

Date and Time: Saturday, May 4, 2024 2:34:00AM EEST

Job Number: 223498701

Documents (100)

1. [In Brief](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

2. [Undermining Israel : the holocaust conference in Tehran has nothing to do with history, and everything to do with attacking Israel 's claim to statehood](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

3. [Holocaust denial comes to Stanford](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

4. [If It's 'Apartheid,' Then Who's the Palestinian Mandela?](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

5. [Wainberg's two decades of fighting AIDS: More people die daily of the disease than were killed in the 9/11 attacks](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

6. [*A great chance thrust upon SA*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

7. [*Stewth*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

8. [*International Briefs*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

9. [*Life of the Party*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

10. [*I'm beginning to get that queasy feeling, When things look this promising for West Virginia . . .*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

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

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

12. [*Grandchild's bat mitzvah takes Foxes on Israeli trek*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

13. [*LETTERS*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

14. [*OUR GEOSTRATEGIC LOCATION*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

15. [*Fight for hearts and minds - SEPTEMBER 11 - THE FIFTH ANNIVERSARY*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

16. [*How we can fight Tehran*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

17. [*Anti-Semitism is alive in U.N. resolutions*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

18. [*The silence that kills*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

19. [*Come on over*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

20. [*Big challenge ahead for Layton on Afghan policy*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

21. [*The good, bad and ugly: Things I learned in 2006*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

22. [*The Dubious Record of Pelosi and Her Cronies*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

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Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

23. [*Muslim poem stirs up yet more controversy: Not meant as blanket statement about Quebecers, author says*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

24. [*Guardian weekly: comment and analysis: Letters:*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

25. [*Layton caught in crossfire*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

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News

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Apr 15, 2007

26. [*Briefs*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

27. [THE SILENCE THAT KILLS ARABS AND MUSLIMS MUST SPEAK OUT AGAINST THE ATROCITIES
COMMITTED IN THEIR NAMES](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

28. [Truce fails to curb clashes](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

29. [U.S. move means Canada stuck in Afghanistan We have no excuse after Bush commits more troops to war](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

30. [Border crossing](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

31. [Qaeda's Successful Recruiting Efforts](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

32. [Under Muslim feet](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

33. [Not-So-Strange Bedfellow](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

34. [Diane Sawyer, apple polisher](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

35. [Sexism in politics warrants attention](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

36. [The many colours of bigotry](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

37. [The Silence That Kills](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

38. [THIS ZOMBIE MUST GO AND GO NOW](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

39. [Kristof's Own Legacy](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

40. [Opinion - Fisk as incisive on Iraq and British bunk as ever - Award-winning journalist and war correspondent Robert Fisk was in Belfast last week to promote the paperback version of his latest book. Luke Ryan caught up with him at the Waterfront Hall](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

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News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

41. [HORSE RACING: A HILL OF BEANS THAT MAY FALL ON US ALL; THIS WONDERFUL SPORT](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

42. [Hamas urges attacks A truce is scrapped after Israeli shelling kills 18 civilians.](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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Content Type
News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

43. [Iraq 's refugee crisis offers problem, opportunity for U.S.](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

44. [News Summary](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

45. [International: Iranian students hide in fear for lives after venting fury at Ahmadinejad: President's supporters vow revenge on protesters: Activists forecast harsher crackdown on dissent](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

46. [Poet denies blanket attack on Quebecers: Muslim controversy: Work sparked by 'hurtful' town declaration](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

47. [*Liberal heavyweights clash*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

48. [*Israeli Police Recommend Charges Against President*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

49. [*West is not at war with Islam: Bush*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

50. [*the legacy of the good neighbour has been lost*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

51. [*Boos greet UN chief on Beirut visit*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

52. [*A question of power*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

53. [*Mideast can find peace if U.S. acts, Ellison says The Minnesota Democrat and first Muslim congressman said he returned from the region impressed with the desire for reconciliation at every stop.*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

54. [*The silence that kills*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
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55. [*Columbia U. president's blunder teaches bad lesson*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

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Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

56. [*A TV drama will show the fictional assassination of President Bush. But what if it had really happened?*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

57. [*Honestly, I never want to be leader again*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
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58. [*Place the blame in Lebanon where it belongs*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

59. [*Not-so-strange bedfellow*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

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News

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Apr 15, 2007

60. [*Stop the killing*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

61. [*Which country is America 's natural ally?: One is progressive, democratic and tolerant; the other is not*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
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62. [*Ex-President of Iran Is Due To Parley at United Nations*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
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63. [Former spy lines up for top job as Israel 's leader falters](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

64. [A blind eye to genocide](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
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65. [Secular Muslims in minority; The West should pay more attention to the quiet majority searching for a middle ground that fuses modernity with Islamic tradition](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

66. [Daniels In the Lions' Den](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

67. [Uri Dan's Famous Phrase On Language](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
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68. [U.N. 'S obsession with Israel crosses the line into anti-semitism](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
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69. [Israelis swimmers persevere Levy, Shpaizer focused after war hits country](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
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70. [There is no 'us' and 'them'](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
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71. [Before summit, a Rice shuttle She traveled between Israeli and Palestinian leaders a day before talks. "I am committed to this," she said.](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

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News

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Apr 15, 2007

72. [My strategic plan for the battle between them and US](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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73. [*International Briefs*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

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Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

74. [*Immigration mistakes return to haunt us*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

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News

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75. [*News Summary*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

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76. [*Ramadan over, women of Beirut prowl for mates*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

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Content Type
News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

77. [*Gaza's pain: 'We're bored of this life and want to die'*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

78. [*Americans are tolerant, but not toward extremists*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

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79. [*Hanson: Given enough small taps, Iran regime will crack*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

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80. [*Letter: YourSay - Karren's views so naive*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

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81. [*It's the limit*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

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82. [*Stop the killing*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

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83. [*Scrutiny Increases for a Group Advocating for Muslims in U.S.*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

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84. [*Robbie misery in park*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

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Narrowed by:

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News

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Apr 15, 2007

85. [*'Diversify... energy supply'*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

86. [*PC Farooq shows our Islamic blind spot*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

87. [*The night the children of Qana died*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

88. [*When a Society Fails Its Women*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

89. [*FOCUS: British forces worldwide The last few years have been the busiest for the British armed forces in 40 years - bringing claims that the army is vastly over-stretched and many battalions are under strength. As more and more British servicemen and women pay the ultimate price for their country, we look at where our troops are deployed across the world, how many there are and when we can expect our troops to return home. Although the British Army is currently working and training in 80 different countries, we look at the main areas where this is happening and why*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

90. [*Women have a long way to go*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

91. [*Mideast intrigue tangles Liberals*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

92. [*The grim word on 'moderates'*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

93. [*In search of Corporate Iran and a Coca-Cola*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

94. [*Where the Boys Are, at Least for Now, the Girls Pounce*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

95. [*Israeli leader says he's untouchable*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

96. [*Democrats turf Lieberman*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

97. [*Israeli Tennis Players Serve Up New Image*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

98. [*Britain 's dark day in war on terror Jordan : Tourist shot dead in gunman rampage*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

99. [A team of refugees tries to keep focus Vantage Point](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

100. [Looking back: A diary of events for 2006](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

In Brief

The Vancouver Sun (British Columbia)

August 1, 2006 Tuesday

Final Edition

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Section: SPORTS; Pg. F5; In Brief

Length: 726 words

Byline: Vancouver Sun; News Services

Body

MILWAUKEE'S MAGLOIRE BLAZES NEW TRAIL

NEW YORK -- The Portland Trail Blazers acquired all-star centre Jamaal Magloire from the Milwaukee Bucks on Monday for Steve Blake, Brian Skinner and Ha Seung-Jin. Magloire, a 28-year-old Toronto native, started all 82 games for the Bucks last season, averaging 9.2 points and a team-leading 9.5 rebounds per game.

LEINART A NO-SHOW at CARDINALS WORKOUT

FLAGSTAFF, Ariz. -- Quarterback Matt Leinart missed the Arizona Cardinals' first day of workouts Monday as contract negotiations between the team and their first-round draft pick dragged on. Leinart did not report to training camp with the rest of the team Sunday, and when players took the field Monday he still hadn't appeared. There were no indications from the club that it was close to signing Leinart, the 10th overall pick in April.

GUSHUE to HEADLINE CONTINENTAL CUP

WINNIPEG -- Olympic men's curling champion Brad Gushue of St. John's will headline the North American team at the 2006 Continental Cup of Curling Nov. 23-26 in Chilliwack. All the medallists from the Olympics will participate in the Ryder Cup-styled event, which pits the North American team against Europe over four days of play. The North American team also includes foursomes skipped by Calgary's Shannon Kleibrink, the women's bronze medallist, world silver medallists Jean-Michel Menard from Gatineau, Que., and world bronze medallist Kelly Scott of Kelowna.

BALAZS STAGES DRAMATIC COMEBACK

MAGOG, Que. -- Zsofi Balazs of Toronto made a splash in her debut at the Canadian open-water swim championship as the 16-year-old came from behind to win the women's 10-km race Monday. Balazs grabbed the lead on the eighth of 10 laps to earn the win in two hours, 13 minutes and nine seconds. Veteran Karley Stutzel of Victoria was second at 2:15:50, while Tara Ivanitz of Vernon was third in 2:17:12.

GERMANY SETS FREESTYLE RELAY RECORD

BUDAPEST, Hungary -- Germany set a world record in the women's 400-metre freestyle relay at the European swimming championships on Monday. The time was three minutes, 35.22 seconds. The previous record was held

In Brief

by Australia in 3:35.94, set at the 2004 Athens Olympics. The German swimmers were Petra Dallmann, Daniela Goetz, Britta Steffen and Annika Liebs.

CANADA BEATS DEFENDING CHAMPION U.S.

TAIPEI, Taiwan -- Kate Psota of Burlington, Ont., hit a go-ahead two-run single in the fourth inning and threw three shutout innings for the save as Canada beat the defending champion U.S. 5-2 Monday in its Women's World Cup baseball opener. Starter Martine Nadeau of Quebec City gave up two runs on five hits and a walk in four innings of work to earn the win. Canada plays Cuba today.

ISRAELI SOCCER CLUBS AT HOME ON ROAD

NYON, Switzerland -- Two Israeli clubs in the UEFA Cup will play their "home" qualifying matches in neutral countries. UEFA said Monday it made the decision in view of the security situation in the region, where Israel is fighting Hezbollah. Hapoel Tel-Aviv FC plays its home tie against Domzale of Slovenia on Aug. 8, and Bnei Yehuda Tel-Aviv is at home to Lokomotiv Sofia of Bulgaria on Aug. 10.

ROONEY, RONALDO GET REACQUAINTED

MANCHESTER -- Thirty days after his World Cup ended in shameful dismissal against Portugal, Wayne Rooney renewed acquaintances with his nemesis Cristiano Ronaldo and returned to action as Manchester United captain in a 45-minute appearance against Macclesfield Town. Rooney's return, which caused a 15-minute delay to kick-off as 6,000 fans crammed into the League Two club's Moss Rose ground, coincided with the arrival at Old Trafford of Michael Carrick, who wrapped up his transfer from Tottenham.

MARATHON MAN COLLAPSES IN SAN FRAN

SAN FRANCISCO -- A 43-year-old man died Sunday while running the San Francisco Marathon in what appeared to be the first fatality in the race's 29-year history. William Goggins of San Francisco collapsed from apparent heart failure as he was approaching the 37-km mark of the 41.92-km race.

GRAMANTIK EARNS PERMANENT GIG

OTTAWA -- Athletics Canada took the interim tag out of head coach Les Gramantik's title. Also Monday, track and field's governing body named Martin Goulet chief high performance officer. Gramantik, who was named interim head coach in September 2005, coached for Canada at three Olympic Games, five Commonwealth Games, eight world championships and two Pan American Games.

Load-Date: August 1, 2006

Undermining Israel: the holocaust conference in Tehran has nothing to do with history, and everything to do with attacking Israel's claim to statehood

The Gazette (Montreal)

December 14, 2006 Thursday

Final Edition

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Section: EDITORIAL / OP-ED; Pg. A31

Length: 732 words

Byline: ED MORGAN, Freelance

Body

This week's so-called Holocaust conference in Tehran had nothing to do with seeking historical truth and everything to do with undermining what Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and the radical mullahs, whose views he represents, perceive to be the basis of Israel's claim to statehood.

Their perverted lie that the Holocaust never happened negates the reality of the proven facts that the Nazis and their collaborators carried out the mass murder of millions of Jewish men, women and children. It is also a calculated attempt to de-legitimize the state of Israel, the fulfillment of the Jewish people's centuries-old struggle to re-establish their sovereign presence in their ancestral homeland.

Ahmadijenad and his cohorts fail to understand that Israel is not the result of the Holocaust but, rather, that had there been an Israel in the 1930s and 1940s, there would have been no Holocaust. It is indeed in this capacity as a rescuer of threatened Jewish communities that Israel has welcomed, for example, the majority of the 900,000 Jews that Arab countries have been expelled or induced to leave their ancient homelands.

The Iranian mullah-ocracy's denial of the Nazi genocide lays the foundation, in its view, for the fulfillment of the repeated genocidal call it has issued for the destruction of Israel, in direct violation of the Genocide Convention and the Charter of the United Nations. It is this context that best explains why Iran has become the leading state sponsor of international terrorism, perhaps most infamously as the patron of Hezbollah.

Argentine prosecutors have also recently confirmed that the fingerprints of Ahmadijenad's predecessors are all over the 1994 bombing of the Jewish Community Centre in Buenos Aires that killed 85 people. And one must never forget the state-sanctioned murder of Iranian-Canadian photo-journalist Zahra Kazemi.

Iran's travesty of a conference used the Holocaust as a weapon, but people of good conscience saw it for what it truly was - anti-Semitism, plain and simple. That is why the nations of the civilized world have condemned it. That is also why students at Tehran University and many other Iranians protested against it, in a remarkable demonstration of courage and commitment to truth in a country where criticism of the government can be a death warrant.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper eloquently and forcefully expressed outrage over the gathering on behalf of all Canadians. His government, one week before the conference, also found an excellent antidote: Canada's participation, for the first time, in a meeting of the Task Force for International Co-operation on Holocaust

Undermining Israel : the holocaust conference in Tehran has nothing to do with history, and everything to do with attacking Israel 's claim to statehood

Education, Remembrance and Research, held in Budapest. The task force of governments and NGO representatives, aims to inspire political and social support for Holocaust education, remembrance and research on a global level.

In examining these issues, it is well to recall the historical truism that the Holocaust did not begin with Auschwitz. It began with words and actions that went unopposed and which therefore emboldened Nazi tyrants to up the ante and impose increasingly severe and restrictive laws and measures against the Jewish population. These bore ever more lethal consequences for their victims.

Adolf Hitler, in his manifesto Mein Kampf, outlined exactly what he planned to do once he seized power. We should similarly harbour no illusions about Ahmadinejad and his regime, especially as it blatantly disregards monitoring and regulation in its quest for nuclear capability and threatens regional stability and international peace and security. Historical experience tells us that we appease tyrants at our peril.

While the scope, magnitude and mechanized bureaucratic implementation of the Holocaust make it unique, its lessons and messages are universal. As we ponder the horrors of Bosnia and Rwanda, and today the killing fields of Darfur, we must recommit ourselves to making sure that "never again" is not an empty slogan but an organizing metaphor for the protection and enhancement of freedom, human rights and dignity for all peoples.

And we must work together to ensure that 60 years from now, no country like today's Iran will hold a sham conference to debate whether these genocides actually occurred.

Ed Morgan is the national
president of the Canadian
Jewish Congress and
a professor of international law
at the University of Toronto.

Graphic

Photo: REUTERS; David Duke (left), a former U.S. Ku KluxKlan leader, listens at the Holocaust conference in Tehran.

Load-Date: December 14, 2006

Holocaust denial comes to Stanford

University Wire

January 25, 2007 Thursday

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Section: COLUMN

Length: 790 words

Byline: By Amichai Magen, The Stanford Daily; **SOURCE:** Stanford

Dateline: STANFORD, Calif.

Body

The Coalition for Justice in the Middle East and its splinter group, Students Confronting Apartheid in Israel, are at it again; pulling no punches in their relentless campaign to demonize the Jewish People and delegitimize Israel. Thursday night, the two student groups are stooping to new lows and aligning themselves with the most radical elements in the Middle East by hosting Norman Finkelstein on Stanford University campus.

Finkelstein is an academic joke, and a bad one at that. The 54-year-old Assistant Professor at DePaul University, Illinois, has been hired and let go by several middling schools, before gaining his current (untenured) position in 2003. The New York Times Book Review has described his work as "juvenile," "arrogant" and "stupid."

He is an American-born son of two Holocaust survivors who began his career as an anti-Israel political agitator -- circumstances which on their own make his claims to objective historical scholarship on the Holocaust highly suspect. Finkelstein can neither read nor write German. Being unable to access many of the sources that are the foundation of sound research in this highly complex and sensitive field has not prevented Finkelstein from passing sweeping, tendentious and twisted judgments on one of the saddest, and most important, episodes in human history.

In essence, Finkelstein's argument is as follows: The Jews, in a fiendish conspiracy, have fabricated a "Holocaust Industry" in order to portray themselves as victims, cynically exploit their suffering and consolidate Israel as a power set on regional domination. If the Holocaust had never happened, the Jews would have invented it themselves, since the Holocaust served their diabolical quest for money and global imperialism.

This thesis is a hodge-podge of pathological paranoia, ignorance, malice and brutal disrespect to the memory of the millions of human beings systematically murdered by the Nazis (Christians, Jews and Muslims). If we applied Finkelstein's warped logic, we would conclude that Blacks "exploit" the history of slavery to obtain civil rights gains or that in the 20th-century, women have created a "Feminism Industry" in a cruel attempt to gain power and subjugate men. How many Einsteins, how many Kafkas, how many Menuhins, how many lives (born and yet to be born) were lost forever in the furnaces of Auschwitz? The world will never know. But to suggest that the Jewish People, or anyone else on this planet, has "profited" from the extinguishing of so many souls -- each of infinite value in its own right -- is monstrous beyond belief.

