they hoped that from now on, the groups would intensify their joint activities, especially in the Negev.

Court Shields Farmers

Israel's top court ordered the army to boost protection for Palestinian farmers harassed by settlers. The High Court of Justice on Monday found in favor of a petition filed by civil rights groups. The groups are opposed to the recent

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military practice of preventing Palestinians in the West Bank from accessing their farmland for fear that they could be attacked by settler vigilantes.

Israel Eyes Extremists

Israel is limiting the movements of far-right activists ahead of an expected crackdown on illegal West Bank outposts. The Defense Ministry issued restraining orders over the weekend against at least a dozen Israelis affiliated with extreme pro-settlement movements, security sources said. The orders are designed to keep the activists away from West Bank outposts as they are evacuated and to limit confrontations with security forces. Defense Minister Amir Peretz has vowed to crack down on dozens of the outposts in compliance with the road map peace plan. The first evacuations are expected as early as this week.

Israeli Elected to U.N. Post

An Israeli expert was elected to a United Nations committee on women's rights.

Ruth Halperin-Kaddari, director of Bar-Ilan University's Rackman Center for the Advancement of the Status of **Women** and author of "**Women** in Israel: A State of Their Own," was named to the 23-member committee.

Tribute for Rebbe in D.C.

Leaders of both parties in Congress, as well as top Bush administration officials, attended a two-day tribute to Menachem Mendel Schneerson, the late Lubavitcher rebbe, who died June 12, 1994. Speakers included Elie Wiesel, Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff and Australia's defense minister. Some 30 foreign diplomats met with Lubavitch emissaries to their countries.

Europe Urges Vigilance

The European Parliament demanded that E.U. leaders step up the fight against homophobia, anti-Muslim sentiment and antisemitism. Specific incidents mentioned in the June 19 resolution included the murder of French Jew Ilan Halimi and an attack on Poland's chief rabbi, Michael Schudrich. In response, the Polish Parliament passed a counter-resolution last Friday that said, "Singular occurrences of intolerance in Poland are very scarce, and are severely criticized by the Polish authorities and therefore are not grounds for generalizations about Polish society," according to the Warsaw daily Gazeta Wyborcza.

Bias up in Manchester

Antisemitic incidents in Manchester, England, increased by 40% from 2004 to 2005, said Leor Giladi, the city's police superintendent. In an address to a synagogue in Manchester last week, Giladi said that the increase came even as there was a 30% drop over the same period in the Greater London area. The superintendent revealed that two or three incidents were reported weekly - mostly anti-social behaviors such as throwing water balloons or eggs as people walked to synagogue, though some incidents involved physical attacks.

Polish Official Under Fire

The deputy chief of Polish state television is the former editor of a neo-Nazi magazine, according to press reports. The country's leading daily, Gazeta Wyborcza, accused Piotr Farfal of editing and writing articles in the neo-Nazi magazine The Front when he was 18. The articles included such phrases as "We do not accept cowards, collaborators or Jews." Farfal, now 28, denies knowing about the magazine's content, telling newspapers that he merely lent The Front his name and should not be held accountable for acts committed during his teenage years. He also says he resigned from the magazine after two years, because of its neo-Nazi leanings. Farfal is a supporter of Education Minister Roman Giertych, whose League of Polish Families has a history of antisemitism, according to several anti-racist organizations. Pawel Kowal, a lawmaker from the Law and Justice Party that leads Poland's coalition government, said that Farfal should lose his post if the report is accurate.

Poll: Arabs Dislike Jews

NEWSDESK

Anti-Jewish sentiment is nearly universal in Jordan and Egypt, a new survey has found. Some 98% of respondents in Jordan and 97% in Egypt - two Arab countries that have made peace with Israel - harbored anti-Jewish feelings, while negative feelings about Jews were found to be "overwhelming" in other Muslim countries surveyed as part of the Pew Global Attitudes Project for 2006, The New York Times reported. Other Muslim nations surveyed included Indonesia, Nigeria, Pakistan and Turkey.

In follow-up interviews, Muslims said that the primary cause of poor relations with the Western world is the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Rumsfeld To Visit Israel

Donald Rumsfeld is expected to visit Israel in the coming weeks. The visit, Rumsfeld's first since becoming defense secretary in 2001, is part of a regional tour that will include stops in Jordan and Egypt. In Israel, he is scheduled to meet with Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, Defense Minister Amir Peretz and with senior defense and security officials. Rumsfeld visited Israel in the early 1980s as a Reagan administration special representative to the Middle East. Last month, during Olmert's visit to Washington, the two agreed to work toward a closer defense and security relationship. The security relationship suffered setbacks following a dispute over Israeli arms sales to China.

Load-Date: July 17, 2006



Can fever cure the jihadi?

The International Herald Tribune
July 21, 2006 Friday

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Section: OPINION; Pg. 6

Length: 753 words

Byline: David Brooks

Dateline: WASHINGTON

Body

It happened just over a year ago in Key West, Florida, of all places. We'd come down for a conference organized by the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, and one afternoon two friends, Reuel Gerecht and Jeffrey Goldberg, squared off for a debate on the prospects for democracy in the Middle East.

Gerecht and Goldberg are Americans whose fascination with Islam has taken them to ridiculous places.

Gerecht, a former member of the CIA clandestine service, spends an astonishing amount of time in spare rooms in Middle East backwaters talking fatwas in klatches with bearded fundamentalists.

Goldberg has lived in a madrasa in Pakistan. His magazine pieces from inside Hezbollah won a national award. In the fall he has a book coming out, "Prisoners," about his time as a prison guard in the Israeli army and his friendships with the Palestinian detainees.

Having heard many of their stories, I have this image of Goldberg being kidnapped by some terrorist group and when he's thrown into the hideout he finds Gerecht already there schmoozing with the local mullah.

But these two companions disagree utterly about the path to Arab democracy. Gerecht began their debate in Key West by reporting that a genuine wave of democratic thought is sweeping through the region.

It's not only happening among the liberal secularists who are marginal to the Arab mainstream, he said. It's happening among the ayatollahs and the clerics.

The people who will do well in the first elections, Gerecht predicted a year ago, will not be to our liking. They will be anti-American and ferociously anti-Israeli. The first phase of Arab democracy will be extremely bumpy, he warned, with possible attacks on Israel, and crackdowns on **women**'s rights.

But it is better, he argued, to go through this phase than to wait for a religious reformation, which will never come. It is better to endure this phase than to preserve the old dictatorships, which feed extremism.

The only way to reform the Middle East, Gerecht concluded, is by changing political institutions and enduring as the spirit of democratic self-government slowly changes society. There will be a period of fever, but the fever will break the disease.

Can fever cure the jihadi?

When it was Goldberg's turn (the transcript is available online at pewforum.org), his first observation was that sometimes fevers break the disease but sometimes they kill the patient.

The only difference, he said, between the terrorists and the "moderate" Islamic supremacists that Gerecht would empower is that the terrorists want to kill all Americans and all Jews whereas the moderates only want to kill all the Jews.

Morally, Goldberg, continued, the United States cannot champion democratic reforms that produce jihadist regimes that attack Israel and wink at the honor killings of teenage girls. And politically, how long are we supposed to endure this period of painful democratic birth? Fifty years? 100?

In Goldberg's view, cultural reform has to precede political reform. The West should continue to champion the Arab world's liberal modernizers, who believe in pluralism and human rights and who may have deeper roots in society than we think.

Fourteen months later, we're in the middle of the fever Gerecht and Goldberg were grappling with. Hezbollah, *Hamas* and Muktada al-Sadr have indeed benefited.

But, Gerecht points out, so have a lot of real democrats who are resisting the extremists. Goldberg counters that organizations like *Hamas* and Hezbollah were always jihadi and will always be jihadi, and no amount of democratic participation will change that.

What this debate is really about is the mother of all chicken-and-egg problems. Can we use political reform to spark cultural change, or do we have to wait for cultural reformation before we can change politics?

The Bush administration's position is clear. In some of my best arguments with senior officials, they insist, a la Gerecht, that institutions shape behavior. And to their credit, even in this moment of turmoil they are hanging tough and pushing for more democratic reform.

But the truth is that at the moment neither the Goldberg nor the Gerecht thesis is winning. The fever Gerecht predicted has sent world opinion scurrying off for stability at any cost. World opinion is abandoning both Palestinian-style democratic transformation and the cultural modernizers who are being crushed in places like Egypt.

People are rushing back toward the illusory stability of Mubarak and the House of Saud.

That, Goldberg and Gerecht both agree, is what brought us 9/11.