Finkelstein's brand of Holocaust denial is all the more pernicious for its relative subtlety. Unlike David Irving -- who claims the gas chambers never existed and that Hitler was the Jews' greatest friend -- Finkelstein (who calls Irving

Holocaust denial comes to Stanford

"a good historian") admits that it did happen, and then proceeds to turn the Holocaust into a tool with which to attack its primary victim. In the Finkelsteinian mind, the Jews, and the Jews alone, are prohibited from collective mourning. Jewish insistence that the Holocaust be remembered becomes an act of unforgivable Jewish aggression, for which Israel must be "censured," to use one of his favorite expressions of attack. This Holocaust erosion is at once more subversive and more dangerous than the outright factual denial practiced by the likes of Irving or Iran's President, Ahmedinejad. It insidiously assaults our moral imperative to remember the Holocaust and eats away at its chief lesson to humanity: Never again!

Not surprisingly, Finkelstein has become the house favorite of neo-fascists in America, Europe and the Middle East; the dream-Jew of the post-Holocaust anti-Semites. David Duke -- the white supremacist and former Imperial Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan -- endorses him warmly on his Web site (www.davidduke.com). German neo-Nazi queen, Ingrid Rimland, has intimated that Finkelstein's writing makes her feel "like a kid in a candy store." And Finkelstein's own enthusiasm for Osama bin Laden and Hezbollah have made him a welcome guest on the radical Shiite militia's official satellite TV station, Al-Manar.

Finkelstein is an American citizen and thus at liberty to express his odious views. But free speech is not at issue here. The real question is should this academic fraudster be entertained at Stanford University? Does Finkelstein's message of hate enhance or diminish our academic standards and community? And is it legitimate for CJME, a Stanford funded student organization, to offer its uncritical, enthusiastic endorsement to a man who defames an entire people and its six million murdered innocents purely for the purpose of making Israel look bad?

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Load-Date: January 25, 2007

If It's 'Apartheid,' Then Who's the Palestinian Mandela?

The Forward

January 19, 2007

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Section: News; Pg. A15

Length: 842 words

Body

Of all humanistic disciplines, history is the easiest to exploit for the advancement of one's political worldviews. Former president Jimmy Carter's recent book, *Palestine: Peace Not Apartheid*, is an interesting case in point.

Carter compares Israel's policies toward the Palestinians to the notorious system of racial segregation that was imposed on blacks in South Africa. He is not the first to make such a comparison. Advocates of the Palestinian cause regularly raise the South African analogy. But Carter is the first prominent, mainstream American to make the comparison.

Since the term apartheid stirs up a host of bitter, angry associations, it is important to probe Carter's accusation carefully.

The charge is not without merit. Key aspects of Israel's occupation of Palestine are, indeed, analogous to the practices of South Africa's National Party: A system of separate roads and road blocks facilitates

the free travel of Jews while curtailing the movement of Arabs; the members

of one group live in well-groomed, heavily subsidized communities, while many members of the other group live in degrading poverty.

In addition, young Palestinian are routinely detained without trial, often for prolonged periods of time. These detentions are justified by repeated government declarations of a state of emergency, just as similar arrests were rationalized in South Africa. Like South African courts, Israeli tribunals have been lenient with soldiers and policemen accused of committing human rights violations,

failing, in essence, to exercise judicial review over the application of political power.

These similarities are frightening and should worry anyone who cares about Israel's commitment to democracy. And yet, Carter and many Palestinians use the South African analogy selectively. The comparison suffers from a glaring omission:

If many of Israel's policies resemble the practices of the white government in South Africa, how do the Palestinian armed organizations measure up to the South African resistance movement, the African National Congress?

For one thing, although both the ANC and the Palestinian organizations have targeted civilians, the ANC did so more sporadically and more reluctantly than the Palestine Liberation Organization, Hamas and Islamic Jihad. For almost five decades after its establishment, the ANC espoused nonviolence, arguing

If It's 'Apartheid,' Then Who's the Palestinian Mandela?

that armed struggle would alienate whites.

The ANC adopted armed resistance in the early 1960s only after its repeated attempts to negotiate had failed. For several years, the group restricted itself to acts of sabotage against property. It was only when this policy proved fruitless

that the organization turned against security forces and, eventually, against civilians.

The Palestinian armed factions, by contrast, have shown little interest in nonviolence. The more extreme organizations have consistently refused to distinguish between Israeli military personnel and civilians. They have targeted women and children, for much longer, much more consistently and with far more devastating

results than the ANC.

Furthermore, the leadership of the ANC forcefully pursued compromise with whites when the opportunity for peace arose in the early 1990s. The Palestinians, on the other hand, snubbed the dramatic peace proposals put forth by President Bill Clinton and Prime Minister Ehud Barak in the summer

of 2000. While the ANC remained committed to a peaceful settlement with whites in South Africa throughout

the struggle against apartheid, the Palestinians have voted into power a government that refuses to recognize Israel's right to exist, has called for its destruction and has aligned itself with Holocaust-denying Iran and its Lebanese client Hezbollah. If historical analogies are to be politically

instructive, those making them must consider all aspects of the case under discussion, not only those parallels that bolster their agendas. The struggle against apartheid in South Africa can, in fact, teach us valuable lessons about the Middle East conflict.

It can show us that war does not end before both sides give up on the maximal formulation of their claims. It suggests that enemies who acknowledge and account for their record of human rights abuses are likelier to reconcile than those who insist on burying the past. It indicates that peace depends on a rare mixture of fatigue among combatants, daring local leadership and significant international pressure.

Perhaps most importantly, the South African analogy shows us that hate is not a force of nature beyond the reach of human influence. As Nelson Mandela so eloquently put it: No one is born hating another person. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love.

Americans, Israelis and Palestinians could benefit greatly from studying South Africa's tortured past. But as long as we are focused on simply exploiting history to win arguments, these lessons are likely to be lost.

Load-Date: January 18, 2007

Wainberg's two decades of fighting AIDS: More people die daily of the disease than were killed in the 9/11 attacks

The Gazette (Montreal)

August 15, 2006 Tuesday

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Section: EDITORIAL / OP-ED; Pg. A19; L. Ian MacDonald

Length: 677 words

Byline: L. IAN MACDONALD, Freelance

Body

Since Mark Wainberg attended his first International AIDS conference, he figures at least 20 million people have died in the global epidemic.

"Five thousand people die every day," says Wainberg, director of the McGill AIDS Centre at the Jewish General Hospital, and co-chair of the week-long conference that opened yesterday in Toronto.

The daily toll is twice as many people as died in the 9/11 attacks and, as he points out, many more than have been killed in the conflict between Israel and **Hezbollah** in Lebanon.

"But," says Wainberg, "it's not as if the UN is going to pass a resolution at the Security Council on AIDS that might win this war." At least there's a chance it could win a lasting ceasefire in the Middle East, he added.

Wainberg, 61, has been on the front lines of what he calls "the war against AIDS" since the beginning, in the early 1980s.

Until actor Rock Hudson was diagnosed with AIDS in 1985, the disease was essentially in the closet. Until basketball star Magic Johnson was diagnosed HIV-positive in 1991, AIDS was regarded as a disease that struck only homosexuals.

Since AIDS first came to North America a quarter century ago, it is North America that has made the most progress in the fight against it. Magic Johnson is a healthy example of the success of breakthrough research and development, including Wainberg's own, on HIV's resistance to drugs.

"We've managed the epidemic so that there are two different diseases," he says: North America and the rest of the world. In Canada and the United States, he says, "AIDS is now controlled through drugs and cocktails, to the point where deaths are now negligible. When someone dies today, it is the exception rather than the rule."

He says there are 6,000 new cases in Canada, bringing to 58,000 the number of HIV patients in this country. Most of them, with drugs that are both available and affordable, will now live out essentially full lives.

It's a different story in Africa and Asia, where AIDS has killed millions and HIV has infected millions more, where some governments have been in denial, where condoms are not used, where abstinence is often not an option for

Wainberg's two decades of fighting AIDS: More people die daily of the disease than were killed in the 9/11 attacks

women, and where drugs are neither available nor affordable. And where civil society, particularly in some African states, could crumble. And where, in India and China, authorities can no longer deny the presence of the epidemic.

In Africa, Wainberg says, AIDS is primarily transmitted heterosexually from men to women, the men not using condoms, the women often not having a choice in having sex, particularly with soldiers. "It's a tragedy for the people," he says, "and a catastrophe for those countries. And it's largely being spread from men to women who have little capacity to resist." And then there are the orphaned children, millions of them, of African women who die of AIDS.

The AIDS conference brings together 25,000 delegates from around the world for what Wainberg terms an action agenda in "a worldwide effort to stem the HIV epidemic."

Bill Gates and Bill Clinton, whose foundations are focused on AIDS in Africa, appeared together today.

But Stephen Harper, who was invited to give an opening keynote, wasn't there. The prime minister was represented by Health Minister Tony Clement and International Development Minister Josee Verner. Harper has called it a scheduling issue.

Wainberg suspects that Harper passed on the invitation because his office didn't want him booed by some members of the the audience for his opposition to same-sex marriage. In terms of precedents, this is the third time the AIDS conference has been held in Canada. One prime minister, Brian Mulroney, spoke to it in Montreal in 1989. Another, Jean Chretien, gave it a pass in Vancouver in 1996.

"Brian Mulroney understood that he was going to get booed in 1989," Wainberg says, "but he came anyway."

Wainberg, who doesn't let go of things easily, adds: "Our door is still open to Mr. Harper." Wainberg calls it "a political opportunity." In the empathy department, it looks more like a missed opportunity.

ian-macdonald@sympatico.ca

Load-Date: August 15, 2006

A great chance thrust upon SA

Business Day (South Africa)

March 07, 2007

Business Day Edition

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Section: OPINION & EDITORIAL; Pg. 15

Length: 758 words

Byline: Ronnie Mamoepa

Body

A great chance thrust upon SA

WILLIAM Shakespeare wrote: "Some are born great, others achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon them."

By assigning SA the presidency of the United Nations (UN) Security Council, this body has thrust greatness upon the government and people of our country.

By giving SA this responsibility, the security council sends the message that the world has confidence in the ability of the government and the people of SA to contribute meaningfully to the maintenance of global peace and security. For our part, we must communicate the message that we are humbled by this responsibility and feel honoured to serve the people of Africa, the south and the world.

The success of SA's presidency will depend on co-operation with all members of the security council, both permanent and nonpermanent.

Our first task as president is to set the agenda of the council for the month. In this regard, our representatives in New York have successfully concluded consultations with all members on items for the agenda, which will guide the work of the council for this month.

Coinciding with SA's presidency is International Women's Day tomorrow. Drawing on what we have learnt as a nation from the strides we have taken in addressing gender equality in all spheres of life, we have proposed that a security council presidential statement be adopted in commemoration of this day.

Welcoming SA's election to the world body, Foreign Minister Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma pointed to the need to build synergies between the African Union and Security Council and the UN body to prevent outbreaks of conflict in Africa.

We therefore hope to host a thematic debate on March 28 to explore the relationship between the security council and regional organisations in the maintenance of international peace and security, with a particular focus on Africa.

A great chance thrust upon SA

In terms of consultations with other members of the security council, it is clear that a number of African issues will arise during the month of our presidency, including the situations in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Cote d'Ivoire and Somalia.

We have boldly asserted the right of the Congo as an independent sovereign state to ease into its new responsibilities and thus determine its needs, which must necessarily serve as a guide to the response of the security council.

The council is once more expected to review the situation in Cote d'Ivoire.

It will almost certainly have to take into account deliberations of this month's meeting of the international working group, of which SA was part, including progress made in the dialogue between President Laurent Gbagbo and rebel leader Guillaume Soro.

The issue of Iran has been dominating international news and will certainly continue to receive the attention of the security council.

As members of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) board of governors and signatories of the Nonproliferation Treaty, SA has supported the right of all countries to nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

As expected, the security council has received a report from IAEA director-general Mohamed Al Baradei on Iran's implementation of its Nonproliferation Treaty Safeguards Agreements. The report indicates Iran has been providing the IAEA with the necessary access to declared nuclear material and facilities, as well as nuclear material accountancy reports. The report, however, also shows that Iran has not suspended enrichment-related activities as required by the security council. Our task in this regard, in our capacity as president of the security council, is to guide the council towards consensus.

A number of issues relating to the Middle East will also be considered. In respect of Lebanon and Syria, we will consider issues related to, among others, the status of Sheeba farms; the maintenance of the cease-fire between Israel and Hezbollah; and the investigation into the assassination of former Lebanese prime minister Rafiq Hariri.

The council will also hold its routine discussion on the Middle East peace process, focusing on the conflict between the Palestinians and the Israelis.

The world expects SA, as president of the security council, to guide its work for the month, to work for successful decisions on all agenda items and to communicate its decisions. We will endeavour to do so with all honesty, integrity and in a principled manner and as part of our contribution to ensuring that the UN remains central in addressing the challenges facing all of humanity.

Mamoepa is spokesman for Foreign Minister Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma.

Load-Date: March 9, 2007

Strewth

The Australian (Australia)

October 2, 2006 Monday

All-round Country Edition

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Section: FEATURES; Strewth; Pg. 10

Length: 776 words

Byline: Sian Powell

Body

MATP

Agog in the piazza

GOUGH and Margaret Whitlam have always been a formidable pair, and as Margaret's recent comments on Janette Howard have proved, happy to take on anyone, anywhere. John Wheeldon, who served as a senator from West Australia between 1965 and 1981, and who was one of Whitlam's ministers, was a great friend of the American novelist Gore Vidal. Before he died in May, Wheeldon (who after politics become an editorial writer for The Australian) liked to tell how he was once in Venice's Piazza San Marco with Vidal. The author, Wheeldon remembered, suddenly grabbed him nervously by the arm. "Look out," Vidal said, having seen the Whitlams looming across the piazza, and reaching for a literary allusion to some enormous giants. "It's Gog and Magog."

Seven's human fodder

RUPERT Stasch, who spent 16 months living with the Korowai tribe of Indonesian Papua and is now considered a world expert on their habits and customs, has finally caught up with the cannibal brouhaha that enmeshed Channel 7's Today Tonight journalist Naomi Robson. Robson and her crew, along with guide Paul Raffaele, were chucked out of Papua (they were working without journalists' visas) where they were on a so-called quest to rescue a young Korowai boy, WaWa, from supposedly being eaten by his relatives. Stasch, an associate professor at Reed College in the US, tells us he considers the whole rigmarole most regrettable. "Besides selling the boy WaWa as a story, Paul Raffaele, Naomi Robson, and their rivals have also been selling, behind him, a lurid cannibal show, straight out of Hollywood mythology and colonial dreams," he says. "Raffaele and Robson's form of human exploitation is immoral. All who have followed this affair should refuse what the shamelessly exploitative story-traffickers are selling."

Salam swansong for Roos

SWANS coach Paul Roos showed a real magnanimity of spirit after his team's one-point loss on the weekend. A black miasma of mourning descended on the Swans rooms after the match, but Roos nevertheless allowed himself to be cornered and extensively interviewed by two young men from community television. From a show called Salam Cafe, on Channel 31, the pair were asked what their program was all about. They had an answer ready for the curious. Salam Cafe, they said (straight-faced), was a bit like a Muslim version of The Panel.

Reconstructed order

THE knights and dames of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem were in fine form at St Mary's Cathedral in Sydney yesterday: the black lace veils adorning the dames, the white cloaks of the knights billowing behind them in the gentle breeze as they strode down the nave. An illustrious band, sworn to guard the holy places in medieval times, the order claims George Pell as a grand prior, and the cardinal was there to see the procession. Such is the average age of the knights, though, that the gentle clanking which could be heard through the stone arches yesterday morning was unlikely to have been the sound of their swords or spurs. More likely, one Catholic says, to be the muted clunk of dodgy hips and knees.

Manners maketh the man

JOHN Howard's favourite feminist Pru Goward has a way of sounding like a primary school teacher telling off a dirty little boy. Interviewed on Channel 10 yesterday, the Sex Discrimination Commissioner gave one-time Labor leader Mark Latham a demerit point for rudeness. "What is not appropriate," she said, referring to Latham's comment about The Australian's columnist Janet Albrechtsen, "is to call women journalists who have disagreed with you or have challenged your views 'skanky hos'." Newly endorsed as the state Liberal candidate for Goulburn, Goward did not elaborate on other colourful Lathamisms, including the now notorious crack on "nervous wrecks, metrosexual knobs and tossbags".

New age of censorship

AS an Australian literary lion, David Williamson is unlikely to be accustomed to an inky mauling by newspaper sub-editors. But on the weekend the celebrated playwright's long and discursive piece on tribal loyalties lost a paragraph in The Age (a paragraph that made it into The Sydney Morning Herald's version). Williamson, who apparently lives in semi-retirement in Queensland's Noosa Heads, wrote about tribal hatreds in the offending sentences: "Shi'ite kills Sunni, Hutu hacks Tutsi, Muslim extremists kill themselves and many others, Israel attempts to obliterate Hezbollah and only succeeds in destroying a fledgling democracy." Perhaps the paragraph got the axe for space reasons, or perhaps The Age has become remarkably sensitive to the dangers of taking sides.

strewth@theaustralian.com.au

Load-Date: October 1, 2006

International Briefs

Telegraph Herald (Dubuque, IA)

February 1, 2007 Thursday

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Section: NATIONAL/WORLD; Pg. a7

Length: 711 words

Byline: ASSOCIATED PRESS

Body

Germany seeks arrest of CIA agents

BERLIN - German prosecutors said Wednesday that they have issued arrest warrants for 13 suspected CIA agents who allegedly abducted a German citizen in an apparent anti-terrorist operation gone wrong.

It was Washington's second European ally to seek the arrest of purported CIA agents for spiriting away a terrorism suspect. Italian prosecutors want to question 25 agents and one other American in the alleged kidnapping of an Egyptian cleric suspected of terrorism.

Munich prosecutor Christian Schmidt-Sommerfeld told The Associated Press that warrants in the latest case were issued in the last few days. He said the unidentified agents were sought on suspicion of wrongfully imprisoning Khaled al-Masri and causing him serious bodily harm.

Hugo Chavez gets unprecedented powers

CARACAS, Venezuela - President Hugo Chavez was granted free rein Wednesday to accelerate changes in broad areas of society by presidential decree - a move critics said propels Venezuela toward dictatorship.

Convening in a downtown plaza in a session that resembled a political rally, lawmakers unanimously gave Chavez sweeping powers to legislate by decree and impose his radical vision of a more egalitarian socialist state.

The law gives Chavez, who is beginning a fresh six-year term, more power than he has ever had in eight years as president, and he plans to use it over the next 18 months to transform broad areas of public life, from the economy and the oil industry in particular, to "social matters" and the very structure of the state.

Iraq halts flights to Syria ahead of crackdown

BAGHDAD, Iraq - Iraq indefinitely halted all flights to and from Syria and closed a border crossing with Iran as the government prepares for a new security crackdown aimed at crushing violence in the capital and surrounding regions, a member of parliament and an airport official said Wednesday.

The airport official said flights to and from Syria would be canceled for at least two weeks and that service had been interrupted on Tuesday. The official spoke on condition of anonymity.

Former Israeli official convicted of misconduct

International Briefs

TEL AVIV, Israel - A court convicted former Justice Minister Haim Ramon on Wednesday of kissing a **female** soldier against her will - a case that riveted the country's attention and added another layer of scandal to Israel's beleaguered leadership.

The verdict was expected to clear the way for Prime Minister Ehud Olmert to launch a major Cabinet shake-up.

Ramon, 56, was charged with sexual misconduct after kissing the 21-year-old woman at a party at the Defense Ministry on the first day of Israel's war with **Hezbollah** guerrillas in Lebanon last summer.

"There are some lines that cannot be crossed," said Judge Hayuta Kochan, who read the unanimous verdict by a three-judge panel. "This was not a kiss of affection. This has all the elements of sexual crime."

Ramon could face up to three years in prison. His sentencing will be Feb. 21, Israeli media said. Ramon, who left the courthouse without commenting, is expected to appeal.

Bin Laden relative reportedly killed

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates - A brother-in-law of Osama bin Laden, who is wanted in the Philippines for alleged terror financing, was killed in Madagascar in what appeared to be a burglary, the victim's brother said Wednesday.

Jamal Khalifa, who was married to a sister of the al-Qaida leader, was killed when gunmen broke into his house in a Madagascan village on Tuesday, his brother Malek Khalifa said in a phone interview from his home in Jiddah, Saudi Arabia.

Malek, who was distraught when recounting his brother's death, said between 25 and 30 armed men broke into Jamal's house "while he was sleeping," and killed him. "They stole everything - his computer, all of his things," he said.

Malek said he did not have more details because his brother was a Saudi citizen and Saudi Arabia did not have an embassy on the East African island.

He said his main concern was "to collect my brother's body."

He said Jamal was in Madagascar on business, and his wife and family were in Saudi Arabia.

Malek abruptly ended the call with The Associated Press, but was quoted by the Al-Arabiya satellite TV channel as saying that Jamal mined and traded precious stones in Madagascar.

Load-Date: February 1, 2007

Life of the Party

The New York Times

August 13, 2006 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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Section: Section 6; Column 3; Magazine; Pg. 15; THE WAY WE LIVE NOW: 8-13-06: QUESTIONS FOR NANCY PELOSI

Length: 667 words

Byline: By Deborah Solomon

Body

Q: As the Democratic leader of the House of Representatives, how are you spending your summer vacation now that Congress is out of session? I'll be traveling to 20 cities this month to raise money for the Democrats, but on the Sunday when this piece appears, I will be at my vacation home in Napa Valley, holding an issues conference.

Are you saying you have issues? Well, I am addicted to chocolate, but what we'll be discussing at the conference are the urgent issues facing our nation, such as Iraq, affordable health care and education. My whole focus is the first Tuesday in November.

Exactly how many seats do the Democrats need to gain to take the majority in the House? Fifteen. Right now there are 203 Democrats in the House, and to get the majority we need 218. We have 49 or 50 races that we are targeting. Every poll says we are ahead by at least 10 points. If the election were today, we would win. But it's not today. It's in 86 days. And every day is a lifetime in politics.

What do you think the president could do in the interim to boost his ratings? If I knew, I wouldn't say it publicly.

What if he produces Osama bin Laden the night before the election? Well, that won't do it. That's five years too late.

What if he and his strategists use the Israeli-Hezbollah war to divert the public's attention from Iraq? This doesn't help him. This is again a failure of U.S. diplomacy and leadership in the world. Look at this: the North Koreans are testing nuclear missiles, the Iranians are going nuclear, the Somalis are going militant, Iraq is a disaster, the Israeli-Palestinian situation is explosive and now we have the Lebanon situation. It's been a failure of U.S. leadership all around.

One problem facing the Democrats is that the only ones who seem to have a knack for raising serious money are the Clintons. There are a lot of good fund-raisers! Our goal in the House is to raise \$105 million in this election cycle, and we will. We're at about \$75 million now. We're right where we need to be.

What is your ultimate ambition? Speaker. Speaker of the House. That's it. That's the end. Imagine a woman speaker of the House! It's the president, vice president, speaker of the House -- the third-highest office in the land. A woman has never even come close to achieving that.

Life of the Party

Don't you think we're past the point where women should congratulate themselves on their passage into traditionally male realms of power? This is about a new level of power.

More powerful than Condoleezza Rice? I'm not talking about -- that is derivative, that is somebody the president appoints. This is power about winning elections. If we had the majority, we could counter the president, we could be a counterforce.

Your critics, particularly among the blogger activists, say you and Harry Reid, your counterpart in the Senate, have failed to endow the Democrats with a forceful sense of purpose. We're in politics. There are factions within parties, and you always take those barbs. You know what? I have a very thick skin. I know what I have to do, and that is to win.

You grew up in Baltimore, where your dad, Thomas D'Alesandro Jr., was the mayor. Which parent were you closer to? I was close to both of them, but probably closer to my mother. She had six boys, and all she wanted was a daughter.

The youngest of your own children, Alexandra Pelosi, is a filmmaker who followed President Bush on the campaign trail in her amusing "Journeys With George." Are your four other children also Democrats? Yes, but my son-in-law is not. He married my daughter Jacqueline. He's a wonderful father and a wonderful husband, and that's all that matters.

By the way, what did you mean when you referred to your chocolate addiction? It's a real obsession. I can't do without it.

Do you ever wake up and eat a chocolate bar in the morning? Ice cream, maybe. Ice cream for breakfast is a good thing. In fact I did it recently in Washington. It got me through the day. Deborah Solomon

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Graphic

Photo (Photograph by Christian Oth)

Load-Date: August 13, 2006

End of Document

I'm beginning to get that queasy feeling, When things look this promising for West Virginia . . .

Charleston Daily Mail (West Virginia)

August 18, 2006, Friday

Copyright 2006 Charleston Newspapers

Section: EDITORIAL; Pg. P4A

Length: 1743 words

Byline: Hoppy Kercheval, Columnist

Body

I'M officially worried about this upcoming WVU football season. How could that be?

Half the college football world has West Virginia penciled in for a run at the national championship. Super sophomores Patrick White and Steve Slaton are back. The schedule is not a killer.

What could go wrong?

Well, players get hurt. The leather spheroid takes funny bounces. Officials blow calls. Your luck runs out.

Yes, luck. Successful coaches will tell you that you need a certain amount of it to go all the way. For example, Nebraska won a share of the national title in 1997, but only after a bizarre regular season game against Missouri during which the Cornhusker QB launched a desperation fourth-down pass as time ran out.

The ball was deflected toward the turf, where it hit the leg of a prone player before bouncing up into the hands of a Nebraska player for a TD.

All this pre-season hype about WVU feels like a setup.

Fans have had high hopes before - notably 1989, 1998 and 2004 - and were met with disappointment. But those teams weren't getting the mega-buildup of the Mountaineers of today.

On Monday, White and Slaton were on the front page of USA Today, above the fold. They were featured above the Israel-**Hezbollah** ceasefire, for goodness sake!

And now the cover of Sports Illustrated? That, of course, could doom WVU even before the season begins.

As we all know, whenever the editors at Sports Illustrated discover a team or a player who's hot and getting hotter, they feature them on the cover, and then losses or other misfortunes befall the subject.

I know of no such USA Today jinx. But if lightly regarded Maryland comes to Morgantown next month and knocks off WVU, which is not beyond the realm of possibility, then it could be the start of such a curse.

Fans have selective memories. They have to. It's akin to childbirth.

I'm beginning to get that queasy feeling, When things look this promising for West Virginia . . .

Women tell me that as time passes, they forget about the pain.

Why else would a woman have more than one child? Why else would West Virginia fans have gone to Penn State games from 1956 through 1983, a span during which WVU never won?

You fans want to fondly recall the 1988 season when West Virginia went undefeated and played Notre Dame for the national championship?

I remember 1989, when Major Harris lost his way and the Mountaineers suffered a bitterly disappointing tie with Pitt, and losses to Virginia Tech and Penn State before ending on an especially discouraging note with a 27-7 Gator Bowl loss to Clemson.

Sure, I was at last season's Sugar Bowl. WVU pulled a huge upset. I remember all of the smug Georgia fans before the game, and how they walked zombie-like from the Georgia Dome afterwards.

Meanwhile, West Virginia fans reveled in the unexpected. Now, come on, you didn't really expect West Virginia to beat Georgia, did you?

As you can see, I'm a pessimist. I always have been. I figure with all these people running around with their glasses half full - or in the case of some fans overflowing - somebody's glass has to be half empty, and that's mine.

Heck, I was in the stands of Old Mountaineer Field in 1975 trying to convince my buddies to leave before the game was over because I was hung over and wanted to watch the rest of the game on TV.

Fortunately, my friends prevailed and I was there when Bill McKenzie's field goal gave West Virginia the 17-14 victory.

But I've also been around long enough to know - as I have said before - that to be a Mountaineer fan is to open one's self to a certain amount of suffering.

My late friend and longtime Mountaineer fan Don Marsh avoided watching the games. Marsh, who had a bad heart, just couldn't handle the stress.

You know that's true, but you don't want to admit it.

You don't want to tune out the preseason buzz that allows you to talk about West Virginia in the same sentence with Notre Dame, Texas, and USC. I can't blame you, but I just want to warn you.

But don't worry about it too much. I'll do enough of that for all of us.

Kercheval is host of TalkLine, broadcast by the MetroNews Statewide Radio Network from 10 a.m. to noon Monday through Friday. The show can be heard locally on WCHS 580 AM.

Load-Date: August 18, 2006

Our vital role in Iraq's road to freedom

The Advertiser (Australia)

August 4, 2006 Friday

State Edition

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Section: OPINION; Pg. 18

Length: 759 words

Byline: WITH ANDREW SOUTHCOTT

Body

NIGHTLY TV images of car bombings or attacks on mosques in Iraq are no doubt confronting. They raise questions about how well the reconstruction of Iraq is going and whether Australia should be there.

Yet the insurgent attacks on civilians in Iraq are only part of the picture. The work that many young dedicated Australian servicemen and women are doing to rebuild this shattered country rarely hits the news and yet has been quietly effective in a typically understated Australian way. An Australian Anzac-class frigate, HMAS Ballarat, undertakes important work in the Persian Gulf monitoring Iraqi dhows for illegal activity and protecting Iraq's offshore oil platforms, their only significant source of export income.

Orions from RAAF base Edinburgh, in Adelaide's north, conduct maritime patrols to support the security of Iraq's shipping. In Al Muthanna province, ADF personnel have trained an Iraqi brigade and provided security for Japanese engineers to rebuild local infrastructure. Significantly, Al Muthanna is the first province where security has been handed to the Iraqi military and shows the way forward for the coalition in Iraq.

Australia's role has not gone unnoticed. Senior U.S. commanders have been impressed by the cultural sensitivity Australian troops have shown in working with local Iraqi people. They believe the Australian approach on the ground is one they could learn from. It should be a matter of pride that our families, schools and communities prepare these young Australians so well for such a challenging role.

The work in Al Muthanna province is part of a long tradition in the ADF of working in a counter-insurgency and nation-building role. East Timor is only the most recent example of this. In the 1940s and '50s, British and Australian special forces worked with their local counterparts in Malaya to defeat a communist insurgency. Their success was instrumental in achieving Malaysia's independence as a free and stable nation. Regardless of whether you supported the military action in Iraq in 2003, the important question is to deal with the situation in Iraq as it is now.

Looking at Iraq's neighbours, it is clear that a stable and democratic Iraq is far better than any alternative. Iran continues to defy world opinion in pursuit of a nuclear capability. Syria and Iran fund and support the terrorist organisations of Hamas and Hezbollah and their attacks on the people of Israel

Syria stands accused of the 2005 assassination of Lebanese prime minister Hariri. It is in no one's interests to have a weak Iraq surrounded by rogue states.

Our vital role in Iraq 's road to freedom

After Word War II, rather than turn their back on Japan and Germany, the Allies recognised that it was in their interests to rebuild their defeated foes. The Marshall Plan helped reconstruct Western Europe and the U.S. and Commonwealth countries, including Australia, helped provide stability for Japan.

With the enormous revenue generated by oil, Iraq today should be an affluent country. The fact it is not is due to decades of neglect under Saddam Hussein. Rather than leave Iraq to fend for itself, Australia's role should be, together with other responsible countries, to see that the Iraqi military and Iraqi security forces are in a position to safeguard the security of the population of Iraq.

In March, 2004, Mark Latham announced that it would be the policy of the Australian Labor Party to have Australian troops in Iraq home by Christmas. What was never made clear was which troops he was referring to or even, according to one Labor candidate, which Christmas.

I do not see our role in Iraq as a commitment without end. But it would be wrong for Australia to turn its back on the people of Iraq before they can provide their own security. The Iraqi people and the Iraqi Government do not want us to withdraw. It is in all of our interests that Iraq emerges as a stable and democratic country rather than leave it as a failed state which will be a haven to Islamic terrorists.

*

Andrew Southcott is the federal member for Boothby and recently visited Australian service personnel deployed in the Middle East as part of the ADF Parliamentary Program.

SECOND THOUGHTS

AUSTRALIAN FORCES IN IRAQ

* About 1400 personnel are involved in Operation Catalyst, the Australian Defence Force contribution to the coalition in Iraq.

* The commitment includes 110 security and escort personnel in Baghdad; 440 in the southern province of Dhi Qar; a team of 34 helping to train the Iraqi army; 330 RAAF personnel flying Hercules and Orions; and HMAS Ballarat deployed in the Persian Gulf.

Load-Date: August 3, 2006

Grandchild's bat mitzvah takes Foxes on Israeli trek

St. Louis Post-Dispatch (Missouri)

August 11, 2006 Friday

THIRD EDITION

Copyright 2006 St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Inc.

Section: METRO; Pg. C3

Length: 702 words

Byline: DEB PETERSON

Body

ISRAEL REBOUND: Sam and Marilyn Fox returned Wednesday from a week in Israel, where they were visiting for the bat mitzvah of their granddaughter, Mariam Fox-Goldgraber, in Jerusalem. Besides attending bat mitzvah-related events, the Foxes spent their time touring the country -- sticking to the part that is safe from Hezbollah rocket attacks. Commenting on the fighting, Sam, the Harbour Group chairman and CEO, said, "President Bush is the only world leader that really gets it, who understands that the root causes have to be dealt with or there will be no lasting peace." The Foxes' daughter, Cheri Fox, her husband, Chaim Goldgraber, and their family live in Jerusalem. Sam and Marilyn expected no problems and encountered none. They flew in and out of Ben Gurion Airport on their private plane, having obtained the same special clearance that is always required for private aircraft using that airport. In other news about the Foxes, the couple will host a reception in their home Monday for Laura Bush. The president's wife is here to thank big party donors for their dollars and their support.

BITTY BUSCH HEARTS: Dr. Bill Hartel and his BallPark Pens continue to expand. The company has added retail outlets in New York and Los Angeles and recently contracted with Build-A-Bear to supply plastic hearts made from Busch Stadium seats at their stadium store. The company, which makes pens and other memorabilia from ballpark stadium seats and other wooden parts, is also finishing negotiations to sell merchandise in the ballpark stores in Cincinnati and Philadelphia. Hartell has found yet another avenue to ply: He's made fishing lures from the plastic seats that were removed from Busch, and he's hoping a pro or so in the Bassmaster Tournament Trail in Missouri on Sept. 14 will find his lures, well . . . alluring.

BANKING GURU: Our town's Colin Welch, who has roots in University City and Creve Coeur and is a late 1980s grad of Chaminade high school, has ankled JPMorgan and joined Lehman Brothers in the newly created job of head of European investment banking. Welch will begin his London-based job next month and has been assigned the task of boosting the firm's franchise in Europe. At JPMorgan, he was responsible for client relationship management in the investment bank's global retail group. He acted for U.S. retail companies, including the sales of Neiman Marcus to Texas Pacific and Tommy Hilfiger to Apax. His father is Michael J. Welch, professor of radiology and co-director of the Division of Radiological Sciences at the Washington U. medical school.

CANADA, EH?: Edwardsvillian and independent filmmaker A.J. Schnack, who directed the well-received documentary "Gigantic: A Tale of Two Johns," about the band They Might Be Giants, has a new doc that will premiere at the prestigious Toronto Film Festival next month. The film, "Kurt Cobain: About a Son," intimately traces the rock star's life from his hometown of Aberdeen, Wash., to his famed days with Nirvana in Seattle. The film's

Grandchild's bat mitzvah takes Foxes on Israeli trek

publicist says that Schnack attempts to rediscover the man behind the myth by drawing on more than 25 hours of previously unreleased audio interviews.

BOOK IT: St. Louis' DuEwa M. Frazier is the editor and publisher of the newly released "Check the Rhyme: An Anthology of **Female** Poets & Emcees," by Lit Noire Publishing in New York. The collection is a cross-generational volume of poetry and features the work of 50 **female** writers, lyricists and spoken-word artists from diverse cultures and backgrounds. Contributing poets from St. Louis are Tiffany Woods-Bennett and Hadiyah Nicole Green. Frazier is a U. City High grad, class of '92. The anthology will officially be released Aug. 31 at the Bowery Poetry Club in New York City.

SUH-WEET: Nicole Merson of Troy, Mo., wrote an original short story that has been published in the newly released "Chicken Soup for the Scrapbooker's Soul -- Stories to Remember," a recent book in the popular franchise. Merson's story is about a woman who stopped fretting over small things like piled-up laundry and Play-Doh on the floors. Instead of getting stressed over the imperfections, she decided to scrapbook them, thereby capturing the essence of her family.

Load-Date: August 11, 2006

End of Document

LETTERS

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

August 13, 2006 Sunday

Main Edition

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The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Section: EDITORIAL; Pg. 5D

Length: 2526 words

Byline: SAM HEARD, BRUCE MYERS, CRAIG MICHAEL BECK, EDWARD MARTIN, BILL HURST, KEN MANFORD, BRYAN P. SOROHAN, NORMAN WISHMAN, TOM ELLICOTT, STEVEN CHARLES, HARRELL LAWSON, CHRIS CHIEGO, TERESA DE KOCK, RALEIGH CANNON, RONALD JOHNSON, BILL LONG, TOMMY HOUSWORTH

For the Journal-Constitution

Body

We can all learn from coach Dews' example

I read Michelle Hiskey's article on Braves bullpen coach Bobby Dews with great interest ("A :Lifetime of Dews," Sports, Aug. 6). He has an enthusiasm for life that is hard to find these days. So many of us are always hunting for the negative in people, places and things, that in our minds, we usually find them. Dews has kept a positive attitude toward life in general, overcoming obstacles that many of us share in one way or another.