Load-Date: July 21, 2006



A Campus for 'Scholars, Not Fighters' on a Settlement Site

The New York Times

June 21, 2006 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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Length: 1065 words

Byline: By STEVEN ERLANGER

Dateline: GAZA, June 16

Body

A Palestinian college is growing from the rubble of an uprooted Israeli settlement.

Nearly a year ago, the Israelis pulled all their 9,000 settlers and military forces out of the Gaza Strip and then took bulldozers and backhoes to what used to be homes, schools, shops and clinics, leaving a few gutted synagogues, a few hundred greenhouses and tons of rubble.

Throughout most of the former settlements, Palestinians have thoroughly mined the debris for metal, wiring, fixtures and almost anything usable or sellable. But despite promises at the time, not an ounce of rubble has been removed or reprocessed, leaving a post-apocalyptic landscape baking in the unforgiving sun.

Except at the site of Neve Dekalim. On nearly 41 acres surrounding what used to be the largest school in what used to be called the Gush Katif bloc, the Palestinian president, Mahmoud Abbas, decreed a campus. He granted it to Al Aksa University, affiliated with his Fatah party, which lost elections this year to <u>Hamas</u>.

With seed money of \$1.5 million from the sheik of Sharjah, one of the United Arab Emirates, the university hired its own security guards, built its own wall and started clearing and rebuilding.

The first students appeared in March, as construction went on around them, and now some 2,000 men drawn from cramped branches of the overcrowded university all over southern Gaza are taking their exams here. A new classroom building is going up to house 4,000 **women**, who are taught separately in this conservative society.

Mahmoud al-Shami, the deputy dean of student affairs, said he hoped that the <u>women</u> could be part of the campus by September for at least two days a week as building continued.

Mr. Shami showed off his office, with its satellite Internet connections, new desk, fixtures and fittings. "Now we're focusing on creating scholars, not fighters," he said.

Hosam Abu Zeit, 22, was between exams in the social sciences. "Before, we would be shot if we entered this place," he said of the once heavily guarded settlement. "Now, in less than a year, we've succeeded in studying here. It gives me a sense of pride to be studying in a liberated place."

A Campus for 'Scholars, Not Fighters' on a Settlement Site

Previously, he studied in the nearby Khan Yunis refugee camp, less than a mile and a world away across the 15-yard-high cement wall that the Israelis built between the camp and Neve Dekalim.

Al Aksa's campus in Khan Yunis, said Tamim Dheir, the assistant to the president in charge of renovation, was 1.7 acres, about 4 percent of the area of this campus. Classrooms were so scarce that students studied only three days a week, with men alternating days with **women**.

"We were on top of one another there," Mr. Zeit said, and then, almost giddy, swung his arm in an arc, to indicate a new sense of space. On the walls are a few posters of dead militants considered to be martyrs, like Muhammad Abdel Hadi of the Abu Rish Brigades, but students pass by them this day without a glance.

His friend Wael Balaawi, 21, ran a hand through his gelled hair. "After 38 years of occupation!" he said excitedly.

"We couldn't even come here for a picnic or go to the beach, and we were cramped into the refugee camps, and the settlers had these huge places," he said with some wonder. "Now we can go where we want in a land that's ours."

In Gaza the Israelis largely built on empty sand dunes, displacing few Palestinians. But the network of walls, checkpoints, military sites and Israeli-only roads made it extremely difficult for Palestinians to travel freely. Now a trip from Gaza City to Rafah, which was often impossible, can be made in less than an hour.

Mr. Dheir, in his own freshly painted office, serving tea in new china cups, took out an architect's rendering of what the campus might look like in the future and displayed it proudly. Some of the nicest features were in red.

"It's only a plan," he finally said. "The red means it's part of the 10-year plan." But the intention is to bring the colleges of education, art and science here in their entirety within the next two years.

He added: "This is one of the symbols of freedom after the humiliation imposed on the Palestinians. It's a national project." But as a state university normally financed by the Palestinian Authority, now led by <u>Hamas</u>, the employees here, like Mr. Dheir, have also not received their salaries for the last four months.

"It's very difficult," he said with a sigh. "The whole situation is difficult. It's a big preoccupation for everyone. No one's paying their bills, and everyone is calling for unity and fearing civil war."

When <u>Hamas</u> supporters in Gaza's Islamic University clashed with Fatah supporters in Al Azhar University, there were some fistfights here, but they were quelled. "It nearly touched us, too, but we managed to stop it," Mr. Dheir said. "We said that this is a presidential place and we must have unity."

Still, Fatah flags fly next to the Palestinian one, and Palestinians still call the area by its former Israeli name, Neve Dekalim.

Walking around the campus, Mr. Dheir explained that there had been much salvaging and looting after the Israelis left, when even many of the trees were cut down. But Mr. Abbas soon ordered Fatah security guards to patrol the area and to stop the seizing of land that had taken place in a number of other former settlements, where some clans, militant groups and business interests had taken over what was supposed to be Palestinian Authority land devoted to the interests of Gazans as a whole.

"After we put up the wall, things became easier," said the registrar, Ahmed al-Mabhouh.

The old Neve Dekalim supermarket is being turned into a two-story cafeteria for students and teachers, and a row of shops nearby, one of which used to offer a serviceable espresso, has been remodeled into one large hall for the registrar. But the campus excludes the former synagogues, mostly gutted and firecharred, which remain on the horizon.

A group of students wandered on the repaved walkways, chatting excitedly after finishing a linguistics exam. Almutaz Abu Sittah, 19, tall and handsome, was proud of the campus but dour about the future.

A Campus for 'Scholars, Not Fighters' on a Settlement Site

"There's little optimism," he said. "The world is besieging us. And there's no real government, and no real state to govern."

Does he feel freer? "We've grown up," he said, "with vengeance in our hearts."

http://www.nytimes.com

Graphic

Photos: Palestinian construction workers putting up a new building on campus, on a site formerly occupied by a municipal building for Neve Dekalim. (Photo by Wisam Nassar for The New York Times)

A poster of Yasir Arafat has a place of honor on a cafeteria wall on the new campus of Al Aksa University. (Photo by Khalil Hamra/Associated Press)Map of Gaza Strip highlighting Neve Dekalim: Neve Dekalim was one of the settlements evacuated by Israel.

Load-Date: June 21, 2006



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

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Section: FEATURES; Letters; Pg. 16

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Body

MATP

MOST TALKED ABOUT

GAZA STANDOFF

To deny Palestinian terrorism is to deny the truth

CONGRATULATIONS on your editorial ("Israel on target in Gaza response", 30/6) on Israel's actions in the Palestinian territories.

While most media in Australia find it difficult to describe organisations involved in terrorist activity against Israel as "terrorists", choosing instead the term "militants", your paper seems to be taking the lead in journalistic integrity.

Clearly the violence perpetrated by some Palestinians against Israel falls into the category of terrorism. To deny this is to deny the truth.

While you emphasise in your editorial the Palestinian people's predicament, you correctly point out that much of it is a result of their own doing. They are the ones who democratically elected the <u>Hamas</u> government and they must therefore live with the consequences.

Anyone following the unfolding events in the Gaza Strip would know that a clear majority of Palestinians in fact support the terrorist action -- the kidnapping of an Israeli soldier -- which resulted in the necessary Israeli response. This in no way means, however, that Palestinian civilians are legitimate targets. They merely must live with the consequences of their vote for *Hamas* and the subsequent actions of that administration. Israel must take due care to ensure civilians are not harmed.

Any other state whose citizens were being held by terrorists would, if it valued the safety of its citizens, do everything within its power to ensure they are brought home alive. Negotiating with the terrorists and giving in to their demands would simply encourage such acts in the future.

Manny Waks

Executive Officer, B'nai B'rith Anti-Defamation Commission, Caulfield South, Vic

I'M writing to express my utter disgust at the actions by Israel, which has committed a blatant act of war against Palestinians in the Gaza Strip.

This flies in the face of any genuine interest in peace in the region and should be resisted by anyone interested in world peace. The arrests of members of the <u>Hamas</u> government show us that Israel and the US have no interest in democracy in the Middle East, unless it follows their script.

Benjamin Solah

Eagle Vale, NSW

ONCE again it seems that Western governments will stand by and watch in ambivalent impotency as Israel unleashes a grossly disproportionate full-scale military assault on the refugee camp that is Gaza. The Palestinian people are once more subjected to a policy of collective punishment for, it seems, exercising their democratic right and voting for a <u>Hamas</u>-led government. The kidnapping of a young Israeli soldier is unfortunate, but he is a soldier, a combatant, and such risks are commensurate with his station. This act is far more legitimate under the rules of war as enunciated in the Geneva Conventions than the countless targeted assassinations carried out by the Israeli Defence Force over the past six weeks.