Dews has learned through his recovery [from alcoholism], as I have, that you go through a spiritual change during this process. A lot of it has to do with a "Higher Power greater than oneself." We can change our attitudes toward our perceived problems with the help from this power. The willingness to honestly assess our difficulties and the openmindedness to accept a different way of dealing with them are the basics for a change in our attitude, and ultimately in ourselves.

Dews has shown his willingness to change and grow emotionally, intellectually and, most important, spiritually. God bless you, Bobby, and keep on writing.

SAM HEARD, Cumming

Waging war: Israel's right to exist central issue

All the recent braying in the AJC by Jay Bookman, Jimmy Carter ("Carter calls U.S. Mideast policy 'erroneous,' " News, Aug. 6) and numerous letter writers can be reduced to one simple question: Does Israel have a right to exist

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or not? If Israel has that right, then Bush's policy is right on target --- full support for the Israelis in their ongoing struggle with their Arab neighbors who won't accept their miniscule presence.

The bottom line is that every country in the world was created by taking land from some other group, whether by purchase, squatting or forced removal. In Israel, much of the land was purchased by the Zionists prior to 1946; the rest was abandoned by the Palestinians during the Six Day War initiated by the Arabs. In contrast, other "new" countries, such as Pakistan, Bangladesh and Eritrea, were formed through civil war. Where is the moral outrage regarding these countries?

BRUCE MYERS, Lilburn

Don't forget cost to our troops

With the lack of graphic visual images in the media displaying the true horrors of war to the American people, I would like to encourage the Journal-Constitution to print more front-page stories like that of Spc. Rodney Davidson ("To war again, with memories," Page One, Aug. 6). These articles show us the pain and atrocities our troops endure that most of us only face in nightmares. Yet for our troops there is no waking from these nightmares of war, even after returning home.

News coverage of this human cost of war reminds us that for those who do return from Iraq or Afghanistan physically unharmed, as with Davidson, there will still be devastating scars inside that may never heal. We owe it to our troops to be aware of this issue and be ready to help them when they come home.

CRAIG MICHAEL BECK, Conyers

Use of innocents simply cowardly

A recent column ("Slam terrorists' use of human shields," @issue, Aug. 6) does not go far enough in its framing of those who would use civilians as shields or as targets. "Terrorists," "freedom fighters" (call them what you will), whether they are Muslim, Christian, Arab, Irish or American, should be labeled by the international news media for what they are --- despicable cowards.

EDWARD MARTIN, Peachtree City

Situation grim, at home and abroad

Let's see. Hezbollah kidnaps two Israeli soldiers in an act of terrorism. Israel wants them back. Hezbollah commences to fire poorly aimed missiles into Israel, killing innocent folk, not military targets, etc. Israel, as it has been forced to do many times since the U.N. mandate which created the country, attempts to fight back against the aggression.

As usual, listening to the brave, masked, militant soldiers dedicated to kill off "Zion," we blame the Israelis for all of the problems. With this crap going on we are not only losing many lives --- all Semites --- but on both sides we are losing the propaganda wars.

Oh yes, Congress goes off on a month-plus vacation so that the Republicans can get re-elected and we can continue on the disaster that we have started.

Our grandchildren will help our children pay for the mess that has been created. We just hope that China doesn't foreclose on the mortgage they hold on us.

BILL HURST, Dunwoody

Gay men would uphold institute of marriage

After reading the article "Middle-aged, no degree, no wife" (News, Aug. 6), I feel compelled to emphasize that the statistics cited in the story blame factors such as the greater economic independence of women and dwindling

LETTERS

prospects in the labor market for the decline in marriage for 18 percent to 22 percent of men 35-44 years of age. This factual report did not blame homosexual relationships for these changes in traditional marriage, simply because there is no relevance.

It is important to point out that 20 percent of the gay men in this country have built stable, loving families that include children. Why do our legislatures continue to deny marriage rights to a group of men who would strengthen the institution of marriage in this country and use that equality to protect their families?

KEN MANFORD, Roswell

Democratic Party: Responses to Jim Wooten column "Democrats' soul on line in two races," @issue, Aug. 6

What about Republican Party's soul?

I'd like to thank Jim Wooten for his advice in his Sunday column on saving the soul of the Democratic Party. In the same spirit of bipartisan concern, I would like to point out to him that the soul of his own Republican Party is increasingly jeopardized by the corruption, greed, torture and incompetence that Republicans have tolerated and enabled over the past six years with President Bush.

Before you get too upset over the mote in your brother's eye, Jim, it might be a good idea to do something about that great big beam in your own.

BRYAN P. SOROHAN, Gainesville

Time to admit Bush made mistake

If I read the tea leaves behind the lines in Jim Wooten's column, it doesn't matter if Iraq is on the brink of civil war --- leftist Democrats are wrong and Republicans are right by "staying the course."

Almost 3,000 of our guys killed and countless maimed for life. What will it take for Wooten to go on record and admit Bush's mistake? It's because of our being in Iraq that Iran and Syria, perceiving Bush's weakness, started the conflict with Israel. It just sickens me when I see Iraqis marching in support of Hezbollah and burning the American flag.

We leftist Democrats remember President Bush telling the American people in our going into Iraq that we would be welcomed with open arms. Some welcome!

NORMAN WISHMAN, Norcross

Good riddance to Democrat Lieberman

Jim Wooten opined that if the Democrats bounced U.S. Sen. Joe Lieberman (D-Conn.), the world would see our true colors. Well, red, white and blue are still my colors, but I'm glad "Bush Lovin' Joe" is gone. The world won't miss Lieberman, but his loss does spotlight the growing divide between many Jews and the Democratic Party.

Take for example Atlanta's Bernie Marcus' very public gifts to the Republican Party. I speculate that moderates such as Marcus have drifted to the GOP not just because of tax policy, but because they see the GOP as more hawkish on the Middle East. But the sad reality is that President Bush is no friend of Jews or Israel, having destabilized the region disastrously with his heedless policies. President Carter's characterization of the Bush Middle East policy as "erroneous" sums it up.

If the GOP wants to support Israel, a bold plan for peace would aid it far more than wars that inflame and embolden our enemies. Peace is the moral authority that Israel needs, not war and retaliation. Peace is the moral authority that the United States needs. But Lieberman didn't get that.

TOM ELLICOTT, Atlanta

LETTERS

Slain Morehouse student: Failure to call 911 can't be forgiven

I see that for one or two of the alleged participants in the senseless robbery/torture/murder of Morehouse College student Carlnell James Walker Jr., coercion may have been involved ("Morehouse tries to learn from tragedy," Metro, Aug. 6). While that may somewhat mitigate their participation, it in no way excuses their utter disregard of human life if events as described by authorities actually took place. Even if it wasn't their idea, and/or they didn't fully participate in the beatings, their alleged failure to make a simple call to 911, once away from the scene, would be unforgivable.

If what we're told is true, they coldly left their "friend" to die in the trunk of a car. Do we really need any louder an alarm to see just how twisted the values of our young people have become?

STEVEN CHARLES, Atlanta

Positive things don't get in paper

It's apparent that The Atlanta Journal-Constitution continues to buy into the stereotype that anything bad done by one black person reflects negatively on the entire black race, but anything good done by one black person may reflect positively on that person only.

People with somewhat tenuous relationships to Morehouse College kill a Morehouse student off campus in another county, and it becomes a repeated headline story. Positive events occur all the time on the Morehouse campus by Morehouse students, and the AJC never mentions it. Repeated wins of the Honda scholastic completion, multiple Rhodes scholars and Phi Beta Kappa students, positive community mentoring, etc., and not a whimper from the AJC.

It's time the AJC discarded its 1906 reporting and positively embrace the entire community.

HARRELL LAWSON, Sparta

Africa: Responses to Cynthia Tucker's column "Zimbabwe can use the grace of intervention," @issue, Aug. 6

No easy answer in Zimbabwe's ills

If only intervening to end Zimbabwe's despotic regime were as simple as Cynthia Tucker made it sound in her column. Unfortunately, as George W. Bush found out, there are no easy solutions when trying to change a regime.

China, a close ally of Zimbabwe, would veto all effective action by the U.N. Security Council. Boggled down in Darfur, the African Union would be unable to send any kind of aid. That leaves only the European Union and the United States to act, but allegations of neocolonialism as well as a strong international dislike of intervention would severely limit support. Robert Mugabe also has a strong army and powerful tribal affiliations --- is the world prepared to start another guerrilla-style war to get rid of Mugabe?

It is easy to make pleas for action in troubled areas around the world; it is much more difficult to find a solution that can actually be implemented.

CHRIS CHIEGO, Athens

South Africa also in midst of crisis

Congratulations to Cynthia Tucker for shining a light on Zimbabwe.

I lived in neighboring South Africa for 32 years and followed its tragic demise closely. We emigrated to the United States seven years ago, and despite the wonderful efforts of Nelson Mandela, we have watched our native country fall into a similar abyss of corruption and violent crime. The bleak turn of events causes us heartbreak every day.

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Private South African citizens have taken it upon themselves to reach out internationally via www.crimexposouthafrica.co.za, where their horrendous experiences are described. The current government refuses to issue the actual statistics on crime and rape, and the true situation is rarely reflected in the press.

South Africa is hailed as an unforgettable tourist destination. Sure, if you have state-of-the-art security, as Oprah Winfrey does.

I hope Tucker will consider writing about another great African country now headed for the big black hole.

TERESA DE KOCK, Rome, Ga.

Atomic bomb omission

In a paragraph dedicated to the 61st anniversary of the dropping of the atomic bomb on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, it was stated there were more than 200,000 people killed in the two raids ("Next: A Calendar for the Mind," @issue, Aug. 6). No mention was made of the fact that these bombings saved untold thousands of lives of American fighting men and shortened the war.

RALEIGH CANNON, Roswell

Kids are watching athletes who cheat

From Barry Bonds to Floyd Landis, the list goes on and on of athletes who are willing to sell their bodies and their souls for the sake of winning ("Landis fired after second positive sample," Sports, Aug. 6). The monetary rewards far outweigh the risks.

If it were simply a case of athletics, my concern would not be so great. These people are not decision makers, they are simply athletes. However, cheating in athletics is symptomatic of a greater societal problem. As a society, we receive our signals on what is acceptable from our decision-makers and political leaders. When those people can't be trusted to tell us the truth or to conduct themselves ethically, the signal goes out very clearly that "the end justifies the means." It's prevalent in our society in all areas. "As long as I get what I want, it doesn't matter who I hurt or what I destroy."

Our young people are watching and listening.

RONALD JOHNSON, Austell

Hats off to a great musical tradition

It was great to see the article by Eileen Drennen on the Everett & Tanner music ("Grand ole hideaways keep string music alive," Page One, Aug. 6). I have been going to Tanner's Chicken House for several years and have also enjoyed the music at Everett Brothers Music Barn. These venues might be the best places to be on Friday and Saturday nights. The music is terrific, the audience is friendly, and the whole environment is easygoing.

There are many places in Georgia where musicians and listeners can have a great time playing and hearing music that doesn't blow their ears out or cost too much to attend. I hope the Everetts and Tanners continue for many years and that they continue to get the recognition and front-page coverage they deserve.

BILL LONG, Dacula

Rivera not in same class as Stewart, Colbert

So Geraldo Rivera thinks Jon Stewart and Stephen Colbert "exist in a small little place where they count for nothing" ("Quotes of the week," @issue, Aug. 6)?

The work of Stewart on "The Daily Show" and Colbert on "The Colbert Report" is some of the sharpest political satire our nation has seen since the days of Mark Twain and Will Rogers.

LETTERS

As I recall, Rivera's career has been filled with countless laughable moments too. The difference is, on Comedy Central, the laughs are intentional.

TOMMY HOUSWORTH, Decatur

United States needs five parties, not two

Am I the only voter who wonders if elections still do any good at all? Have we already lost the right to elect our public officials? Has our form of government been changed without our consent?

Massive violations of law and the Constitution --- not to mention simple honesty --- suggest a post-democratic era has begun. If the Constitution is already in tatters, we may need a new system.

Our country is not polarized, it is fragmented. We need five parties rather than two, that can form coalitions and arrive at some sort of consensus. One thing to be said in favor of a parliamentary system: It's likely those running this country would have lost a vote of confidence years ago.

ROBERT E. VAN KEUREN JR., Atlanta

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OUR GEOSTRATEGIC LOCATION

The Nation (AsiaNet)

September 6, 2006 Wednesday

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Byline: LT COL (RETD) MUHAMMAD AFZAL SADIQ

Body

We have been relying on our geo-strategic position in the sub-continent but our reliance has suffered a serious set back in view of the changing political scenario in the region. After the occupation of Afghanistan by the coalition, forces and our logistic support to the US led invasion made things easier for the US to dig in and stabilise for a long haul. On the one hand, we became US partner to fight global terrorism and on the other, US promised Afghanistan "Freedom and democracy" - reconstruction - financial assistance. The Afghans tired of the Russian occupation and the rule by Taliban thought it better to pull along the American way.

The assistance and reconstruction started at a snail speed with the result that a state of unrest-despondency prevailed amongst the masses. Unfortunately US planners failed to appreciate the post war need to stabilise the country and they had no plans to cover the destruction caused by the invading forces. This led to growing resentment amongst the masses for lack of providing basic utility services. This was noticed more in Iraq than in Afghanistan. US succeeded in installing President Karzai's government to give the world an image that democracy has been established in Afghanistan. The influence of this government was restricted to Kabul and suburb area and beyond that, the Warlords were in power. Thus, political instability prevailed right from the start.

In order to stabilise the situation US went in for an immediate need to indoctrinate the Afghan nation with its own concept of liberty and freedom that ran counter to their religious beliefs. The masses did not swallow the fast pace at which this doctrine was thrust down the throat of the masses and there was resentment.

The Afghans had recently got rid of Russian indoctrination that they faced for over two decades followed by strict religious obligations by the Talibans. This new concept was not received well by the intelligentsia who were sceptical and felt that their religious domain has been invaded. Pakistan which had been instrumental in assisting the Afghans had a feeling that being a Muslim state it had the right to help in the reconstruction of Afghanistan - have a better political, religious and cultural relations because the brunt of refugees migrating during Russian invasion were given shelter and settled in Pakistan.

Unfortunately, the Afghan government preferred Indians who involved themselves in all activities for reconstruction and capturing Afghan market. The presence of Indians on Afghan soil brought security problems where Indian Consulates are operating to the detriment of Pakistan. We have a security situation on our western border and seventy thousand troops are deployed on the ground for the purpose. Recently due to US-Indian, strategic alliance Indo-US forces will be deployed to combat terrorism emanating from Pakistan side.

On the East, we have our archenemy India. There is a permanent deployment of troops by both sides along the cease-fire line since 1948. Two full-fledged wars in 1965-1971 were fought and India has been instrumental in

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dividing Pakistan into two in 1971. We have to keep our guard to ward off any threat posed by the enemy. During the Afghan war, Taliban force was created to fight Russians.

This force comprised of religious diehard Afghanis were motivated to put up resistance in Afghanistan and were equipped with American arms. We are enveloped on the three sides of our border with India on the east till north, Afghanistan on the northwestern border and Iran on the West. We have working relations with Iran and apprehend no security problem in the area. Unfortunately the border facing Afghanistan poses serious security threat in view of cross border insurgency taking place from both sides of the border.

As a result, we were compelled to deploy approximately seventy thousand troops on this side of the divide line. This is the aftermath of our logistic support to US led coalition forces. Thus, one finds Pakistan sandwiched between hostile forces on three sides of the border. An alarming situation to cope up with. Recently Indo-US strategic alliance jointly spells out fighting terrorism from Pakistan. A country that fought global terrorism with US cooperation is now the victim of combined fight by US and India directed against it. What a co-incidence?

The global political scenario has seriously jeopardised the geo-strategic position of Pakistan. With the passage of time, US intentions in the area are surfacing to crystallise. US want India to become a superpower to face China. It wants to occupy oil rich Arab States in the Middle East to control oil resources. It has plans to divide Iraq into Shia-Sunni zones and is planning to create a religious rift in other areas to weaken the Muslim Ummah globally. Its involvement in religion is going to backfire and with its present policy of expansionism, it has blurred its image in the eyes of the world. US are now being looked upon as a force determined to harm Muslim interests all over the world.

The recent Israeli invasion of Lebanon was a planned conspiracy. The Hirari assassination blame on Syria was to force Syria out of the Bekka Valley in Lebanon to pave a way for the Israeli invasion. The amount of interest it took in the murder on behalf of Lebanon and its recent flip to destroy that country should be an eye opener for the Muslim world over. Israel as per US plans pushed through Lebanon causing destruction of unprecedented magnitude. Not only that it martyred innocent women, children and older people in the process never seen in history before. The holocaust let loose in Lebanon perhaps reminds one that the Jews faced in World War-II.

This war perhaps has opened the eyes of the Jews as it for the first time suffered heavy battle casualties inflicted by Hizbullah. There will be eventually a ceasefire and the Muslim Ummah should get together to evolve a strategy to fight and protect the Arab World from blatant aggression of the Evil powers. The role played by the Muslim Ummah in this war was despicable. They just watched, demonstrated, held conferences and nothing more. They failed to assist. It is time now to think of the future survival of the Muslims where a combined effort is needed in times to come.

The Arab countries of the region particularly Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, Jordan and Egypt should form a Defence Pact for their survival. Countries like Qatar, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia rich in oil should finance to build and procure arms - equipment. This Task Force be assigned the mission to fight external threat in the region particularly Israel and its Headquarters be located in Saudi Arabia with portion of troops stationed at Lebanon, Syria and Palestine. The Force should have the capability to deploy anywhere at a short notice. Muslim countries like Indonesia, Malaysia and Pakistan should train this force.

This force should be trained to fight pitched battles plus excel in the art of guerrilla warfare to surprise the enemy. The Arab world should consider assistance from Russia, China and North Korea and try and involve these powers in ME affairs. Reliance in the West and US has not proved beneficial to them. A change of friends is the need of the hour.

Pakistan should play an active role in the cause of Arab world protection. It should try to re-invigorate the OIC which for all-purpose is a dead Organisation. After the cease-fire, the Arab world should start thinking of uniting their ranks by a process to enhance the military strength to be capable of handling future aggressions on their own. They have seen that no one came to their rescue and the war of words cannot be of any assistance to them. Self-reliance is a positive reliance and its strength can infuse a spirit to face the enemy when needed.

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Fight for hearts and minds - SEPTEMBER 11 - THE FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

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Byline: Rohan Gunaratna

Body

MATP

What have we learned since 9/11 and what do we need to learn?

Rohan Gunaratna reports

IN the face of adversity, al-Qa'ida has shown an extraordinary ability to integrate disparate jihadist groups into a post-9/11 vision of perpetual war against the West. The British arrests last month demonstrate the adaptive nature of the broad group. It no longer needs to send operatives from Afghanistan: there are young, first and second-generation radicalised Muslims living in the West willing to carry out its avowed mission. Even if al-Qa'ida's leadership is hunted down and the group destroyed, its mission of attacking the West articulated by Osama bin Laden as a religious duty will continue.

The context: Struck by the horror of 9/11, the world community supported a US-led global campaign to dismantle Jamiat al-Qa'ida al-Jihad, the secret group responsible for attacking the US. Al-Qa'ida has suffered severely during the past five years, but its leaders -- bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri -- are still alive. These exemplars of terror are inspiring and instigating a global jihad against the US, its allies and its friends.

Five years after 9/11, we face a greater threat than at 9/11. What are the successes and failures of that campaign?

Three significant developments mark the post-9/11 threat. First, the dismantling of a state-of-the-art terrorist and guerilla training and operational infrastructure in Afghanistan. Second, dispersal of al-Qa'ida, diffusion of the threat and formation of a multi-headed global jihad movement that is resilient and hard to combat. Third, the emergence of Afghanistan and Iraq as two frontiers of jihad, with the potential to inflict a strategic defeat against the US, its allies and friends.

After Afghanistan: Afghanistan was the base of training and operations for al-Qa'ida even before its formation in 1988. In its previous life, al-Qa'ida operated as Maktab-il-khidamat (established in 1984), the Arab group spearheading the fight against the Soviets in Afghanistan. The loss of training camps in Afghanistan after the US-led coalition invasion in 2002 was a significant blow not only to al-Qa'ida but also to multiple groups that relied on Afghanistan for training.

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Since the US-led forces targeted the camps of al-Qa'ida, the Taliban and other foreign groups in Afghanistan, it has become much harder for the jihadists worldwide to find first-rate camps for training. The training camps and opportunities in the southern Philippines, southern Thailand, eastern Indonesia, the Pakistan-Afghanistan border, Azad Kashmir, the Pankisi valley in Georgia, Chechnya, Somalia and in the Pan Sahel region (northwest Africa) are poor substitutes for the big complexes in Afghanistan.

Contrary to popular perception, al-Qa'ida has been a relatively small group of about 3000 to 4000 members. Although its ideology of global jihad has spread since October 2001, at least 3000 members of al-Qa'ida have been killed and captured in 102 countries worldwide. Al-Qa'ida as the operational organisation has been weakened and its command structure decentralised, but the group is still resilient. As an evolutionary organisation, al-Qa'ida has adopted new targets, technologies and tactics.

With the hardening of defences of diplomatic, political and military targets, al-Qa'ida and its derivative groups are striking soft targets, notably economic (tourist and financial) and transportation targets. Working together with its associated groups in Asia, the Middle East and Africa, al-Qa'ida has directed, supported or inspired attacks against Western targets in the global south. With extensive counter-terrorist co-operation and collaboration between Western and other police, security and intelligence agencies, jihadist groups have suffered. As a result the threat has reduced to the continental US, but the threat to US targets in the south remains significant. After the introduction of North Atlantic Treaty Organisation and Australian troops to Afghanistan, the terrorist threat has increased to Britain, continental Europe and to Australia.

The counter-terrorist coalition made significant strides in 2002. But the US-led regime-change project in Iraq was a huge distraction from the key counter-terrorist mission. For every terrorist killed or captured, two new terrorists were radicalised and recruited.

Furthermore, the grand diversion of resources from Afghanistan to Iraq enabled the al-Qa'ida leadership to survive, divide the coalition and benefit from a decline in Muslim support for fighting extremism and terrorism. Although Muslim countries such as Pakistan, Jordan, Egypt and Indonesia co-operated, the public support critical to fight terrorism declined. The best evidence of this is that five years after 9/11, the two principal architects of 9/11, bin Laden and al-Zawahiri, are still alive. Despite huge rewards, they are still planning and preparing large-scale attacks.

The highly flawed strategic shift in the focus and resources from Afghanistan to Iraq resulted in two sustained insurgencies. First, a new land of jihad with worldwide implications was created in Iraq. Second, the conditions for the resurgence of the Afghan-based Islamicist groups -- the Taliban, Hezb-e-Islami and al-Qa'ida -- were created.

These groups, re-forming along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border, present an enduring threat to Afghanistan and Pakistan. Moreover, Saudi, Syrian, Egyptian, Yemeni and other foreign jihadists joined the Taliban and attacked the troops from the NATO international security assistance force. Attacks in Helmand province in Sangin, Musa Qala, Nowzad and Kajaki illustrate the new threat. As a result of exchange of fighters between Iraq and Afghanistan, the jihadists in Afghanistan are copying the tactics from Iraq.

The Taliban, which had banned photography and videography, are working with the al-Qa'ida video company al-Shahab to produce Iraqi-style execution videos. Classic Iraqi tactics -- roadside bombs, suicide attacks, snatch and beheading operations -- are becoming the norm in Afghanistan. The lack of support for Afghanistan after Iraq created a permissive environment for al-Qa'ida's return with new technologies, tactics and techniques. Introduction of Iraq-learned expertise to Afghanistan has changed the complexion of the threat. Today, the jihadists in Afghanistan can sustain a low-level campaign sufficient to destabilise the Karzai Government. But compared with Iraq, the main jihadist front, there is limited support for a second front in Afghanistan.

After Iraq: Unlike the US-led coalition intervention in Afghanistan, the US and British invasion of Iraq received no widespread support. The images from Iraq of Muslims being killed, maimed and injured generated humiliation, resentment and anger throughout the Muslim world. Exploiting the agony, suffering and rage of Muslims worldwide, terrorist and extremist groups became more influential. In the post-invasion period beginning in March 2003, Muslim public and government support to the West for fighting terrorism diminished. In addition to the strengthening of

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existing groups, several new threat groups emerged in the post-Iraq period. Today, the threat is not only from existing groups originating from the global south but also from home-grown groups spawned from the radicalised segments of migrant and diaspora communities in North America, Europe and Australia.

In the Muslim communities of the West and in the global south, invasion of Iraq has had a much more profound influence than intervention in Afghanistan. The Iraq war is an effective recruitment poster for proselytisers across the world. The Iraq war makes it much easier to sell the jihadist message to young Muslims and thereby lure them into the movement. As evidenced by a dozen successful disrupted, aborted and failed attacks, the landscape of threat dramatically changed in the West. The attacks in Madrid (March 2004) and London (July 2005) demonstrated the recurrent nature of the threat. The arrests in Australia (November 2005), in Canada (June this year), and in Britain (last month) showed the migrant and diaspora-hosting countries of the West were particularly vulnerable.

In addition to the ideological influence, several new networks originating from Iraq operationally penetrated Europe and the Middle East. Throughout 2005 and 2006, there was evidence of such networks penetrating North America, Africa and Asia. Despite the demise of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi in Iraq, both his group, Tanzim Qaidat fi-Bilad al-Rafidayn, and Abdullah Shafi's Jaysh Ansar al-Sunnah are attracting foreign fighters who return home with new skills. Iraq has emerged as a magnet and a lightning rod. As Afghanistan produced the last generation of mujaheddin, Iraq will produce this generation of jihadists.

Al-Qa'ida believed 9/11 would galvanise jihadist groups and Muslim communities. It galvanised the jihadist groups but not the Muslim communities. The impetus for later mobilising the Muslim world was Iraq and certainly the Israeli attacks in Lebanon. Although these were initiated by the killing and kidnapping of Israeli soldiers by Hezbollah, international media reporting was able to sway world public opinion against Israel.

Five years after, most of the structured jihad groups are in the conflict zones of the global south. They include the Salafist Group for Call and Combat, the Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group, Takfir wal-Hijra, Asbat ul-Ansar, Jemaah Islamiyah, Riyadus Salihin Brigade, Lashkar-e-Toiba and Jayash-e-Mohammed. But a dangerous evolution is occurring in the West. Many of the structured organisations in North America, Europe and Australia were dismantled after 9/11. Before then, the terrorist infrastructures in the West supported attacks in the Middle East, Africa and Asia. They were mostly disseminating propaganda and funding the local jihads in Algeria, Saudi Arabia, Chechnya, Kashmir and Egypt. As they were not directed against European targets, the terrorist infrastructures on Western soil were tolerated by Western governments until 9/11. Today, many of the cells and network fragments have mutated from support to operational forms and present a threat to Western security. Home-grown groups -- a more virulent strain of al-Qa'ida -- have emerged in the West. There are ideologically inspired, young and unaffiliated jihadi cells in the West intent on hitting Western targets. As they are flat in structure, self-financing and have limited or no contact with bin Laden's al-Qa'ida, they elude government intelligence coverage.

The jihadists and Iran: Western leaders have often said that al-Qa'ida has no political aim. Al-Qa'ida's aim is to create Islamic states wherever Muslims live. The strategic goal of al-Qa'ida is twofold: one, destroy Israel; and, second, wrest control of Saudi Arabia. Iraq is on the front doorstep of Israel and Saudi Arabia, the two countries hosting the three holiest Islamic sites. Until the Western forces pull out of Iraq, the global jihad movement will continue to invest in Iraq. Just as the Soviet forces were defeated in Afghanistan, the intention of al-Qa'ida is to inflict a strategic defeat on US and coalition forces in Iraq.

Intelligence reports, telephone intercepts, court documents and open source-based reporting indicate a previous alliance between the world's two most dangerous groups, Hezbollah and al-Qa'ida. In 1993, Ali Mohamed, a former US and Egyptian military officer, arranged for bin Laden to meet Hezbollah's security chief, Imad Mughniyah, responsible for the bombing of the US and French forces in Beirut in 1983. That relationship led to training of al-Qa'ida members in Lebanon and Iran. After bin Laden relocated from Sudan to Afghanistan in 1996, that relationship with Iran ended.

Depending on US attitudes and approaches to Tehran, Iran will enable al-Qa'ida again. Iran hosts several highly capable al-Qa'ida leaders: Saif al-Adel, the head of security and intelligence; Abu Mohammed al-Masri, head of training; Abdul Aziz al-Masri, head of weapons of mass destruction; and Suleiman Abu Ghaith, head of media.

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The quality of the al-Qa'ida leaders in Iran is much higher than those operating on the Pakistan-Afghanistan border. As Iran is a transit point for the jihadists to travel to Iraq, Pakistan and Afghanistan, at least European engagement with Iran would help to reduce the global threat.

There is some strategic integration between the Shia and the Sunni with regard to the destruction of Israel and the expulsion of the Saudi royal family. Thereafter, jihadists believe the Arab and the Muslim world can be reunited. The strategic goals of the Shia and Sunni Muslim groups are complementary. Both aim to restore the Islamic caliphate that existed before their ancient schism.

Challenges: To manage the contemporary wave of violence, the world faces three challenges. First, there must be general recognition that the fight against terrorism is a battle against extremism. The post-9/11 measures have largely focused on building kinetic and lethal capabilities as opposed to investment in soft power.

The challenge is to educate and re-educate the Muslim community, creating an ethic in society against extremism and violence. There is a belief that terrorists fight for freedom. Freedom fighters do not kill, maim and injure civilians. As opposed to guerillas, terrorists create fear by deliberately targeting innocent men, women and children. As such, governments must work with Muslim clerics to publicise that al-Qa'ida and its associate groups that kill in the name of Allah are not Koranic. Muslim councils must expose the true face of jihad ideologues. Driven by personal and political power and not by public good, most of them masquerade as men of religion. Think of religious schools not as jihadist but as centres of opportunity to sow seeds of peace. Without community engagement of Muslims, the fight cannot be won.

Second, it has to be accepted governments have lacked the necessary knowledge and understanding to fight the contemporary wave of violence. There must be initiatives to formally and informally educate leaders and officials on the need to be sensitive to Muslim public opinion. The invasion of Iraq, Guantanamo Bay, Abu Ghraib, Danish cartoons and Israeli attacks in Lebanon have not helped. The West must build bridges to the wider Muslim community. As many as 40 leads from God-fearing Muslims have prevented substantial terrorist attacks from London to Melbourne. As terrorism is a by-product of extremism, it is important to work with the wider public. As there is significant misunderstanding between Muslims and non-Muslims, there is no substitute for formal and informal public education. In most societies, less than 1per cent actively support violence including terrorism. The fight must be framed not as a clash of civilisation between Muslims and non-Muslims but a clash within a civilisation between the moderates and extremists.

Third, governments must look at the threat strategically, operationally and tactically. At a strategic level, governments must ensure that Iran is not put in a place where it will support the global jihad movement. If the US or Israel attacks Iran, Shia and Sunni extremist movements are likely to collaborate. Israel's lack of foresight and US lack of understanding of the Middle East have already increased the potential for collaboration between Shia and Sunni extremists and terrorists.

At an operational level, governments must develop the technologies to watch and disrupt the jihadists on the internet. After the loss of Afghanistan, the internet has become a virtual battlespace and has emerged as the principal source of knowledge for the jihadists. In addition to large-scale politicisation of young Muslims, the internet today provides the recipes for the manufacture of hexamethylene triperoxide diamine, acetone peroxide and liquid explosives.

At a tactical level, it is necessary to train and retrain the law enforcement, security and intelligence services and the military to better understand and respond to the terrorist threat. There is a grave lack of knowledge and understanding of the ideologies, organisations and operations of the threat groups. For instance, instead of building the capabilities to disrupt terrorist operations at the launch phase, government enforcement agencies must develop indicators for early detection. As precursors can be procured commercially from pharmacies and hardware shops to manufacture explosives, police must work closely with the service sector to report suspicious procurement.

The future: In 2008, al-Qa'ida will mark 20 years of its existence. Al-Qa'ida was founded in 1988, but the group came to the attention of the intelligence community only after it attacked US embassies in East Africa in August 1998. Nonetheless, governments worldwide did not take the threat seriously even after the USS Cole attack in

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October 2000. Governments lacked the resolve to dismantle the high-profile terrorist support and training infrastructures in Afghanistan until 9/11. Until then al-Qa'ida alone had build a state-of-the-art infrastructure that ideologically and operationally trained at least 20,000 jihadists.

There must be recognition that the international neglect of conflict zones from Palestine to Afghanistan, Kashmir to Chechnya and Mindanao to Algeria led to terrorist campaigns. In such conflict zones, humans suffer, their rights are violated, virulent ideologies spawn, people are displaced, refugees form and terrorists are produced. For instance, in Afghanistan, the failure to fill the vacuum created after the Soviet withdrawal in 1989 led to the present predicament.

As much as Afghanistan, one of the worst conflict zones, precipitated the contemporary wave of violence, Iraq is likely to precipitate the next wave. The lesson identified (and not learned) is to build greater international will and capital to intervene in conflict zones. Proactive investment to prevent conflict formation, breaking the sustenance of violence and good governance are paramount to reduce the future potential for global terrorism.

Finally, governments must constantly look into the future. Western nations that have the discipline, the resources and the staying power must develop a strategic vision and not be driven by the tactical successes. Western nations are dazzled by the costly technological tools of war that have only marginal relevance to reducing the contemporary threat.

In fighting the contemporary wave of violence, intelligence-led law enforcement operations have proved the most effective course of action. The fight against terrorism is a multidimensional fight requiring multi-pronged, multi-agency, multinational and multi-jurisdictional efforts. On the ground, this formula must be developed, moving from co-operation to collaboration, building common databases, exchange of personnel, joint training, joint operations, transfer of resources and expertise and sharing of experience. As there is no standard textbook for fighting this terrorism, governments must maximise the successes and minimise the failures.

Rohan Gunaratna is author of Inside Al Qaeda, Global Network of Terror (Scribe, \$29.95) and lives in Singapore.