Similarly, the targeting of civilian infrastructure is illegal under international law. The news that the IDF has already "taken out" the electricity and water supply of Gaza further illustrates not only Israel's disdain for such laws but also its complete disregard for the tens of thousands of innocent Palestinians already living under atrocious conditions within Gaza.

Zaid Khan

Blakehurst, NSW

IT is time to stop making excuses for the Palestinians. Israel's withdrawal from Gaza opened great potential for negotiations. But all the Palestinians could do was to rampage through the territory vandalising the buildings and the fields, then setting up daily rocket attacks into Israeli territory and proudly declaring to the world that they would not recognise Israel.

But even this was not sufficient. The Palestinians continued with cross-border attacks and abductions, and threats of beheading their hostages on video -- a level of depravity reminiscent of the worst excesses of al-Qa'ida terrorists.

In the meantime the internecine violence gives the lie to any claim that the Palestinians have embraced democracy.

Paul Rozental

Melbourne, Vic

THANK you for your straight-talking editorial. I think it's remarkable that the Israeli government and army has managed to avoid inflicting any casualties at all on the Palestinian side in the last few days.

This behaviour, in relation to respect for human life, is in stark contrast to the hooded thugs and murderers who claim to represent the long-suffering Palestian population. The more the world expresses no tolerance for terrorism, the quicker the Palestinians will accept reality and get on with making peace.

Steve Lieblich

Mt Lawley, WA

THE Australian may not like <u>Hamas</u> and may support Israeli settlers and the occupation of Palestinian land for almost 40 years, but the fact remains that every person has the right and duty to fight occupation. The Palestinians are no different than the French resisting the Germans in both world wars or the Afghans fighting the Russians in the 1980s.

The US and the European Community demand that the Palestinians first surrender and then talk but they do not insist that Isreal return to pre-1967 borders.

Akram Malik

Gympie, Qld

The time has come for

Hicks to be set free

THE Prime Minister says he has no sympathy for David Hicks. Sympathy is not the issue, it is the entitlement of an Australian in Hicks's position to be afforded justice.

The US Supreme Court's finding that the military tribunals were illegal and did not meet the minimum international standards of justice is an indictment of the Bush administration and the Howard Government.

In prosecuting the case for the war on terror, both George W. Bush and John Howard have cited upholding and promoting the cherished values of democracy. Inclusive in these values is the presumption of innocence and the right of an accused person to a fair trial.

If there was a case against Hicks, it should not have taken nearly four years to lay charges after subjecting him to cruel and inhumane conditions. The time has come for Hicks to be set free.

Vincent Mahon

Aireys Inlet, Vic

DAVID Hicks left Australia to join forces with the Taliban and, presumably, was more than prepared to take up arms for them to fight, maim and kill Australian troops. It was incredible to note that at a recent rally for Hicks, the majority of the participants were <u>women</u>. With the Taliban's well-known attitude towards <u>women</u>, I found this hard to witness. But, after all, it wasn't long ago that do-gooders were asking for two minutes' silence for an Australian drug trafficker executed in Singapore. We are indeed getting more naive by the day. No wonder the Indonesians find us difficult to understand.

Ash Forward

Shelley, WA

Nothing to do with IR

THE boys over here in the West are in shock with all this talk of Eddie McGuire wanting to "bone" Jessica Rowe ("Packer escapes turmoil for polo fun", 30/6). Fair enough, but in Perth "boning" a girl has got absolutely nothing to do with industrial relations. Onya Eddie, what a guy.

Lee Robinson

Churchlands, WA

LOOKING at the turmoil at the Nine Network, I wonder whether Kerry Packer may have once shared the sentiment first expressed by Louis XV: "Apres moi le deluge.

Geoff Morris

Turramurra, NSW

Puritans on the warpath

IT was heartening to read NSW Education Minister Carmel Tebbutt's views on the teaching of literature in secondary schools ("No place for New Age school syllabus", 29/6). Her understanding that Year 12 students need to be exposed to the primary sources -- actual literature -- instead of being bamboozled by inappropriate and tiresome theories of literature, is very welcome, as is her defence of great literary works.

Unfortunately, her characterisation of the present NSW English curriculum rather ignores the fact that the actual work students have to complete is very much in the vein of the dopey Gradgrind approach which she so rightly deplores. They are constantly being asked to pass imaginative works through tedious political and sociological mills, and to sniff out "values", as if they were puritans on the warpath.

It's all very well to talk of great content, of reading lists being wide -- they are, in theory anyway. But in practice, reading lists stay unexplored as students and teachers try desperately to keep up with the fifth-rate nonsense that passes for approaches to literature, and which they have to grapple with if they want to get the marks.

But perhaps, with her remarks, the minister is subtly signalling a change to the study of English literature in NSW schools? We can only hope so.

Sophie Masson

Invergowrie, NSW

Responding to Langton

YOUR story "Deaths in custody fear frees the guilty" (30/6) has left readers with the impression that I rejected the comments of federal Indigenous Affairs Minister Mal Brough in relation to sentences imposed on indigenous offenders, whereas comments to The Australian reporter who contacted my office were in direct response to Professor Marcia Langton's assertions on the ABC TV's Lateline program on June 26.

I was not commenting on Mr Brough's observations, nor do I intend to. I was not aware of them until I saw them published alongside my quote.

Richard Coates

Director of Public Prosecutions, Darwin

Bolt's 'denialist campaign'

I'M writing with reference to your reproduction of Andrew Bolt's most recent attempt to discredit me and to deny that between 1900 and 1970 there was a widespread policy in Australia of removing "half caste" Aboriginal children from their families (Cut&Paste, 29/6).

We have only one reliable source concerning the numbers of indigenous children removed -- a 1994 Australian Bureau of Statistics survey. It revealed that over 10 per cent of Aboriginal children over 25 had been taken from their families. Most were removed without the authority of a court of law or any welfare assessment. Between the wars, many were removed as part of a policy known officially as "breeding out the colour".

The names of hundreds of these children, removed in the first half of the 20th century, are scattered through government files. As I have informed Bolt, very many are known only by Christian names, such as "Joe" or "Topsy". Because of Bolt's scurrilous denialist campaign and your own newspaper's involvement in it, I intend to compile a data base with some of the names of the "half-caste" children removed from their mothers and communities in Queensland, the Northern Territory and Western Australia which I noted down in the course of the research I did some years ago.

For the past eight years or so, in no fewer than seventy articles, Bolt has denied the existence of the tragic phenomenon we call the stolen generations. His articles have caused indigenous Australians great pain.

In early 2001, I challenged Bolt to debate the issue. After initially agreeing, on spurious grounds he pulled out. In April 2001, he claimed it was because he did not want to help me sell a book. Recently he invented a false and nonsensical story that it was because I had refused to send him an advance copy. In October 2002, I repeated the offer of a debate. I have now sent yet another letter inviting Bolt to a searching debate. I look forward eagerly to his reply.

Robert Manne

Professor of politics

La Trobe University, Melbourne

FIRST BYTE

letters@theaustralian.com.au

To call James Hardie a charity would be a vile slur on the Salvos, Vinnies and the Red Cross. Strength to your arm, Mr Costello.

Charlie Rook

North Perth, WA

The orchestrated theft of antique furniture from the Queensland Parliament during the 1980s serves to remind us that it was not just trust and integrity that went missing during those bleak years.

Crispin Walters

Chapel Hill, Qld

John Howard claims that the removal of AWAs by Labor would be like a dagger to the throat of Australia's economy. However, some of our largest companies have decided against putting their employees on AWAs. Does that mean that they are also putting a dagger to the throat of the economy?

Henry Herzog

Elwood, Vic

As Australian troops put their lives on the line in Iraq, allegedly for the purpose of building democracy, the man who sent them there negotiates trade deals with the decidedly undemocratic regime in China. Still, what's good for business is good for Australia.

Dave Davis

Collingwood, Vic

The fact that Judith Brett (Letters, 30/6) refers to ordinary people, as a discrete category, five times simply proves the point that to the lumpencommentariat "ordinary people" are not like "us" -- they are specimens to be studied.

Trevor Preston

Osborne Park, WA

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Load-Date: June 30, 2006



G2: 'Most Israelis do not believe it is right to control Palestinians': Is it racist to worry about a Jewish majority?

The Guardian - Final Edition February 8, 2006 Wednesday

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Section: GUARDIAN FEATURES PAGES; Pg. 16

Length: 284 words **Byline:** Tova Herzl

Body

Tova Herzl, Jerusalem

Oprah Winfrey and I are fiftyish dieting <u>women</u>. Therefore I expect the Guardian to declare that we are identical. Never mind our differing citizenship, race, occupation and, alas, bank account. Ignore details that spoil the required picture, and start writing, editing, embellishing.

Take the security fence/wall/barrier. Chris McGreal describes difficulties encountered by Palestinians, but omits that the murder of hundreds of Israelis drove its construction. Israeli actions (no, we are not perfect) do not occur in a vacuum. Yet almost no information on the conflict or the region is provided. Thus, security concerns are relegated to "Israel spent the first decades of its existence fighting for its life". Shall we now shrug away *Hamas* ideology? Iranian threats? Others?

There is an ongoing national conflict involving territory and requiring mutual compromise. To seek simplistic comparisons to an evil regime while ignoring intrinsic differences between the situations and their causes is unhelpful and intellectually dishonest. Describing one party to the conflict as racist (hence immoral and wrong) absolves the other of any responsibility. Ah, if not for these Jews/Israelis, everything would be just fine . . .

Lest you think I overreact, note the derogatory references to Israel's "demographic threat". Yes, we worry about a Jewish majority. We want and need our country (as the Palestinians should have theirs). Is that racism? Perhaps "racist" better describes those who would deny us - only us - that right?

Tova Herzl, a career diplomat, is a former Israeli ambassador to South Africa. She was born in Israel and educated both there and in South Africa under apartheid.

Load-Date: February 8, 2006



Canada in dangerous world

Ottawa Citizen

April 3, 2006 Monday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A12; Susan Riley

Length: 739 words

Byline: Susan Riley, The Ottawa Citizen

Body

One of the most poignant and troubling elements in the story of James Loney, the hostage released last week after four months captivity in Iraq, is that Loney's gay partner had to erase himself from public view throughout the ordeal.

This was literally true. The widely-circulated photo of Loney than ran in all the papers, was, his partner Dan Hunt said, taken the day before Loney went to Iraq and it was a photo of both men. "I had to disappear, too," said Hunt. He, and Loney's family, wisely concluded that if the Christian activist's captors knew that James was gay, he may not have survived.

It is one of the many ironies of a complex situation that Loney's rescuers include governments led by George W. Bush and Stephen Harper, neither of whom are champions of gay rights. Nor is Loney -- a member of the anti-war, anti-imperialist Christian Peacemakers Team -- the kind of Christian usually favoured by North American conservatives.

There has been a nasty tone in some of the response to last week's rescue -- including harsh criticism of Loney and his two comrades for being in Iraq in the first place. British hostage Norman Kember was taken to task for not thanking (without prodding) the British soldiers who freed the men. Loney was properly grateful in a gracious statement that thanked all involved in his rescue, spoke warmly of the reception he got from American troops, lamented the death of another Canadian soldier in Afghanistan and drew a clear distinction between the war, which he opposes, and those fighting it. This did not spare him rebuke, however.

Had he been from a mainstream Christian aid group --inspired, perhaps, by a missionary impulse to convert Iraqis while offering humanitarian relief -- would the hostage-taking have sparked the same shocked disapproval? Is it irresponsible for any civilian westerner (including freelance journalists, like newly released Jill Carroll) to be in Iraq? On the other hand, if the only foreigners the Iraqis see are armed and, given the dangers, necessarily wary, what message does that send about our intentions?

These are simple questions, yet even they are difficult for anyone who hasn't experienced the war to answer confidently. The deeper issues are utterly confounding. American, Canadian and other troops are in Afghanistan to protect "democracy", we are frequently told -- to give the long-suffering people the same liberties we enjoy. But how many want the same liberties we enjoy?

Canada in dangerous world

The fundamentalist clerics, who still hold powerful sway in Iraq and in Afghanistan, don't. In their ideal world, gays and lesbians are killed, <u>women</u> imprisoned within a medieval version of family, and Israel, and Jews generally, destroyed. Iraqi Shia cleric Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani issued a fatwa recently saying that homosexuals and lesbians are "forbidden", and adding that "the people involved should be killed in the worst, most severe way of killing."

Ever since the post Sept. 11 invasions, the new rulers of both Iraq and Afghanistan struggle to accommodate western notions of human rights and Sharia law, which imposes harsh penalties on everything from adultery, to -- as the case of Christian convert Abdul Rahman recently illustrated -- the "crime" of changing religions. It reduces the North American conservative fight against gay marriage, say, to a feeble vestige of a more virulent hatred. But it should also make us wary of religious fundamentalism of all stripes -- the belief that there is only one code of decent behaviour that everyone must embrace.

Very early in his career as prime minister, Harper has been faced with some of the world's most intractable problems. He has been typically assertive: Canada will not send aid to <u>Hamas</u> until the new Palestinian authority renounces terrorism; Canada will stay in Afghanistan until democracy flowers there. These are admirably clear responses, but to dangerously complicated situations. Will the rebuke to <u>Hamas</u> only stoke anger, increase its isolation and open Canada to terrorist reprisals? Is sending a large military force the best way to help bring peace to Afghanistan?

Yet, how can anyone not oppose the fascism that makes James Loney vulnerable because he is gay, that hates Jews and devalues <u>women</u>? But how do you defeat an idea with an army? As long as Canadian lives are at risk, the questions aren't academic.

Susan Riley's column runs Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Email sriley@thecitizen.canwest.com

Load-Date: April 3, 2006



Here are some answers from a Muslim

Ottawa Citizen
February 11, 2006 Saturday
Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. B7

Length: 686 words

Byline: Mohammed Azhar Ali Khan, Citizen Special

Body

In a column in the Citizen last week ("Some questions for Muslims," Feb. 3), John Robson asserts,

according to the <u>Hamas</u> Charter, the Prophet Muhammad said that before the Day of Judgment Muslims will kill Jews, and that trees and stones will tell Muslims where the Jews were hiding so that they could kill them.

Mr. Robson asks if the Prophet did say this.

Muslims regard the Holy Koran as God's word that cannot be changed. As to the sayings attributed to the Prophet, there are many, and scholars have analysed them to determine which were authentic. Muslims agree that a statement that contradicts the Koran cannot be authentic because the Prophet Muhammad could not disobey God.

I do not believe the <u>Hamas</u> quote is authentic because it challenges the very premise of Islam -- that God is Just and Merciful.

The Koran says that there is only one God, who created all living beings. He loves His creations. The Koran prohibits harm to even animals and plants.

The Koran states that God made different races and nationalities so they would get to know each other. God did not ask those whom He was creating whether they wanted to be born into a Jewish home, a black or aboriginal one or in Canada, Rwanda or elsewhere. He did not consult them whether they wanted to be born as humans, animals or plants. He alone decided whom to create and in which category.

If it is God who created Jews, would He then punish them for something He did? To punish Jews because God created them as Jews would not be just or merciful but sadistic. It would undermine the Koranic assertion that God does not punish innocent people but only the guilty.

If God despised His own creations, why would He create them? And why would the Almighty need the help of human beings, trees and stones to kill them if that was His wish?

Prophet Muhammad never told his followers to harm Jews. Islam allows Muslims to marry Jewish <u>women</u> without their having to give up Judaism. It did not tell Muslims to marry them and then kill them because they were Jewish.

Prophet Muhammad once saw a funeral and he stood up out of respect. A companion stated that the deceased was a Jew. The Prophet replied, "was he not a human being?" and kept standing.

Here are some answers from a Muslim

The Prophet's forgiving nature was legendary. He did not harm those who had persecuted him, or killed his followers. He was regularly abused but seldom retaliated. A woman threw garbage at him whenever he passed near her house. But for a few days she did not show up. He then went to her house to check. On discovering that she was ill, he tended to her till she recovered.

The Koran describes him as a blessing for all mankind, not a blessing only for Muslims. He concluded treaties with non-Muslims, including Jews. He also fought wars with some, but not because they were Jewish or had refused to submit to Islam.

His immediate successors followed his example. Muslims allowed Jews to return to Jerusalem from where the Crusaders had expelled them. Jewish scholars and merchants flourished in Muslim-ruled lands.

The Koran, in describing the people God loves, does not mention people who were born into Muslim homes. It describes His favourite people as those who remember Him, attribute no partner to Him, are kind to elders, neighbours, <u>women</u> and others, help the needy, keep their word, speak gently, are honest in their dealings, speak the truth and avoid lust, greed, vanity, arrogance, injustice and cruelty.

I believe all religions teach us to become better human beings by being kind to others. We should not allow hatemongers to sow hatred, poison and destruction.

Canada is respected worldwide as a symbol of justice, sanctity of law, freedom, generosity, equality, democracy and civilized behaviour. Let us continue to be an example, to a troubled world, of a people at peace with their consciences and with our fellow living beings in the global village.