BEFORE AND AFTER SEPTEMBER 11, 2001

Major terrorist incidents involving Islamic extremists before

and after the attack on the New York World Trade Centre and the

Pentagon, excluding suicide bombings in Israel and violence

in Iraq since the US invasion:

1993

February 26:

Car bomb planted by Islamic terrorists in underground parking garage of World Trade Centre, New York City, kills six and wounds more than 1000

1996

June 25: Truck bomb at Khobar Towers (US military housing) in Dahrn, Saudi Arabia, kills 19 servicemen and wounds more than 500 people

1997

November 17:

58 foreign tourists, four Egyptians killed at a temple near

Fight for hearts and minds - SEPTEMBER 11 - THE FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

Luxor, Egypt

1998

August 7: Truck bombs outside US embassies in Kenya, Tanzania kill more than 200 people, injure more than 5000; Osama bin Laden indicted in absentia

2000

October 12:

Two suicide bombers attack USS Cole at Aden, Yemen, killing 17; bin Laden allies suspected

2001

May 27:

Muslim guerillas kidnap, kill several tourists at Philippine resort

September 11:

Al- Qa'ida terrorists, backed by bin Laden, fly hijacked planes into the NY World Trade Centre and the Pentagon; fourth plane crashes in Pennsylvania, killing about 3000; beginning in October, US launches war in Afghanistan

2002

January 22:

Drive-by shooting at US consulate in Calcutta, kills five

January 23: Wall Street Journal reporter Daniel Pearl kidnapped in Pakistan, later found murdered

April 11:

Suicide bomber kills 16, injures 23 outside Tunisian synagogue

June 14:

Car bomb near US consulate in Karachi, Pakistan, kills 11 October 6:

Explosive-laden boat rams French oil tanker off Yemeni coast; kills one, injures four

October 12:

Bombs outside nightclub and bar in Bali, kill 202 including 88 Australians, injure 350 November 28:

Israeli tourists attacked at Kenyan hotel, 15 killed, 40 injured; shoulder-fired missiles, shot at plane bound for Israel from Mombassa, miss target

2003

March 19:

US invades Iraq based in part on tenuous links to terrorism

May 12:

Truck bombs at residential compound for foreign workers in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, kill 35

Fight for hearts and minds - SEPTEMBER 11 - THE FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

May 16:

Suicide bombers kill 43, injure 100 in Casablanca, Morocco August 5: Car bomb outside Marriott Hotel in Jakarta kills 12, injures 150 November 8:

Car bomb in Riyadh, kills 17, injures 122

November 15:

Truck bombs kill 25, wound at least 300 outside synagogues in Istanbul

November 20:

Truck bombs kill 27 persons, wound at least 450, outside British consulate and HSBC bank in Istanbul

2004

March 1: Bomb on ferry in Manila Bay, Philippines, kills more than 100

March 11:

Bombs on commuter trains in Madrid, kill more than 190, injure 1900 April 25:

Attack on security building in Riyadh kills five

May 29:

Islamist terrorists attack two oil industry plants, housing complex, Khobar, Saudi Arabia; take 50 hostages, kill 22 of them

September 9:

Car bomb outside Australian embassy in Jakarta kills eight

October 7: Car bombs at three Egyptian Red Sea resorts kill at least 34 December 6:

Gunmen with suspected al-Qa'ida link attack US Consulate in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, killing five

December 12:

Blast at market in Philippines kills at least 15

2005

April 7:

Suicide bomber kills himself, three foreign tourists in Cairo

June 1:

Suicide bomber kills 20 in Kandahar, Afghanistan July 7: Bombs on London bus and subway trains kill 56, injure more than 700

July 23:

Suicide car bombs at tourist sites in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, kill at least 67

October 1:

Fight for hearts and minds - SEPTEMBER 11 - THE FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

Bombs in Bali kill 20, including four Australians

November 9:

Explosions at hotels in Amman, Jordan, kill at least 60

2006

March 2: Bomb in Karachi, Pakistan, kills four, including a US diplomat

April 11:

Suicide bomber in Karachi kills 58, including himself

April 24:

Bombs at three locations in Dahab, Egypt, kill 23, wound 62

July 12 - August 14:

War between Hezbollah militants and Israel August 4:

Suicide bomber in Kandahar, Afghanistan, kills at least 21

August 2:

Bomb kills three in south Thailand; report says more than 1500 had been killed since January 2004 by Islamic insurgency August 10:

Major terrorist plot to bomb planes bound for US. cities from Heathrow airport, London, disrupted

Load-Date: September 8, 2006

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How we can fight Tehran

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

March 31, 2007 Saturday

National Edition

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Section: ISSUES & IDEAS; Pg. A25; David Frum

Length: 775 words

Byline: David Frum, National Post

Body

The Iranian seizure of 15 British naval personnel is an outrage -- and an opportunity. Iran invaded Iraqi territorial waters, attacked British naval personnel enforcing resolutions of the UN Security Council and committed an act of piracy and kidnapping.

Iran then displayed its captives on national television and compelled them to read coerced political statements. It forced the captured **female** sailor to wear the Islamic hijab, a violation of her Geneva Convention right to practice her own religion.

These violent and lawless actions have shocked British and European public opinion. But they should not have surprised anyone.

Iran has routinely used kidnapping as a tool of state. It kidnapped eight British sailors in 2004, and 52 American diplomats in 1979-81. Iran's **Hezbollah** surrogates kidnapped Americans, Britons and others in Lebanon in the 1980s. They kidnapped Israeli soldiers in 2000 and again this past summer, triggering a war.

Iran has committed graver crimes too. Iranian agents have committed murder on the soil of the United States, France and Germany -- and carried out mass-casualty terror attacks in Saudi Arabia and Argentina.

Today, Iran is racing to build a nuclear bomb, violating its commitments under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. And too many in Europe shrug their shoulders.

This latest crisis, however, opens a chance to mobilize European opinion to action.

One of their own has been attacked and threatened with the prolonged abuse of its military personnel. The story will appear on television night after night after night. The longer it continues, the more British people and other Europeans will wonder: Is there anything we can do? And the good news is: Yes, there is.

The bullying, blustering bravado of the Iranians should not conceal the truth that Iran is massively vulnerable to international pressure. For example:

- Iran's decrepit refineries cannot produce enough gasoline for Iranian drivers. So, although Iran is a major oil exporter, it must import 40% of its gasoline. An international embargo on gasoline sales to Iran would inflict

How we can fight Tehran

severe distress. Earlier this month, Iran raised the (deeply subsidized) price of gasoline from 34 cents a gallon to 50 cents. Some in the regime are considering imposing rationing--a move that would badly damage what remains of the mullahs' popularity.

- Iran's rusting industries, many of them state owned, depend heavily on parts and equipment imported from Germany. Two-thirds of these sales benefit from export credit guarantees from the German government. As of 2005, Germany had extended some US\$6.2-billion worth of credit to Iran. That number has been cut in recent months. But if Germany were to follow Japan's lead and cut its credits to zero, Iranian companies would have to pay more for parts --and some would be forced out of business altogether. The Central Bank of Iran estimates unemployment at more than 12%. Many private economists think the real figure closer to 20% --and higher still for young Iranians.

- The United States has maintained sanctions against Iranian oil and natural gas since 1979. The European Union, however, has continued to invest in Iran. The U.S. Department of Energy estimates that foreign companies, mostly European, have invested US\$30-billion in Iran since 1996. Without this investment, Iran's oil and gas output would have faltered long ago.

It's time now for Europeans to join the American ban on investment in Iran's energy sector. Such a ban would deal a painful blow to Iran's economy, which has little to sell beside oil and gas. Iran suffers an inflation rate over 20%, suggesting that the Iranian government is already overspending its oil and gas revenues. Squeeze those revenues, and you squeeze the regime.

- Not all firms investing in Iran are European. Malaysia's Petronas and Russia's Gazprom both play major roles. Till now, firms doing business in Iran have been allowed to do business not only in the EU but also in the United States. It's time now to impose a secondary boycott, and to force firms like Petronas to decide: Either you do business with Iran or you do business with the rest of the planet. You choose.

Since 9/11, Europeans have pleaded with the U.S. to rely on sanctions and diplomacy rather than force. Fine. Let's see some sanctions then -- real sanctions, not the wrist-slaps imposed till now.

Iran has been waging war on the world; it's time the world organized in countervailing self-defense. And if anything is needed to stiffen our collective will, let's broadcast one more time that image of Faye Turney, cloaked against her will in that black headscarf of subordination and humiliation.

Graphic

Black & White Photo : AFP, Getty Images; Iranian TV station Al-Alam shows images of British servicewoman Faye Turney wearing a hijab. ;

Load-Date: March 31, 2007

Anti-Semitism is alive in U.N. resolutions

St. Petersburg Times (Florida)

March 18, 2007 Sunday

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Section: PERSPECTIVE; Pg. 5P

Length: 835 words

Byline: ROBYN BLUMNER

Body

"Commie Jew traitor Blumner," the handwritten letter began. "You ugly Jew swine bitch," it shrieked, suggesting that Guantanamo be converted into an "Aushwitz style creamatorium" for people like me.

I get letters like this with varying degrees of venom. They always remind me that anti-Semitism is a virulent affliction that is very much alive.

I'd like to believe that the hatred of Jews was relegated to those who can't spell - like my letter writer. Ignorant, shrivel-hearted people who stew over their own failures in life by blaming historic scapegoats. But the epidemic afflicts many, many more.

You might even call it the U.N. disease.

Just to be clear, I am not one of those who thinks the state of Israel can do no wrong or should be above criticism for its human rights violations. But I do call it anti-Semitism when the only Jewish state in the world is singled out and condemned repeatedly for actions that pale in comparison to those committed by the very nations pointing the accusatory finger.

"It is legitimate for the U.N. bodies to criticize Israel, but not when they do so unfairly, selectively, massively, sometimes exclusively, and always obsessively," writes the Geneva-based U.N. Watch, an organization devoted to monitoring the United Nations and promoting human rights.

The record of bias is unassailable. The current 61st U.N. General Assembly has passed 22 anti-Israel resolutions and condemned only a handful of the 191 other U.N. member states. Every year the body passes about 19 anti-Israel resolutions, while not once censuring systematic human rights violators such as Cuba, Zimbabwe, Uzbekistan, Syria, China and countless others.

U.N. Watch reports that at the 2005 annual assembly of the World Health Organization only one country was singled out by special resolution. Israel was found to violate the health rights of Palestinians. Similarly, that same year, at the annual meeting of the International Labor Organization, only one country-specific report was made part of its agenda. Israel was charged with violating the rights of Palestinian workers.

All this ferocious attention on Israel not only gives ammunition and cover to those who would ignite and spread anti-Semitism, it delegitimizes the United Nations and its mission. Equality is guaranteed under the U.N. Charter. Yet the United Nations has launched itself on a near-hysterical campaign against only one country and one people.

Anti-Semitism is alive in U.N. resolutions

Uzbekistan's President Islam Karimov allegedly boils political prisoners in oil, China offers its billion people no political or religious freedom, Zimbabwe's Robert Mugabe is starving his population and beating and jailing opposition members, children are forced to be soldiers in Uganda, there's a genocide taking place in Sudan, Saudi Arabia denies women the vote and outlaws any religion but Islam.

The world is a cesspool of human rights violations, but investigating and condemning Israel - the only true democracy in the Middle East, where Arab-Israeli citizens enjoy religious freedom, the vote and participation at high levels of government - is what preoccupies the United Nations.

And the U.N.'s Human Rights Council might be the most obsessed of all. The council has been in existence since June and has held four special sessions. Three of them focused on Israel's actions. The one on the Israeli military's "gross human rights violations in Lebanon," failed to mention the terror group Hezbollah's rocket attacks on Israeli civilians and the kidnapping of two Israeli soldiers that provoked the incursion.

The council's predecessor, the Human Rights Commission, was disbanded because of its persistent prejudice against Israel, and because some of its member countries were notorious rights violators. This new council appears to be little better.

Then there's John Dugard, the United Nations' "Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967." He seems to relish accusing Israel of a kind of racial cleansing, using phraseology reminiscent of Nazi Germany.

In a report issued in January that barely acknowledges the extreme security issues Israel faces, Dugard wrote scathingly about Israel's new barrier. "The Wall being built in East Jerusalem is an instrument of social engineering designed to achieve the Judaization of Jerusalem," Dugard said.

Judaization is a term that could have been spit out of Eichmann's mouth. Now it's spit out of the U.N.'s.

Had Dugard been an objective observer he would have at least noted these statistics: In 2002 and 2003, 140 Israeli citizens a month were murdered by terrorists with 20,000 such attacks in all. In 2006, the country reports suffering fewer successful suicide bombings all year than it had in one week in 2002. These results are attributed largely to the wall.

Not all criticism leveled at Israel is animated by anti-Semitism, just most of it. Maybe U.N. diplomats don't use the same colorful language as my uncouth letter writer, but their alignment of interests is very clear.

Load-Date: March 18, 2007

The silence that kills

Yukon News (Yukon)

March 9, 2007 Friday

Final Edition

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Section: INSIGHT; Pg. 9; The World Today

Length: 755 words

Byline: Thomas L. Friedman, The New York Times

Body

On February 20, The Associated Press reported from Afghanistan that a suicide attacker disguised as a health worker blew himself up near "a crowd of about 150 people who had gathered for a ribbon-cutting ceremony to open an emergency ward at the main government hospital in the city of Khost."

A few days later, at a Baghdad college, a **female** Sunni suicide bomber blew herself up amid students who were ready to sit for exams, killing 40 people.

Stop and think for a moment how sick this is.

Then stop for another moment and listen to the silence.

The Bush team is mute. It says nothing, because it has no moral authority. No one would listen.

President Bush is losing a PR war to people who blow up emergency wards. Europeans are mute, lost in their delusion that this is all George Bush's and Tony Blair's fault.

But worst of all, Muslims, the very people whose future is being killed, are also mute. No surge can work in Iraq unless we have a "moral surge," a counter-nihilism strategy that delegitimizes suicide bombers.

The most important restraints are cultural, societal and religious. It takes a village -- but the Arab-Muslim village today is largely silent. The best are indifferent or intimidated; the worst quietly applaud the Sunnis who kill Shiites.

Nobody in the Arab world "has the guts to say that what is happening in Iraq is wrong -- that killing school kids is wrong," said Mamoun Fandy, director of the Middle East program at the International Institute for Strategic Studies.

"People somehow think that killing Iraqis is good because it will stick it to the Americans, so Arabs are undermining the American project in Iraq by killing themselves."

The world worries about highly enriched uranium, but "the real danger is highly enriched Islam," Fandy added.

That is, "highly enriched Sunnism" and "highly enriched Shiism" that eats away at the Muslim state, the way **Hezbollah** is trying to do in Lebanon or the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt or al-Qaida everywhere.

The silence that kills

One result: There's no legitimate, decent, accepted source of Arab-Muslim authority today, no center of gravity "for people to anchor their souls in," Fandy said.

In this welter of confusion, the suicide bombers go uncondemned or subtly extolled.

Arab nationalist media like Al-Jazeera "practically tell bin Laden and his followers, 'Bravo,'" Fandy said.

"The message sent to bin Laden is that 'You are doing to the West what we want done, but we can't do it.' This is the hidden message that the West is not privy to.

"Unless extreme pressure is applied on Muslims all over the world to come up with counter-fatwas and pronounce these men as pariahs, very little will happen in fighting terrorism."

"The battleground in the Arab world today is not in Palestine or Lebanon, but in the classrooms and newsrooms," Fandy concluded.

That's where "the software programmers" reside who create symbolic images and language glorifying suicide bombers and make their depraved acts look legitimate. Only other Arab-Muslim programmers can defeat them.

Occasionally an honest voice rises, giving you a glimmer of hope that others will stand up.

The MEMRI translation website (memri.org) just posted a poem called When, from a Saudi author, Wajeha al-Huwaider, that was posted on Arab reform sites like www.aafaq.org.

"When you cannot find a single garden in your city, but there is a mosque on every corner -- you know that you are in an Arab country.

"When you see people living in the past with all the trappings of modernity -- do not be surprised, you are in an Arab country.

"When religion has control over science -- you can be sure that you are in an Arab country.

"When clerics are referred to as 'scholars' -- don't be astonished, you are in an Arab country.

"When you see the ruler transformed into a demigod who never dies or relinquishes his power, and nobody is permitted to criticize -- do not be too upset, you are in an Arab country.

"When you find that the large majority of people oppose freedom and find joy in slavery -- do not be too distressed, you are in an Arab country.

"When you hear the clerics saying that democracy is heresy, but seizing every opportunity provided by democracy to grab high positions -- do not be surprised, you are in an Arab country.

"When you discover that a woman is worth half of what a man is worth, or less--do not be surprised, you are in an Arab country.

"When land is more important than human beings -- you are in an Arab country.

"When fear constantly lives in the eyes of the people -- you can be certain you are in an Arab country."

Load-Date: March 10, 2007

[Come on over](#)

Guardian.com

August 30, 2006

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theguardian

Length: 1223 words

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

Body

BIG BUSINESS EXTENDS ROMANIAN INVITATION

"Queue here for Britain," says the Mail. "This way to the UK," says the Sun, picturing a few dozen Romanians queuing outside the British embassy in Sofia for visas. "Such scenes are repeated EVERY day as people jostle for tourist visas to give them a head start getting into Britain before Bulgaria joins the EU on January 1. Once here, they plan to wait until they are allowed to work legally."

The Independent thoroughly approves. (The FT is of a similar mind: it reports a study suggesting that Spain's economic growth in the past decade is largely due to immigrants.) "Let them all in, say business leaders," splashes the tabloid. It quotes the chairmen of Centrica, Merrill Lynch and Sainsbury's and the CEOs of WPP and United Business Media, all of whom joined a pro-immigration lobby, called the Business for New Europe Group. It wants Bulgarians and Romanians to be allowed the same access to the British labour market that Poles and other eastern European nations have enjoyed.

There are some useful stats at the bottom of page two: 62% of the 600,000-odd eastern Europeans who have come to the UK in the past two years are from Poland; 70,000 migrants have worked on farms; 10% of builders are from overseas; and four-fifths of the incomers are between 18 and 35. They earn wages that are on average 13% higher than those of non-migrants. This, the paper says, "suggests that migrant workers are more highly skilled and more productive". The Mail gives space to the comments of the former Labour minister Frank Field, who think Britain should be trying to increase its own workers' productivity.

Trevor Phillips, the head of the Commission for Racial Equality, told the Royal Geographical Society last night that migrants were changing Britain in ways that had to be addressed. He urged people not to "confuse genuine experience of multicultural community" with, for example, the Notting Hill carnival, which amounted to "domestic tourism", the Telegraph says.

* Mail: Bulgarians queue for UK visas

* Independent: Business leaders seek 'unlimited immigration' from EU states

* FT: Spanish study points to benefits of immigration

* Telegraph: Migrants changing Britain

Come on over

TAKE ME TO YOUR LEADER

With no obvious lead, the papers begin to crank up their political coverage in time for the conference season. The Guardian says a group of Labour MPs are increasingly frustrated by Tony Blair's failure to set a departure date and want to "collectively and publicly demand" that he announce it at the Labour conference. The twist is that several are loyalists and Gordon Brown is apparently not involved in "the latest round of plotting".

The Telegraph points out that spending on "spin" - for which read press officers and other PR staff - has trebled since Labour came to power. "In effect, the taxpaying voter, regardless of his own party allegiance, is subsidising the promotional activities of the party in power," grumbles the paper's leader.

Over in the Mail, meanwhile, the paper's campaign against junk mail - geddit? - is gathering steam. It turns out that people who opt out of junk mail, as the paper is urging them to do, may not receive "government communications" because the Post Office cannot tell the difference. "If Royal Mail is not prepared to stop this stuff, it might be an idea to just put it back in their post boxes," a Wirral pensioner suggests. Whether this will help to keep down the cost of stamps as effectively as junk post does is a subject the Mail steers well clear of.

The Mirror warns readers that a "car crash con gang" - one of those four-noun headlines so sought after in the wild - is ramming innocent motorists in order to make fraudulent vehicle and personal injury claims. "Using two vehicles, and putting innocent lives at risk, the crooks career in front of trucks then brake heavily so they can be shunted in the rear," the paper says.

- * MPs plot to force Blair exit date
- * Mail: Anger over Royal Mail's junk warning
- * Telegraph: Spending on spin trebles under Labour
- * Mirror: Car crash con gang

KATRINA'S POWER ONE YEAR ON

George Bush may never recover from his fall in standing among Americans after Hurricane Katrina, according to the Independent's leader. "New Orleans seemed to demonstrate beyond doubt that, when disaster struck, Mr Bush was paralysed into inaction; that his choice of key staff was irresponsible, and that he presided over a federal government that showed callous disregard for a major US city at the very time when federal help should have come into its own," says the paper.