Mohammed Azhar Ali Khan is a former president of the Ottawa Muslim Association. He was also chairman of the Interfaith Working Group at the Department of Canadian Heritage, and he served 25 years with the Ottawa Citizen, mostly on the editorial board.

Load-Date: February 11, 2006



Letters | Letters

The Philadelphia Inquirer January 31, 2006 Tuesday

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The Philadelphia Inquirer

Found on Philly . com

Section: EDITORIAL; Pg. A10

Length: 735 words

Body

Not legally at war

President Bush may be violating the Constitution by using the National Security Agency to monitor U.S. citizens or persons here in the United States. His rationale that Congress has given him the authority to do so is incorrect.

The President indeed does have extraordinary powers in a time of war. The simple fact is that we are not legally at war. Congress hasn't declared war. We are operating under an authorization for the use of military force. This authorization doesn't specifically permit the NSA to spy on American citizens or persons. Using the Federal Intelligence Security Act court would allow the President to do so. Why he hasn't is a mystery. He has other, legal avenues and tools to protect this nation. If he doesn't use them, the Congress should consider impeachment.

Eugene J. Willard

Philadelphia

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Fourth Amendment

The exchange between Gen. Michael Hayden, former National Security Agency director, and Knight Ridder reporter Jonathan Landay (Jan. 24) was quite upsetting.

The ex-NSA director says it is OK to conduct wiretap surveillance without court approval because the Fourth Amendment only refers to "unreasonable searches and seizures." He refuses to admit that the actual text of the Fourth Amendment clearly states that "no warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause." On top of this, he scapegoats by saying that he did not craft the authorization, but is only responding to a lawful order.

The general's lapse in understanding the Fourth Amendment and what is considered a "lawful" order is something we should find most disturbing.

Edward Hall

Letters | Letters

Philadelphia

We're not at war

We are not at war, despite what the President and his cronies say.

Dick Polman quotes a Democratic strategist (Jan. 25) as saying that nobody cares about President Bush and the Constitution. I beg to differ. As in the Nixon years, Americans eventually repudiate a president's attempts to ignore the law while hiding behind false claims designed to scare the public into submission.

Europeans see acts of political terrorism as the dastardly, heinous crimes they are. Our nation should employ all legal means to investigate and pre-emptively stop these outrages.

But dressing up even these terrible crimes as a supposedly "new kind of war" in order to exercise crude political power is a hallmark of the right wing, as is its faux choice between utilizing defense and protecting civil liberties. A better president could fight terrorist criminals while respecting the Constitution.

Keith Mason

Cinnaminson

Self-defeating Dems

A reader's letter (Jan. 25) regarding Jonathan Last's column "Abortion-rights lobby's ungluing: Bob Casey?" lays out my worst nightmare for the probable Casey-Santorum senatorial race. Namely, that enough liberal/moderate voters will stay home on Election Day and others will throw away their votes on a candidate who has absolutely no chance of winning, thus ensuring the reelection of Rick Santorum.

Did we learn nothing from the 2000 presidential race? Are liberal voters in Pennsylvania to repeat the folly of voting for the perfect candidate and thereby guarantee the election of a perfectly terrible one?

Casey is a decent, honorable man who is open to the issues that face ordinary Pennsylvanians, including <u>women</u> and minorities. Santorum whose views are antithetical to the best interests of all Americans, except the wealthy and the powerful, has been bought and paid for long ago. If readers such as the writer of the Jan. 25 letter have their way, you'll see him on the Republican national ticket in 2008.

Melina Waldo

Haddonfield

Bush and *Hamas*

President Bush loves to talk about the spread of democracy, but I won't hold my breath waiting for him to take accolades for his administration's pushing forward an early Palestinian election that put a terrorist organization at the helm. Bush's ham-handed attempt to buy influence for Fatah with U.S. taxpayer funds no doubt helped *Hamas* win the election by a wider margin. It is just the latest example in a seemingly endless stream of mistakes and missteps that underscore the stunning incompetence and disengagement from reality of the Bush team. His reign of failure can only be stopped by a Congress that will not act as a rubber stamp for his harebrained schemes, and will force him to account for his myriad blunders and alleged violations of law and the Constitution.

Brandon Bittner

Royersford

Load-Date: January 31, 2006



Muslims and the media

University Wire

March 16, 2006 Thursday

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Section: COLUMN Length: 715 words

Byline: By Jason Sheltzer, The Daily Princetonian; SOURCE: Princeton

Dateline: PRINCETON, N.J.

Body

Does the mainstream media depict Islam unfairly? According to a new Washington Post poll, 46 percent of Americans have a negative view of Islam. The Post attributes this fact to "political statements and media reports that focus almost solely on the actions of Muslim extremists."

It may have been the extremists who hijacked the airplanes, but it was the <u>women</u> and the children who flooded the streets of Palestine in celebration after the Twin Towers fell.

It may have been the extremists who murdered Dutch filmmaker Theo Van Gogh, but thousands of Muslims have rioted (and over 100 people have been killed) over illustrations published in a Danish newspaper.

It may have been the extremists in <u>Hamas</u> who strapped explosives to their bodies and killed Israeli schoolchildren, but it took the support of a majority of voters to give **Hamas** control of the Palestinian legislature.

In each of these cases, the extremists justified their crimes by appealing to their religion and its holy book. If such an interpretation of Islam is faulty (and I suspect it is, knowing that at various times, the Crusades, the Inquisition and slavery have been "justified" by the Bible) where is the condemnation from the Islamic middle?

Some apologists counter by saying that the media pays no attention when Muslims do speak out against terrorism. This simply isn't true. Last November, three hotels in Jordan were bombed by terrorists. When the Jordanian people rallied in support of their leader and against terrorism, it was given prominent coverage in The New York Times and was widely reported in newspapers around the United States. It seems, however, that such indignation is lacking after other violent attacks, especially when the victims are Americans or Jews.

The media cannot be blamed for reporting the truth. Since the Black September massacre of Israeli athletes in 1972, hundreds of terrorist attacks have been carried out by Muslims with scarcely a word of repudiation from any Islamic government or religious leader. In fact, after the Munich massacre, delegates from a number of Muslim nations refused to comply with Germany's request that they lower their flags to half-mast to show respect to the Jewish victims.

This is not to say that Islam is worse or more prone to violence than Judaism, Christianity or any other religious sect. Many religions go through periods of violent, xenophobic turmoil. It so happens that Islam is going through such a phase now.

Muslims and the media

There are some who take this equivalency between religions too far. Last week, the 'Prince' printed a column entitled "Uncle Sam Sends Muslims to Timeout." Following the lines of the Washington Post article, the authors note, "Global public opinion is already skewed by stereotypes about Islam." They further make the claim that "in reality, the Muslim community is no different from any other community - committed to the universal values of freedom, justice and equality that underlie all religious communities."

Perhaps this is true under an idealized (or Westernized) version of Islam, but this certainly isn't true in the majority of countries that actually practice Islamic law. Under Islamic law, non-Muslims are made to be a subordinate caste of citizens called the dhimmi. Dhimmi may be forbidden from holding public office or filing suit in court, and they must pay a special tax to the state, called a jizya, if they do not wish to convert to Islam.

The abuse of <u>women</u> under Islamic law is also commonplace and well-documented. The rights of <u>women</u> are strictly curtailed, and in many Muslim countries, they can't vote, inherit property or divorce. These are not "skewed stereotypes about Islam"; these are the realities of daily life for many who live in Muslim nations.

The solution to this problem is not, as The Washington Post seems to suggest, for the media to whitewash the truth in hopes of generating positive sentiments about Islam. The media has a responsibility to report the facts, free from bias. If the facts are that Muslim extremists are committing a disproportionately high number of violent terrorist attacks, then so be it. That's what the media should report.

Jason Sheltzer is a sophomore from St. Davids, Pennsylvania. He can be reached at sheltzer@princeton.edu.

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Load-Date: March 16, 2006



Harper dismisses U.S. Arctic comments

Prince George Citizen (British Columbia)

January 27, 2006 Friday

Final Edition

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Section: CANADA; Pg. 7

Length: 763 words

Byline: Canadian Press

Dateline: OTTAWA

Body

OTTAWA (CP) -- Stephen Harper moved quickly to dispel the notion he'll be too cosy with the United States, using his first news conference as prime minister-designate to warn the Americans to butt out of Canada's Arctic affairs.

Harper raised the issue without prompting Thursday in an indication of his eagerness to stake his political turf.

He wasn't asked about comments from U.S. Ambassador David Wilkins this week but offered a response anyway.

Wilkins warned that the waters around Canada's Arctic are international territory and questioned Harper's plan to place military icebreakers there.

Harper shrugged off the ambassador's complaint.