The Guardian says the response "simply cannot be understood except in a racial context", quoting a former resident of the Lower Ninth ward: "I'm not saying they planned this as a way to empty New Orleans of poor, black people, but it's sure going to work out that way."

"Only 41% of houses in the area have a gas service and only 60% have electricity. A mere 17% of the city's buses are in use. Only a third of New Orleans' public schools are in operation ... a full year on, Hurricane Katrina should continue to cause outrage about the rottenness and misery of the lives still lived in what Michael Harrington once famously called 'the other America'."

- * Telegraph: Organic milk proved more healthy
- * Times: IVF threat to obese women

SVEN STILL ON THE PAYROLL

Slow news days don't come much slower than when Sven Goran-Eriksson is back on the front page of the Sun. "Sven is still being paid 13,000 a DAY - even though he was ditched as national coach two months ago. The deal continues until he finds new work." The man himself is pictured playing tennis: "Game, set and cash to me, I think."

Come on over

* Sun: You're having a laugh

THE ARGUMENTS OF AUGUST

I suppose you think I'm going to come up with an entertaining little story to round off a rather parochial Wrap, don't you? Yeah, you always do, don't you? Anyone would think you were paying ... oh, never mind. Well, there's nothing in the basement today except a depressing little story that says we're more likely to row on August 30 than on any other day. Don't blame me, for God's sake. I didn't write it. Some "relationship psychotherapist" says that now summer is over couples bicker and have "needless arguments". Yes, well, some of them may be meaningless, but who took the bin in last night? Who ate the celery before it went bad? Who spent nearly two hours getting home due to overcrowding on the Northern line? Who had to walk from Chalk Farm to Tufnell Park and couldn't even squeeze onto a bus? Who ... God, I hate these media rent-a-quotes and their stupid predictions.

* Couples most likely to have a row today

COMING UP ON GUARDIAN UNLIMITED TODAY

The first in a series of public hearings into the merits of seven shortlisted venues bidding to host the UK's first Las Vegas-style super-casino gets under way.

Three more men will appear in court today charged in connection with the alleged plot to blow up transatlantic passenger jets.

UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan demanded that Israel lift its air and sea blockade of Lebanon, but Israel said it would only remove the embargo once it is assured that forces deployed on Lebanon's borders can stop new weapons shipments to Hizbullah.

In today's podcast, available at noon: Julian Borger on New Orleans one year after Katrina and Bobbie Johnson on free music downloads.

Load-Date: August 30, 2006

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Big challenge ahead for Layton on Afghan policy

The Star Phoenix (Saskatoon, Saskatchewan)

September 14, 2006 Thursday

Final Edition

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Section: FORUM; Pg. A11; Susan Riley

Length: 761 words

Byline: Susan Riley, Ottawa Citizen

Body

Jack Layton achieved rare harmony in the wake of the New Democratic Party's recent convention in Quebec City: he was condemned by advocates for both Muslim and Jewish Canadians, for policies endorsed by 1,500 delegates.

Beyond that, however, the news isn't encouraging.

The Canada-Israel Committee took issue with two convention resolutions, one deemed too critical of Israel and another that ignored Hezbollah's terrorist activities. The motions were "irresponsible" and "dangerously misinformed," said the CIC.

Then the Muslim Canadian Congress called the NDP "reckless and opportunistic" for proposing an immediate withdrawal of Canadian troops from Afghanistan.

To be fair, Middle East politics are a minefield -- not just literally -- for any mainstream party and opinions within Jewish and Muslim communities are hardly uniform no matter what their self-appointed spokesmen say. Layton's larger problem is persuading the general public that his policies -- particularly on Afghanistan -- are sensible and morally sound.

He has much work to do.

His focus so far has been on the speedy withdrawal of Canada's 2,200 troops by February. He accompanies this demand with boilerplate about refocusing the mission on development and diplomacy -- an excellent idea that would probably find wide support.

But he doesn't say how this happy end will be achieved, nor does he seem too concerned about leaving our NATO allies to pick up the military slack while our troops are off doing good.

He is too busy condemning George W. Bush's clumsy and dangerous tactics -- preaching, if polls are to be believed, to the converted.

There is probably a significant constituency of Canadians who agree with Layton that the military campaign is, ultimately, futile, that peace will not be achieved without talking to the Taliban, that you do not win the hearts of Afghans or promote Western values by bombing their homes and villages.

Big challenge ahead for Layton on Afghan policy

Many voters, including traditional NDP supporters, will also agree that Canada can't just walk away, that it has an obligation to help one of the poorest nations in the world rebuild, to encourage equality for women and universal education -- the exact rationale cleverly advanced by Prime Minister Stephen Harper in defence of Canada's mission.

Layton has to tackle, persuasively, the major argument in favour of a continued military campaign: that no rebuilding can take place while the Taliban, or warlords, control large tracts of the country. He and other advocates of early withdrawal also have to explain how to justify any such move to our allies.

Could Canada, for instance, redirect much of the \$4 billion earmarked for the military campaign in Kandahar to rebuilding in the relatively stable Kabul area and further north? As to the allies, Canada could argue that it has suffered more casualties proportionately than almost any other nation, that it has done its part and it is time for Germany, Italy, Turkey, Spain -- four countries that refused a call this week from NATO for 2,500 new troops -- to take the reins.

While the NDP has been slow to defend and explain its controversial stance, Harper has escalated his marketing efforts, using the anniversary of 9/11 and a visit by U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, to sell the Afghan mission to an uneasy public.

The offensive continues next week with a state visit by Afghan president Hamid Karzai.

Harper's appeal to country, God and duty is similar to Bush's, but his argument is less problematic: There is a link between Sept. 11 and Afghanistan where al-Qaida was incubated, and none with Iraq.

Even the Liberals, distracted and divided, threaten to outflank the NDP on Afghanistan. Bob Rae, for example, says Canada should not pull out unilaterally but press NATO to re-evaluate the mission.

"We can't just snap our fingers and say this week that we lost too many troops and we have to come home," he says. Ouch.

In Quebec City, Layton dismissed Rae as "a failed one-time Ontario premier who, it turns out, is also a turncoat." Double ouch -- an indication, perhaps, that Layton, who usually avoids personal attacks, fears Rae.

He should. As Liberal leader, Rae could poach centre-left votes from the NDP; he has already stolen its one-time "star" candidate Paul Sommerville, a former Bay Street economist.

Before Parliament resumes next week, the NDP caucus will be meeting to flesh out its Afghanistan policy. It also has to keep a nervous eye on the Greens. A recent poll has them at 10 per cent and the NDP back at 14 per cent.

Little wonder Layton is looking a bit twitchy these days.

Load-Date: September 14, 2006

The good, bad and ugly: Things I learned in 2006

The Vancouver Sun (British Columbia)

January 2, 2007 Tuesday

Final Edition

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Section: EDITORIAL; Pg. A11; Dianne Rinehart

Length: 755 words

Byline: Dianne Rinehart, Special to the Sun

Body

With apologies to Esquire's annual tribute, here's what I learned in 2006 . . .

Of TomKats and Brangelinas: That you can be as pretty, talented, funny, rich and babe-a-li-cious as Nicole Kidman and Jennifer Aniston, and your husband is still going to fantasize about Penelope Cruz and Angelina Jolie.

Under Where? That you can be as rich and famous as pop star Britney Spears, actress Lindsay Lohan, and nobody Paris Hilton, and, apparently, still not be able to find a clean pair of underwear when you need 'em.

Dirty Dancing: That the lowest fertility rate in the world, and a promise from women that they'd have more babies if their husbands would help them with the housework isn't, apparently, enough to get a guy in Japan to do dishes.

Drug Lords: That the emergency contraception, Plan B, is legal in this country -- unless your local pharmacist doesn't believe in it; in which case, prepare yourself for a grilling on your personal life that would make 24's Jack Bauer's anti-terrorism interrogators proud.

"A Shot in the Dark" Takes on New Meaning: That when a bunch of rich white cowboys shoot exhausted, run-ragged and terrorized prey from a helicopter in Quebec, it's bad, but when a bunch of native guys shoot exhausted, run ragged and terrorized prey from pickup trucks at night with rifles and spotlights on Vancouver Island, it's good. The Supreme Court, after all, says so, concluding for good measure -- in case we miss it -- that safety concerns do not trump native hunting rights. Perhaps the Quebec hunters have a helicopter they'd like to sell.

How We Know Newspeak is Alive and Well: That we can have 87 per cent unemployment rates on the Kashechewan reserve and still think the answer is more grants (though the government provides \$10 billion in grants a year to reserves housing less than 300,000 natives), cleaner water, and a move to slightly higher ground. Do you dare think about Economics 101: no local economy, no jobs, no pride, no chance? Or has a PC cat got your tongue?

Caught You Laughing! That Danish cartoons are only funny if certain political Muslim leaders say so -- and those guys seemingly have no sense of humour or proportion -- or respect for civil rights. Just joking! (And we thought Stephen Harper was humourless.)

The good, bad and ugly: Things I learned in 2006

That Crime Pays: Fox network and Regan-Books figured it would be a good idea to pay O.J. Simpson to tell us how he would have killed his wife, Nicole Brown-Simpson, and her friend, Ron Goldman, if he had killed them -- like we didn't already know.

That Just When You Think It's Safe to Go Out: It's not! The Lebanese successfully chase out the Syrians, only to be held hostage by Hezbollah (backed by Syria and Iran). Allied forces capture Saddam Hussein only to be thwarted by Shia and Sunni Muslim terrorists bent on annihilation of their fellow countrymen. Iran holds a conference on whether or not the Holocaust happened, and we can't point fingers at those idiots because one of our own, Shiraz Dossa, a political science professor at St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish, N.S., attended -- and spoke! (His speech is the only thing not available on line for some reason.) Iran's president supports terrorists, is working to get the bomb, and is vocal in the extreme about his desire to obliterate Israel but swaths of UN members use U.S. funding to paint America as the Evil Empire. We chase the Taliban out of Afghanistan, only to be attacked by . . . the Taliban. Has anyone read On the Beach lately?

That There's Something in the Drinking Water at Foreign Affairs: Our Foreign Affairs Minister Peter MacKay refers to ex-girlfriend and MP Belinda Stronach as a dog, and a former ambassador to Israel, Norman Spector, calls her a bitch. Good thing they're both educated men who respect women or Canada would really be embarrassed.

That One Man's Terrorist is Another's Freedom Fighter: Hamas wins elections in Palestine. Go figure.

Sex, Lies and Politics: That self-righteousness is apparently an aphrodisiac: U.S. Congressman Mark Foley fights child pornography while sending salacious pick-up notes to young government pages, and national Evangelical Association President Ted Haggert crusades against gays, while having sex and doing drugs with male gay escorts.

That "Beatlemania" has more than one meaning: "Good Beatle" Paul McCartney is accused of bashing his wife -- and to think we were worried about the seals.

That Good Deeds Were Done by Good People for Good Reasons in 2006. Really. Wishing for more of it in 2007.

Dianne Rinehart is an Ottawa-based writer.

Load-Date: January 2, 2007

The Dubious Record of Pelosi and Her Cronies

Richmond Times Dispatch (Virginia)

April 12, 2007 Thursday

Final Edition

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Section: EDITORIAL; Pg. A-13

Length: 814 words

Byline: Ross Mackenzie

Body

The insults of Nancy Pelosi and her congressional cronies exceed even Don Imus'.

With a single phrase he has disparaged black women. (Question: Will a nation properly indignant over what Imus said now display an equal anger at the denigration of women infusing, e.g., hip-hop and rap?)

The egregious Pelosi and her like-minded limousine lefties in Congress persist in (a) trying to take down a president ineligible to seek re-election and (b) building higher the obstacles to success in Iraq.

These days Speaker Pelosi is cooing about essentially two things: the multitudinous accomplishments of her House of Representatives in its first 100 days, and the landmark importance of her hegira from Congress' marbled halls to - principally - the Damascus palace of a leading financier of planetary terror.

WHAT OF the 100 days?

-The House has passed an increase in the minimum wage from \$5.15 to \$7.25 an hour and a measure to implement fully the recommendations of the Iraq Study Group. Both bills now languish in House-Senate conference.

-The House has held 100 investigatory hearings - on Iraq, on Afghanistan, on Guantanamo, on rendition, on electronic surveillance of terrorists, on U.S. attorney firings. And those hearings may be just the beginning. Notes Virginia Republican Rep. Tom Davis:

"It's going to be a problem for this administration over the next three years.... [The Democrats] are overdoing this [investigation business] with a vengeance ... trying to cripple the administration. They are not focusing, for the most part, on policies - just focusing on personalities, focusing on trying to tear things down."

-Both houses have done little about lobbying and nothing about Social Security. Democrats in both have talked much about ending the Bush tax cuts - thereby imposing history's largest tax increases. And of course both have approved measures limiting funding for American troops in Iraq and demanding the pullout of all troops before the November 2008 presidential election.

-(Apparently to stress that hostilities in Iraq are unrelated to anything, the House Armed Services Committee has banned the use of the phrase global war on terror and "colloquialisms" such as the long war in references to Iraq.

The Dubious Record of Pelosi and Her Cronies

And Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid has pledged to respond to presidential vetoes of congressional pullout demands with measures to end all funding for the troops.)

THE PELOSI hegira - she covered by a maple-leaved babushka in Damascus - recalls nothing so much as Jane Fonda astride an anti-aircraft gun-mount in Hanoi.

But this is worse. Pelosi is speaker of the House of Representatives. Not only has she undermined the morale of U.S. troops in the field. She also has delivered to our enemies messages of fractures in U.S. foreign policy - not least regarding the isolation of Syria.

In venturing from Jerusalem to Damascus, Pelosi said: "We came in friendship, hope, and determined that the road to Damascus is a road to peace." In (her words) communicating "a message from Prime Minister [Ehud] Olmert that Israel was ready to engage in peace talks," she also misrepresented the position of the Israeli government. Said Olmert later:

"What was communicated to [Syria by] the U.S. House speaker does not contain any change in the policies of Israel. . . . Syria must cease its support of terror, cease its sponsoring of the Hamas and Islamic Jihad organizations, refrain from providing weapons to Hezbollah and bringing about the destabilizing of Lebanon, cease its support of terror in Iraq, and relinquish the strategic ties it is building with the extremist regime in Iran."

THEN THERE is the Logan Act, a federal statute for more than 200 years. Logan makes it a felony for anyone not authorized by the administration to discuss with foreign governments "disputes or controversies with the United States."

Robert Turner, a former chairman of the American Bar Association's standing committee on law and national security, offers two quotes from 1798-1800 regarding the Logan Act:

Rep. Isaac Parker: "The people of the United States have given to the executive department the power to negotiate with foreign governments, and to carry on all foreign relations, and ... it is therefore an usurpation of that power for an individual to undertake to correspond with any foreign power on any dispute between the two governments...."

Rep. Albert Gallatin, Thomas Jefferson's future secretary of the Treasury: "It would be extremely improper for a member of this House to enter into any correspondence with the French Republic.... As we are not at war with France, an offense of this kind would not be high treason, yet it would be as criminal an act, as if we were at war...."

* * *

It's quite a list of dubious accomplishment by Pelosi and her congressional cronies - and all in just 100 days.

Ross Mackenzie is the retired editor of the Editorial Pages.

Graphic

COLUMN

Load-Date: July 27, 2007

**Muslim poem stirs up yet more controversy: Not meant as blanket statement
about Quebecers, author says**

The Gazette (Montreal)
February 13, 2007 Tuesday
Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A10

Length: 699 words

Byline: JEFF HEINRICH, The Gazette

Body

The poem was published three weeks ago in an Arab-language Montreal newspaper.

In it, a Muslim woman lauds the wearing of the hijab, and suggests those who fear her are godless people who've led lives of debauchery.

Its author is a man, a young Lebanese Montrealer.

He was part of a Muslim delegation that went to Herouxville on Sunday to plead for mutual respect and an end to stereotypes.

Posted in French - the language in which it was written - on the Internet, in blogs and discussion groups, the poem is being called an outrage, the work of hypocritical fanatics.

But the 22-year-old poet stands by his words, defending them as merely a made-up cry of pain by what could be any devout Muslim woman hurt by anti-Islamic prejudice in Quebec.

"She's criticizing anyone who tries to bring her down, who tells her, 'Your veil is bad for our society,' " said Haydar Moussa, who came here from Lebanon when he was 8 and speaks for the Association of Young Lebanese Muslims.

"She's saying: 'You made mistakes and I never said anything. So why criticize me for something that is very personal?' " Moussa told The Gazette.

"My veil is not a kerchief," reads the poem.

"It's my skin/My modesty, my dignity, my respect.

"And if you, old-stock immigrant/You have neither faith nor law/And you spent your youth drunk/And went from one male to the next/That's not the case for me."

Muslim poem stirs up yet more controversy: Not meant as blanket statement about Quebecers, author says

The poem was published Jan. 23 in the Montreal biweekly Sada Al Mashrek (Echo of the Orient). It ran beside a column by Najat Boughaba (writing under her nom de plume Najat Moustapha), a French literature scholar who led the Canadian Islamic Congress delegation to Herouxville.

In a TV interview last night on LCN, Boughaba, editor-in-chief of the bi-weekly, said the poem was written by a male university student left heartbroken by a failed relationship. "People somehow took from it that he is insulting all Quebec women," she said, adding she considers Quebec women her "co-citizens."

The village, 165 kilometres northeast of Montreal, is at the centre of a daily debate in Quebec society over how far to "reasonably accommodate" the demands of religious minorities.

Herouxville's town council made international headlines last month after proclaiming a "code of life" that immigrants should abide by - for example, by not stoning women. Pressure made the council drop the stoning reference at a meeting last night.

"I'm not a woman, but I'm an immigrant, and it was hurtful" to hear Herouxville's declaration and see it supported by a section of Quebec public opinion, Moussa said. "I was hurt, and I wanted others to get a taste of what I got - you understand?"

Posted on several Quebec and French websites critical of Islamic fundamentalism, including the blog of Quebec commentator Richard Martineau and a Jewish site called Judeoscope.ca, the poem has drawn a flood of criticism, much of it anti-Arab.

"The friends of Hezbollah thank Quebecers by calling their daughters sluts," is the headline of one comment posted to the online forum of LibertyVox.com.

"This poem is in bad taste," a writer named Abdelkarim Mohammed commented on Martineau's site. Most Muslim women in Montreal do not wear the hijab, he noted. "But they're feeling the pressure of veiled women who are preaching and propagandizing for the veil."