"It is the Canadian people we get our mandate from, not the ambassador of the United States," he said.

"I was very clear about this in the election campaign: the United States defends its sovereignty. The Canadian government will defend our sovereignty."

Moments before asserting his independence from U.S. foreign policy, Harper described a friendly phone call he received from President George W. Bush earlier this week.

International issues figured prominently in Harper's 22-minute appearance in the foyer of the Commons, his first question-and-answer session since winning Monday's election. He also said he received congratulatory calls from the leaders of Mexico, Britain and Australia.

Harper hinted strongly that Canada will not recognize the new militant Palestinian Hamas government.

Harper did not commit to an official position but pointed out that Canada supports Israel's right to exist -- which **Hamas** militants do not.

He added: "For a nation to be truly democratic, that nation must renounce terrorism."

Harper said he will outline Canada's official position closer to Feb. 6, the date his Conservative government gets sworn in.

Harper dismisses U.S. Arctic comments

In the meantime, he has already started transition briefings with senior bureaucrats and the head of the Bank of Canada. He will meet in the coming days with the RCMP commissioner and military's chief of defence staff.

Harper discussed the cabinet he intends to form and hinted it would include as many <u>women</u> and central Canadians as possible.

"The cabinet will reflect the unity and diversity of the country," he said more than once.

Few <u>women</u> -- just 14 in all -- were elected under the Conservative banner, and the party is under-represented in the country's largest urban areas and Quebec.

Once a cabinet is named, Harper will set about producing a policy-setting throne speech for the opening of Parliament several weeks later.

He said he will consult opposition parties and listen to their suggestions for the speech. But he said Canadians expect him to act on his own key election promises: cutting the GST, a new government-ethics bill, a crackdown on crime, a \$1,200 child-care subsidy and a health care wait-times guarantee.

His ethics bill will be perhaps the most sweeping of its kind ever introduced in Canada. The proposed Federal Accountability Act will rewrite the rules for party fundraising, lobbying, and access to information.

It was suggested to Harper that all those new accountability measures would become a political millstone for him.

Would cabinet ministers be forced to resign every time the new access-to-information law unearthed details of a blunder or an ethical lapse?

He said his tolerance for ministerial miscues would be middle-of-the-road between recent Conservative and Liberal governments.

"In that (Mulroney) government I thought the trigger was often pulled too quickly," he said.

"But in this past (Liberal) government we saw what happened when nobody was ever forced to leave. The problems just got bigger and bigger as time went on.

"So we want to find some kind of a reasonable medium."

Harper also said Thursday that:

-- He intends to deal with the same-sex marriage issue early in his mandate, but not immediately.

Observers believe his minority government won't have enough votes to overturn a new law on gay and lesbian marriage. He has also ruled out using the constitution's notwithstanding clause -- the only other possible means of scrapping the law.

-- He expects the Liberal-dominated Senate to respect the will of the House of Commons and adopt the laws it passes.

Harper does promise to give the Senate some democratic legitimacy by establishing elections for the upper chamber.

-- He does not want to pay severance to David Dingwall, who resigned amid scandal from the Royal Canadian Mint.

"We've never favoured paying a severance package to someone who voluntarily resigns," he said.

But Harper added that he wants to hear the legal advice of government lawyers.

Load-Date: January 27, 2006



Assumptions take their lumps as West meets Middle East

St. Louis Post-Dispatch (Missouri)

December 11, 2005 Sunday

FOURTH EDITION

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Section: NEWSWATCH; Pg. B4

Length: 1112 words

Byline: By Jon Sawyer POST-DISPATCH WASHINGTON BUREAU CHIEF

Dateline: BEIRUT, LEBANON

Body

Take a dozen journalists, half from the United States and half from countries throughout the Middle East.

Put them together for a week of workshops and reporting in war-scarred, volatile Lebanon.

Then watch the sparks fly --- and assumptions die.

For Omayma Abdel-Latif, a senior reporter with Cairo's Al Ahram newspaper, the most revelatory moment came at the end of a group interview with the Lebanese director of <u>Hamas</u>, when a couple of the American journalists balked at adding their e-mails to a list for follow-up material.

"They were fearful when the <u>Hamas</u> guy took their e-mails that if they were found to have e-mails from <u>Hamas</u>, they could be questioned or go to jail," Abdel-Latif said. "That I could not grasp."

Fran Quigley, a civil-liberties attorney and free-lance reporter from Indianapolis, was startled that Israel loomed so large in how the Middle Eastern journalists saw U.S. policies in the region.

"Our colleagues viewed all U.S. actions in the region through the prism of U.S. allegiance to Israel," Quigley said -more important than talk of spreading democracy or even access to oil.

For Khosrow Soltani Kasseb, editor of the Tehran-based Iran News, the most surprising moment came during a group interview with the commander of forces in southern Lebanon for Hezbollah, the Iranian-backed Shiite resistance movement that led the two-decade struggle against Israeli occupation forces that ended with Israel's withdrawal in 2000.

Given Hezbollah's reputation for strict piety and rigid rules, the <u>women</u> in the U.S. journalist group arrived with their heads dutifully covered. Also on hand: a local woman reporter from Beirut, wearing a hot pink elastic top, tight pants -- and nothing at all on her head.

"I never imagined that they would let <u>women</u> appear without observing full Islamic hijab" covering, said Soltani. "It sounds as though I, too, had been influenced by the extensive negative propaganda by the Western media."

Assaulting stereotypes

Assumptions take their lumps as West meets Middle East

The journalists meeting in Beirut were part of a workshop on international reporting in which participants might learn as much from one another as from the instructors. The workshop was sponsored by the lowa-based Stanley Foundation and by the Reuters Foundation.

The result was spirited exchanges in Beirut, in the classroom and interviews and over dinner, and in e-mails since.

"The one thing I walked away from Beirut with was this overwhelming sense that Americans and Middle Easterners need to talk to each other," said Sean Harder, military affairs reporter for the Savannah (Ga.) Morning News. "Not on a diplomatic or political level," he adds, "but person to person."

Raed el-Rafei, 28, of Beirut's Daily Star, said: "I think the way the media makes news just makes us miss the point most of the time. When the media is always reporting on suicide bombers and politics, we miss the human touch."

For the American journalists, the diverse backgrounds of their Middle Eastern counterparts was itself an assault on stereotypes.

Abdel-Latif is the hijab-wearing daughter of a devout and conservative Sunni family, for example, while el-Rafei grew up in a secular Sunni family reading Sartre and Camus and "feeling very much distant from everything related to religion."

Soltani, the Iranian journalist, was born in the Kurdish city of Mahabad, the son of a Sunni father and Shia mother. His wife is Shia, too. "According to the law, since my father was a Sunni, I am also supposed to be a Sunni," he writes. "But since I am not a practicing Muslim, it really does not matter to me -- Shia or Sunni!"

Santa Essa, 31, is a Baghdad University-trained chemist who became a journalist only after the 2003 war and isn't a Muslim at all. An Assyrian Christian, she works for the Aswat al Iraq news agency. In jeans and T-shirt, a baseball cap backward on her head, she views issues of sectarian strife with the jaundiced eye of someone who has seen too much violence, too close.

"Am sorry to be late," she wrote in an e-mail last month. "I had funeral (my cousin was killed by roadside bomb)."

Beneath the surface

Essa said her main complaint about Western journalists was naiveté, that they took too much at face value. "If you talk with a mixture of Muslims, they will try to appear as very lovely people and say they love each other," she said. "But if you live in Iraq, you'll see that it's lies. Not all of them, but most of them -- they don't love each other."

Essa works with one of the many independent media outlets that have sprung up in Iraq, most with U.S. government help. But her complaints about superficial Western coverage are echoed by colleagues at more-established regional newspapers.

Abdel-Latif, the Cairo journalist, answers with a stinging critique when asked what bothers her most about Western media coverage of terrorism and the Middle East.

"Ignorance, ignorance," Abdel-Latif says. "There is no effort I feel on the part of the American journalists to understand the societies they are covering. They come with their preconceptions and stay as long as they want but leave with the same preconceptions. No lessons learned."

For the journalists at the Beirut workshop, there was a lesson a few days after they headed home in how words can inflame -- and confuse.

The occasion was an appearance by Iran's new hard-line president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, at a Ramadan conference in Tehran on the subject of "The World Without Zionism." At the conference, Ahmadinejad, speaking to 4,000 students, called for Israel to be "wiped off the map."

Assumptions take their lumps as West meets Middle East

The firestorm that followed was predictable: denunciation by U.S. and other Western leaders, editorial condemnation in major Western media, the cancellation of a Tehran visit by U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan.

The only thing missing, said Iranian journalist Soltani, was any acknowledgment that Ahmadinejad's remarks were neither new nor, in the Iranian context, incendiary -- not in a country where "Death to Israel" chants have been a staple of Friday prayers since the era of Ayatollah Khomeini two decades ago.

"These slogans remain slogans and nothing more," Soltani told fellow journalists in an e-mail. "Let's not forget the occasion in which Ahmadinejad said those things," he added -- "a conference dubbed 'The World Without Zionism.' What else did you expect him to say? Viva Israel?"

"What is certain is that no one here (I mean the officials) has any intention of wiping out a state by killing its people!" Soltani said. "They just wish Israel did not exist or would somehow perish for the cause of Palestine."

STLtoday.com/muslim Go online to read earlier stories in this series, plus the transcript of the interview with Karent Hughes.

Notes

MUSLIMS AND AMERICA Journalists: Comparing notes

Graphic

PHOTO

Journalists attending a workshop in Lebanon included (from left) Haitham Tamimi of Hebron, West Bank; Khosrow Soltani Kasseb of Tehran, Iran; and Omayma Abdel-Latif of Cairo, Egypt. Jon Sawyer | Post-Dispatch

Load-Date: December 12, 2005



<u>Picnic explosion: The battle of Huda Ghalia - who really killed girl's family on</u> <u>Gaza beach?: Guardian investigation casts doubt on Israeli claim that army</u> <u>was not to blame</u>

The Guardian - Final Edition
June 17, 2006 Saturday

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Section: GUARDIAN INTERNATIONAL PAGES; Pg. 14

Length: 1606 words

Byline: Chris McGreal, Beit Lahia

Body

Heartrending pictures of 10-year-old Huda Ghalia running wildly along a Gaza beach crying "father, father" and then falling weeping beside his body turned the distraught girl into an instant icon of the Palestinian struggle even before she fully grasped that much of her family was dead.

But the images of the young girl who lost her father, step-mother and five of her siblings as picnicking families fled a barrage of Israeli shells a week ago have become their own battleground.

Who and what killed the Ghalia family, and badly maimed a score of other people, has been the subject of an increasingly bitter struggle for truth all week amid accusations that a military investigation clearing the army was a cover-up, that *Hamas* was really responsible and even that the pictures of Huda's grief were all an act.

However, a Guardian investigation into the sequence of events raises new and so far unanswered questions about the Israeli military probe that cleared the army of responsibility. Evidence from hospital records, doctors' testimony and witness accounts challenges the central assertion that the shelling had stopped by the time seven members of the Ghalia family were killed.

In addition, fresh evidence from the US group Human Rights Watch, which offered the first forensic questioning of the army's account, casts doubt on another key claim - that shrapnel taken from the wounded was not from the kind of artillery used to shell Gaza.

Iconic victim

The pictures of Huda's traumatic hunt for her father garnered instant sympathy around the world and focused unwelcome attention on Israel's tactic of firing thousands of shells into Gaza over recent weeks, killing more than 20 civilians, to deter Palestinian rocket attacks.

The Israeli prime minister, Ehud Olmert, initially apologised for the killings but the military swiftly realised it was confronting another PR disaster to rival that of the killing of Mohammed al-Dura, the 12-year-old boy who died in his father's arms amid a barrage of gunfire six years ago and became the first iconic victim of the intifada.

The army quickly convened a committee to investigate the deaths on the beach and almost as swiftly absolved itself of responsibility.

Picnic explosion: The battle of Huda Ghalia - who really killed girl's family on Gaza beach?: Guardian investigation casts doubt on Israeli claim that army was

The committee acknowledged the army fired six shells on and around Beit Lahia beach from artillery inside Israel. But it said that by coincidence a separate explosion - probably a mine planted by <u>Hamas</u> or a buried old shell - occurred in the same area at about the same time, killing the family.

The army admitted that one of the six shells was unaccounted for but said it was "impossible", based on location and timings, for the sixth shell to have done the killing. The investigation also concluded that shrapnel taken from the wounded was not from artillery.

The military declared its version of events definitive. Others went further and saw a Palestinian conspiracy. An American pro-Israel pressure group, Camera, which seeks to influence media coverage, went so far as to suggest that the film of Huda Ghalia's trauma was faked: "Were the bodies moved, was the girl asked to re-enact her discovery for the camera, was the video staged?"

But the army's account quickly came in for criticism, led by a former Pentagon battlefield analyst, Marc Garlasco, investigating for Human Rights Watch. "You have the crater size, the shrapnel, the types of injuries, their location on the bodies. That all points to a shell dropping from the sky, not explosives under the sand," he said. "I've been to hospital and seen the injuries. The doctors say they are primarily to the head and torso. That is consistent with a shell exploding above the ground, not a mine under it."

Mr Garlasco also produced shrapnel from the site apparently marked as a 155mm shell used by the army that day.

Timing

The key part of the military's defence hinged on timings. It says it fired shells toward the beach between 4.30pm and 4.48pm, and that the artillery barrage stopped nine minutes before the explosion that killed the Ghalia family.

The army concluded that the deadly explosion occurred between 4.57pm and 5.10pm based on surveillance of the beach by a drone that shows people relaxing until just before 5pm and the arrival of an ambulance at 5.15pm.

Major General Meir Kalifi, who headed the army's investigation committee, said the nine-minute gap is too wide for Israel to have been responsible for the deaths. "I can without doubt say that no means used by the Israeli defence force during this time period caused the incident," he said.

But hospital records, testimony from doctors and ambulance men and eyewitness accounts suggest that the military has the timing of the explosion wrong, and that it occurred while the army was still shelling the beach.

Palestinian officials also question the timing of video showing people relaxing on the beach just before 5pm if the army, by its own admission, was dropping shells close by.

Several of those who survived the explosion say it came shortly after two or three other blasts consistent with a pattern of shells falling on the beach.

Among the survivors was Hani Asania. When the shelling began, he grabbed his daughters - Nagham, 4, and Dima, 7 - and moved toward his car on the edge of the beach. The Ghalia family was on the sand nearby awaiting a taxi.

"There was an explosion, maybe 500 metres away. Then there was a second, much closer, about two minutes later. People were running from the beach," said Mr Asania. "Maybe two minutes later there was a third shell. I could feel the pressure of the blast on my face it was so strong. I saw pieces of people."

This sequence is backed by others including Huda's brother, Eyham, 20. Annan Ghalia, Huda's uncle, called an ambulance. "We were sitting on the sand waiting for the taxis, the men on one side and the <u>women</u> on the other. The shell landed closer to the girls," he said. "I was screaming for people to help us. No one was coming. After about two minutes I called the ambulance."

Picnic explosion: The battle of Huda Ghalia - who really killed girl's family on Gaza beach?: Guardian investigation casts doubt on Israeli claim that army was

The first ambulance took children to the Kamal Odwan hospital. Its registration book records that five children wounded in the blast were admitted at 5.05pm. The book contains entries before and after the casualties from the beach, all of whom are named, and shows no sign of tampering. The hospital's computer records a blood test taken from a victim at 5.12pm. Human Rights Watch said altering the records would require re-setting the computer's clock.

The distance from the beach to the hospital is 6km. Even at speed, the drive through Beit Lahia's crowded back streets and rough roads would not take less than five minutes and would be slower with wounded patients on board.

Dr Bassam al-Masri, who treated the first wounded at Kamal Odwan, said allowing for a round trip of at least 10 minutes and time to load them, the ambulance would have left the hospital no later than 4.50pm - just two minutes after the Israelis say they stopped shelling.

Factoring in additional time for emer gency calls and the ambulances to be dispatched, the timings undermine the military's claim that the killer explosion occurred after the shelling stopped.

The first ambulance man to leave another Beid Lahia hospital, the Alwada, and a doctor summoned to work there say they clearly recall the time.

The ambulance driver, Khaled Abu Sada, said he received a call from the emergency control room between 4.45pm and 4.50pm. "I went to look for a nurse to come with me," he said. "I left the hospital at 4.50pm and was at the beach by 5pm."

The Alwada's anaesthetist, Dr Ahmed Mouhana, was woken by a call from a fellow doctor calling him to the hospital. "I looked at the time. That's what you do when someone wakes you up. It was 4.55pm," he said.

Dr Mouhana left for the hospital immediately. "It only takes 10 minutes from my house so I was there by 5.10pm or 5.15pm at the latest. I went to recep tion and they had already done triage on the children," he said.

If the hospital records and medical professionals are right, then the emergency call from the beach could not have come in much later than 4.45pm, still during the Israeli shelling.

Killer shell

From the number of shells counted beforehand by the survivors, Mr Garlasco believes the killer shell was one the army records as fired at 4.34pm.

A military spokesman, Captain Jacob Dalal, said the army stood by its interpretation. Military investigators said shrapnel taken from Palestinians treated in Israeli hospitals was not from 155mm shells fired that day. "We know it's not artillery," he said. "It could be a shell of another sort or some other device."

The military has suggested that the explosion was rigged by <u>Hamas</u> against possible army landings but Palestinian officials say that would only be an effective strategy if there were a series of mines or <u>Hamas</u> knew exactly where the Israelis would land.

Mr Garlasco said the metal taken from the victims may be detritus thrown up by the explosion or shards from cars. He said shrapnel collected at the site of the explosion by Human Rights Watch and the Palestinian police was fresh and from artillery shells.

The former Pentagon analyst said that after examining a blood-encrusted piece of shrapnel given to him by the father of a 19-year-old man wounded in the beach explosion, he determined it was a piece of fuse from an artillery shell.

Picnic explosion: The battle of Huda Ghalia - who really killed girl's family on Gaza beach?: Guardian investigation casts doubt on Israeli claim that army was

"The likelihood that the Ghalia family was killed by an explosive other than one of the shells fired by the Israeli army is remote," he said.

Capt Dalal defended the army's investigation. "We're not trying to cover up anything. We didn't do the investigation to exonerate ourselves. If it was our fire, we'll say it," he said.

Load-Date: June 17, 2006



Letters - Israel/US policy has strengthened Hezbollah

Irish News

August 3, 2006 Thursday

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Section: Pg. 26

Length: 306 words

Body

The Israeli invasion of Lebanon represents a dangerous continuation of the US post 9/11 policy whereby acts of sub-state 'terrorism' are met with wholesale infringement of state sovereignty.

In Afghanistan and Iraq America set the example which Israel is now replicating in Lebanon.

To treat a border incident involving the abduction of two soldiers by Hezbollah as if it were an occasion of war is a gross distortion of well-accepted international law and state practice.

If every such provocation were to be treated in this way, the world would be aflame.

Suppose India had responded to the recent Mumbai train explosions that killed 200 Indian civilians as a Pakistani act of war.

The result would have been a devastating regional conflict, possibly fought with nuclear weapons.

The 'war on terror' has in fact become a Humpty Dumpty world where words mean only what the powerful want them to mean.

So, when Israel says it is destroying Lebanon's 'infrastructure of terror', it really means it is killing <u>women</u> and children.

This Orwellian language may fool some people in the west but it is completely lost on the people who are really suffering.

As a result, the US-UK mistakes in Iraq are being repeated in this crisis, with leaders such as Bush and Blair apparently having learned nothing in the past three years.

The Israeli massacre at Qana and the invasion of their country will inevitably have the opposite effect to what was intended.

Far from crushing Hezbollah, Israel and its western supporters have strengthened it and the majority of Lebanese people will almost certainly vote for them next time, just as the Palestinians elected *Hamas* earlier this year.

Perhaps if these leaders had copied the approach which was adopted in Northern Ireland, they might be winning 'the war on terror' instead of fomenting it.

BRIAN McCLINTON, Lisburn.

Load-Date: August 3, 2006



World in crisis; LETTERS

Daily Mail (London)
July 20, 2006 Thursday

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Section: ED SC1; Pg. 68

Length: 325 words

Body

THE Middle East powder keg is closer to a major explosion than at any time for years, with a hawkish American administration unlikely to restrain Israel's response to the provocation of <u>Hamas</u> and Hezbollah (and Syria and Iran keen to support them).

Thousands of British troops face a daily life-or-death battle in Iraq and Afghanistan, sent there by an incompetent Government to satisfy the whims of a glory-seeking Prime Minister hanging on to the coattails of a bumbling, blustering American President ignorant of Middle Eastern culture and history.

It is hardly believable such a situation could get worse, but our incompetent Government has become a completely impotent one with the Deputy Prime Minister possibly facing a standards watchdog inquiry and the Prime Minister's most notable ally and chief fundraiser already the subject of a police investigation.

This gentleman also happens to be the Prime Minister's personal envoy to - of all places - the Middle East.

In the midst of such a crisis, we could normally rely upon Parliament to protect the interests of this country, its citizens and servicemen and <u>women</u>, but today, thanks to the actions of Mr Blair's government since 1997, the power of the once Mother of Parliaments has been neutered.

And what of Her Majesty's Opposition - the party which incredibly supported the foresaid troop deployments? They are proving themselves as inept and out of touch with reality as those they are supposed to oppose, taking time out to prove their green credentials and to lecture the decent, law-abiding citizens who are terrorised by young tearaways and drug addicts on learning to love their transgressors.

I must congratulate Mr Cameron on achieving one feat. He has ensured that, for the first time in my life, I shall not be voting Conservative at the next election and shall not do so as long as this 'Blair clone' remains leader of that once formidable party.

GEORGE McGEE, Midcalder, W. Lothian.

Load-Date: July 20, 2006



OLMERT HUGS ABBAS, SEZ 'SORRY'

Daily News (New York)

June 23, 2006 Friday

RACING FINAL EDITION

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 8

Length: 261 words

Byline: BY MATTHEW KALMAN

Body

PETRA, Jordan - Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert kissed and embraced the Palestinian president yesterday and apologized for the deaths of civilians in Israeli air strikes.

Olmert made the remarkable gestures at a breakfast that was arranged by famed Nazi hunter Elie Wiesel and hosted by Jordan's King Abdullah.

But the change of heart came, Olmert said, from his wife and children, who have opposed his hard-line policies against the Palestinians. Olmert's daughter Donna even joined a demonstration to protest Israeli air strikes in Gaza two weeks ago.

The Israeli attacks aimed at terrorist bomb-makers have taken a heavy toll on civilians, including <u>women</u> and children, in the past week.

When Olmert met Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas at the breakfast, the two men kissed and embraced.

Speaking to an audience of Nobel Laureates after the breakfast, Olmert said he felt "deep regret for the death of innocent Palestinians."

"I can understand the sadness and the rage among those Palestinians," he said. "It is against our policy, and I am very, very sorry."

The prime minister insisted, however, that Israel will keep pursuing the militants.

"Israel will continue to carry out targeted attacks against terrorists and those who try to harm Israeli citizens," he said.

Although he praised Abbas as a "genuine person," Olmert ruled out negotiating with the elected government, headed by the terror group *Hamas*.

"I will fight terrorists, not negotiate with terrorists," he said.

OLMERT HUGS ABBAS, SEZ 'SORRY'

Officials said top-level peace talks would likely be held between Olmert and Abbas in July.

Graphic

GAMMA Ehud Olmert (c.) embraces Mahmoud Abbas as Shimon Pere s looks on in Jordan yesterday. YUSSEF ALLAN AFP/GETTY IMAGES Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert (I.), Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas (c.) and Jordanian King Abdullah are all smiles at meeting in Jordan.

Load-Date: September 13, 2006



NGOs flay Israeli attack on Gaza

The Nation (AsiaNet)
July 10, 2006 Monday

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Section: NATIONWIDE INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 327 words

Dateline: ISLAMABAD July 10

Body

The civil society organisations strongly condemn the vicious attacks by Israel against the population of Gaza whereby one and a half million children, <u>women</u> and men are being mercilessly subjected to bombardments, rocket fire and invasion by tanks and heavy armour. Their electricity supply has been destroyed, people deprived of food and water.

The civil society organisations including Action aid, PODA, Pattan, the Network, Human Resource Management And Development Centre, Sungi Development Foundation, Bedari, <u>Women</u>'s Action Forum, Hawwa Associates and Sustainable Development Policy Institute in a statement said.

This onslaught is the latest in a series of acts of criminal aggression by the Israeli government against the civilian population of Palestine. Almost daily for a number of years, the Palestinians have suffered attacks from the air and the sea, assassinations, demolition of homes, and bulldozing of orchards and fields. Any retaliation is termed to terrorism.

The capture of the Israeli soldier was used as an excuse to disrupt the recently signed agreement between the <u>Hamas</u> and the PLO, and to pre-empt any chance of a solution that might oblige Israel to give up some of the territory it has unlawfully occupied.

The world community; as represented in the UN General Assembly, has time and again demanded through Security Council resolutions that Israel must vacate territories occupied by it in and since 1967, but Israel continues to flout world opinion and international law and to consolidate its hold on occupied Palestinian lands.

We demand that the United Nations; as the representative body for all the people of the world, together with the European Union, must act to immediately stop this latest attack, secure the release of members of the elected Palestinian Government, and set in place effective mechanisms that can ensure the release of imprisoned Palestinians and effect a just solution to the long standing Palestinian conflict.

Load-Date: July 12, 2006