But the poet doesn't see it that way at all. The poem is about individual feelings, and is not a blanket statement about Quebecers, Moussa said. "I'm saying you can't generalize, like some people have done with us."

jheinrich@thegazette.canwest.com

- - -

Lettre a toi, a poem by Haydar Moussa

A qui de droit

Ou a la personne

Qui se sent vise

Qui t'a demande de t'exprimer

Qui t'a donne le droit de parole

Pour japper comme les chiens des rues

Pour enfin insulter

Juger et dire des choses

Insensees et maudites

Muslim poem stirs up yet more controversy: Not meant as blanket statement about Quebecers, author says

Ce n'est pas la liberte d'expression

Alors cesse de parler de liberte

Si tu ignores ses significations

Cesse de parler de democratie

Si tu te comportes comme un tyran

Cesse de parler de dignite

Si tes paroles sont

irrespectueuses

Mon voile n'est pas un mouchoir

C'est ma peau

Ma pudeur Ma dignite Mon respect

Et si toi immigrante de souche

Tu n'as ni foi ni loi

Et tu as passee ta jeunesse soule

D'un male a un autre

Ce n'est pas mon cas

Graphic

Photo: MARCOS TOWNSEND, THE GAZETTE; Preparing to head to Herouxville on Sunday to seek common ground (from left): Najat Boughaba, Mouna Diab and Haydar Moussa. "I was hurt" by the town's code, Moussa said, explaining his poem. ;

Load-Date: February 13, 2007

Guardian weekly: comment and analysis: Letters:

Guardian Weekly

September 8, 2006 Friday

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TheGuardianWeekly

Section: Pg. 4

Length: 1384 words

Body

Population time bomb

Uganda's president, Yoweri Museveni, is not alone in his ignorant, short-sighted view that his country is underpopulated and that "a bigger internal market and workforce will boost their economic prospects" (High birthrate threatens to trap Africa in cycle of poverty, September 1). A number of governments of industrialised countries believe likewise, including Australia's.

A country's GDP will usually rise if population increases, but not necessarily the GDP per capita, a rough measure of wealth or lack of it. As the number of humans press against resource limits, however, GDP per capita will certainly fall. It is only a matter of time before Australia's ever-growing population runs slap-bang into its own resource limits and it too gets trapped in a cycle of poverty.

It seems in sub-Saharan Africa today that the nightmare scenarios predicted in Robert D Kaplan's definitive 1994 article, *The Coming Anarchy*, first published in *The Atlantic Monthly*, are being realised. Kaplan warned that "crime, overpopulation, tribalism and disease are rapidly destroying the social fabric of our planet".

Kaplan took into account neither climate change nor the end of the age of cheap oil. Both these factors will reduce the carrying capacity of most countries and will, no doubt, hasten the anarchy. A number of solutions are demanded, but first and foremost must be universal access to family planning and other measures, such as female education, which bring down birthrates.

Jenny Goldie

Michelago, NSW, Australia

Steven Sinding of International Planned Parenthood Federation notes that international aid donors have shifted their focus away from curbing population growth to HIV/Aids. This is unfortunate because there is ample opportunity for combining good sexual and reproductive health policy and programmes with the response to HIV/Aids in developing countries. Both HIV/Aids and rapid population growth deserve the attention of international aid donors because they are both impediments to development.

Guardian weekly: comment and analysis: Letters:

Resources should be directed towards developing microbicides, promoting the female condom and wider availability of family planning methods that can protect women against unwanted pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases.

One insidious effect of high population growth rates in poorer countries is the creation of the "youth bulge". A high proportion of young adults - often without homes, jobs and education - is one of the main demographic stress factors associated with civil conflict and the breakdown in security. Another stress factor is rapid urban growth. When combined with economic crises or weak governance, these factors are increasingly likely to contribute to civil unrest.

Surely all this is evident in Uganda, where a brutal insurgency has caused many thousands of deaths and displaced more than 1.4 million people. The Ugandan ministry of finance obviously understands the root cause, but not the president, Yoweri Museveni, who believes that a bigger internal market will boost economic prospects. This is simply not tenable if people are too poor to buy goods and conflict disrupts normal economic activities.

Christina Richards

West Deakin, ACT, Australia

Al gores propaganda

Mark Lawson would like Al Gore's film An Inconvenient Truth to be shown on TV so it can be debated afterwards (Cinema and painful truth, August 25). Gore himself would like that, except that the mass media are under pressure from business to keep the public thinking global warming is still "controversial", despite the overwhelming global scientific consensus that heating of the world's climate due to human activity is real and dangerous.

We need a debate on what constitutes "propaganda". If Lawson sees global warming under this heading, it is clear that he doesn't live in New Orleans, the Netherlands, the Pacific or Asian countries where people are watching the sea rise and hurricanes wreak devastation and wondering where it will end. And he's not a dried-out farmer in the African Sahel whose remaining children have gone heaven knows where to escape a homeland where there is no work and nothing to eat.

Maybe he has no children, so no descendants will be around in 2030 to ask why, when there was still time to make a difference, he was still discussing the "controversy".

Isabel Best

Fighting reactionaries

Gary Younge's article was excellent (How to fight reactionaries, August 25). I have just one small observation: there is a difference between "racism" and "fundamentalism". He seemed to mix them a bit too freely.

The problem facing American blacks can only be appreciated by understanding the unique nature of the United States' origins. For one-third of its history it had legalised slavery and has remained racist to the present day.

"Fundamentalism", however, is part and parcel of the human condition. It is universal and can spontaneously arise anywhere; it transcends racism. The fact that political and religious fundamentalism is now rampant in the US simply makes American society that much more repugnant.

The common denominator that links racism with fundamentalism is that they can only thrive in a climate of ignorance and fear - hence the fact that both do so well in America. Lies, accepted by docile Americans, lies that shock Europeans, such as "Israel defeated Hizbullah" and "things are getting better in Iraq", are made so much easier by the ruling oligarchy.

Mark Warren

Guardian weekly: comment and analysis: Letters:

Biebesheim, Germany

However much I agree with Gary Younge, his article seems lacking. His analysis is well honed but his answer - that we should "offer an alternative and more attractive route" to that of the extremists - falls short of the "how to" promised in the headline.

It seems obvious to look for alternatives, but for people to take note of these - and to understand them better - they need to see positive instances in practice. It is necessary, of course, to highlight the injustices of the world - a job the Guardian does admirably well. But is it not equally important to balance them with the success stories?

It is indicative that the only positive example Younge cites - a one-sentence reminder about Mandela's non-racial democracy - is later torn apart in the same issue by a two-page commentary by Rory Carroll on all that is wrong with South Africa. With such a bias towards negative press, is it any wonder that some people grow cynical and the clarity of the reactionaries becomes so appealing?

(Dr) Jamie A Ward

Zurich, Switzerland

Thanks to Gary Younge on his penetrating article on the reasons for the rise in fundamentalism. I hope someone in the British government is reading his comments.

Daniel Joyce

London, UK

Hypocrisy of the West

Iran faces American-driven UN sanctions for the "crime" of developing nuclear power (Power and the people, September 1). But, hang on a second, we're busily mining yellowcake and promoting uranium enrichment in Australia, the US has the nuclear weapons capacity to destroy the Earth hundreds of times over, and Iran's nearby neighbour and sadly constant threat to peace and stability, Israel, has long had a semi-secret WMD arsenal, including nukes, but faces no sanctions or even diplomatic condemnation from the West.

You can sort of see why the Muslim world feels so oppressed and unjustly treated, can't you? The words "blatant hypocrisy" must spring strongly to mind when contemplating this situation - surely even for the pro-Israeli, anti-everyone else lobby that is so dominant at present.

Steven C Raine

Glenalta, South Australia

Eroticism of the gun

In linking US military obscenities with the "poverty draft" and the eroticism of weaponry, Robin Morgan quotes the training song "this is my rifle, this is my gun; one is for killing, one is for fun" (Their bodies as weapons, August 25).

I recall having to sing this ditty while running around the playing field of my British private school, carrying my rifle over my head as a lesson in distinguishing between weapons (a gun does not have rifling in its barrel). The sergeant-major of our combined cadet force in 1960 probably passed this wit on from the second world war. So it is not new, not just American and not just for poor kids, and we had at least as much smut in the dorm as there was in the military - but then we weren't co-ed.

Chris Lyle

Westmount, Quebec, Canada

Guardian weekly: comment and analysis: Letters:

Load-Date: September 22, 2006

End of Document

Layton caught in crossfire

Ottawa Citizen

September 13, 2006 Wednesday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A12; Susan Riley

Length: 780 words

Byline: Susan Riley, The Ottawa Citizen

Body

Jack Layton achieved rare harmony in the wake of the New Democratic Party's recent convention in Quebec City: He was condemned by advocates for both Muslim and Jewish Canadians, for policies endorsed by 1,500 delegates. Beyond that, however, the news isn't encouraging.

The Canada-Israel Committee took issue with two convention resolutions, one deemed too critical of Israel and another that ignored Hezbollah's terrorist activities. The motions were "irresponsible" and "dangerously misinformed," said the CIC. Then the Muslim Canadian Congress called the NDP "reckless and opportunistic" for proposing an immediate withdrawal of Canadian troops from Afghanistan.

To be fair, Middle East politics are a minefield -- not just literally -- for any mainstream party, and opinions within Jewish and Muslim communities are hardly uniform no matter what self-appointed spokesmen say. Layton's larger problem is persuading the general public that his policies -- particularly on Afghanistan -- are sensible and morally sound.

He has much work to do. His focus so far has been on the speedy withdrawal of Canada's 2,200 troops by February. He accompanies this demand with boilerplate about refocusing the mission on development and diplomacy -- an excellent idea that would probably find wide support. But he doesn't say how this happy end will be achieved, nor does he seem too concerned about leaving our NATO allies to pick up the military slack while our troops are off doing good. He is too busy condemning George W. Bush's clumsy and dangerous tactics -- preaching, if polls are to be believed, to the converted.

There is probably a significant constituency of Canadians who agree with Layton that the military campaign is, ultimately, futile, that peace will not be achieved without talking to the Taliban, that you do not win the hearts of Afghans -- or promote Western values -- by bombing their homes and villages. Many voters, including traditional NDP supporters, will also agree that Canada can't just walk away, that it has an obligation to help one of the poorest nations in the world rebuild, to encourage equality for women and universal education -- the exact rationale cleverly advanced by Prime Minister Stephen Harper in defence of Canada's mission.

But Layton has to tackle, persuasively, the major argument in favour of a continued military campaign: that no rebuilding can take place while the Taliban, or warlords, control large tracts of the country. He and other advocates of early withdrawal also have to explain how to justify any such move to our allies.

Layton caught in crossfire

Could Canada, for instance, redirect much of the \$4 billion earmarked for the military campaign in Kandahar to rebuilding in the relatively stable Kabul area and further north? As to the allies, Canada could argue that it has suffered more casualties proportionately than almost any other nation, that it has done its part and it is time for Germany, Italy, Turkey, Spain -- four countries that yesterday refused a call from NATO for 2,500 new troops -- to take the reins.

While the NDP has been slow to defend and explain its controversial stance, Harper is escalating his marketing efforts -- using the anniversary of Sept. 11, and a visit by U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, to sell the Afghan mission to an uneasy public. Next week the offensive continues with a state visit by Afghan president Hamid Karzai. Harper's appeal to country, God and duty is similar to Bush's, but his argument is less problematic: There is a link between Sept. 11 and Afghanistan, where al-Qaeda incubated, and none with Iraq.

Even the Liberals, distracted and divided, threaten to outflank the NDP on Afghanistan. Bob Rae, for example, says Canada should not pull out unilaterally but press NATO to re-evaluate the mission. "We can't just snap our fingers and say this week that we lost too many troops and we have to come home," he says. Ouch.

In Quebec City, Layton dismissed Rae as "a failed one-time Ontario premier, who, it turns out, is also a turncoat." Double ouch -- an indication, perhaps, that Layton, who usually avoids personal attacks, fears Rae. He should. As Liberal leader, Rae could poach centre-left votes from the NDP; he has already stolen its one-time "star" candidate Paul Summerville, a former Bay Street economist.

Before Parliament resumes next week, the NDP caucus will be meeting to flesh out its Afghanistan policy. It also has to keep a nervous eye on the Greens. A recent poll has them at 10 per cent and the NDP back at 14 per cent. Little wonder Layton is looking a bit twitchy these days.

Susan Riley's column appears Monday, Wednesday and Friday. E-mail: sriley@thecitizen.canwest.com

Load-Date: September 13, 2006

Briefs

Philadelphia Daily News
January 30, 2007 Tuesday

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Section: NATIONAL; Pg. 11

Length: 810 words

Body

Palestinian suicide bomber

kills 3 Israelis in beach town

EILAT, Israel - A Palestinian suicide bomber killed three Israelis at a bakery yesterday in the first such attack inside the country in nine months, and the two radical groups that claimed to have sent him said they were trying to end weeks of Palestinian infighting by taking aim at Israel instead.

The bombing was praised by the Palestinians' governing Hamas movement as legitimate resistance - a position that was sure to hurt efforts to end a crippling economic boycott imposed by the international community.

Israeli security chiefs met last night to discuss a response. "This is a grave incident, it's an escalation and we shall treat it as such," said Defense Minister Amir Peretz.

It was the first suicide bombing in this Red Sea resort of 50,000 at Israel's southern tip near the Jordanian and Egyptian borders. The town is a popular getaway for Israelis because it has been insulated from Israeli-Palestinian violence.

New U.S. commander sees

more attacks from Taliban

FORWARD OPERATING BASE SHARANA, Afghanistan - The incoming commander of U.S. troops in Afghanistan said yesterday he expects Taliban militants to launch more suicide attacks this year than in 2006, when militants set off a record 139 such bombings.

Maj. Gen. David M. Rodriguez, commander of the 82nd Airborne Division, said military leaders expect an increase in all kinds of attacks as the weather gets warmer.

"We're expecting an increase in the suicide bombers and some of the other tactics that they have believed are successful," he said. "So we expect to see that as well as the normal stand-off type attacks and harassing kind of attacks on Afghan government officials, Afghan nationals, security forces, as well as coalition forces."

Briefs

Rodriguez, who takes command from Maj. Gen. Benjamin Freakley on Friday, traveled to the eastern province of Paktika next to the Pakistan border yesterday to be briefed by military leaders and the provincial governor.

U.S. on sidelines as Iran,

Saudis work on Lebanon

BEIRUT, Lebanon - In an unusual collaboration that could complicate American policy in the region, Iran and Saudi Arabia have been mediating an agreement to end Lebanon's violent political crisis, the *New York Times* reports.

Leaders of Hezbollah, the Iranian-backed party trying to overthrow Lebanon's government, have recently visited the Saudi king in Riyadh, according to officials who attended the meeting. And Prince Bandar bin Sultan, the Saudi chief security adviser, has met with his Iranian counterpart, Ali Larijani, in Riyadh and Tehran to try to stop Lebanon's slide into civil war.

"The only hope is for the Iranians and Saudis to go further in easing the situation and bringing people back to the negotiating table," said Radwan Sayyed, an adviser to Prime Minister Fouad Siniora.

The Saudi-Iranian efforts have put Washington in an awkward position, since it is trying to reduce Iran's regional influence. But since a stable Lebanon is also an American priority, American officials have watched the efforts without interfering.

Another Palestinian truce

goes by the boards in Gaza

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip- Palestinian infighting raged in the Gaza Strip this morning despite a cease-fire declaration by warring Hamas and Fatah factions aimed at ending factional clashes that have left more than 60 dead in the past two months.

Gunfire and explosions were audible in downtown Gaza City as gunmen from the rival factions ignored the cease-fire, reached at a midnight meeting between Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh of Hamas and a representative of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas of Fatah.

The truce was to have gone into effect at 3 a.m. local time.

Calling women 'birth machines'

gets Japan official a reprimand

TOKYO- Prime Minister Shinzo Abe rebuked Japan's health minister yesterday for calling women "birth machines," a remark that has caused an outcry in the country.

But Abe dismissed calls for the embattled minister to resign.

"I reprimanded him severely," Abe said, adding that he saw no reason for Health Minister Hakuo Yanagisawa to step down.

"From now on, I hope he will remain fully devoted in his job and obtain the people's understanding."

Abe's comments came just hours after a group of female lawmakers called for Yanagisawa's removal.

The health minister triggered outrage over the weekend by describing women as "birth machines" in a speech on the country's falling birthrate.

He later retracted the remarks.

Briefs

"The number of women between the ages of 15 and 50 is fixed. The number of birth machines (and) devices is fixed, so all we can ask is that they do their best per head," Yanagisawa was reported as saying in the speech Saturday.

The government has been scrambling to implement measures to persuade couples to have more children amid concerns about the country's shrinking population.

Daily News wire services

Load-Date: January 30, 2007

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**THE SILENCE THAT KILLS; ARABS AND MUSLIMS MUST SPEAK OUT
AGAINST THE ATROCITIES COMMITTED IN THEIR NAMES**

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (Pennsylvania)

March 7, 2007 Wednesday

SOONER EDITION

Copyright 2007 P.G. Publishing Co.

Section: EDITORIAL; Pg. B-7

Length: 731 words

Byline: Thomas L. Friedman

Body

On Feb. 20, The Associated Press reported from Afghanistan that a suicide attacker disguised as a health worker blew himself up near "a crowd of about 150 people who had gathered for a ribbon-cutting ceremony to open an emergency ward at the main government hospital in the city of Khost." A few days later, at a Baghdad college, a female Sunni suicide bomber blew herself up amid students who were ready to sit for exams, killing 40 people.

Stop and think for a moment how sick this is. Then listen to the silence. The Bush team is mute. It says nothing, because it has no moral authority. No one would listen. President Bush is losing a PR war to people who blow up emergency wards. Europeans are mute, lost in their delusion that this is all George Bush's and Tony Blair's fault.

But worst of all, Muslims, the very people whose future is being killed, are also mute. No surge can work in Iraq unless we have a "moral surge," a counternihilism strategy that delegitimizes suicide bombers. The most important restraints are cultural, societal and religious. It takes a village -- but the Arab-Muslim village today is largely silent. The best are indifferent or intimidated; the worst quietly applaud the Sunnis who kill Shiites.

Nobody in the Arab world "has the guts to say that what is happening in Iraq is wrong -- that killing schoolkids is wrong," said Mamoun Fandy, director of the Middle East program at the International Institute for Strategic Studies. "People somehow think that killing Iraqis is good because it will stick it to the Americans, so Arabs are undermining the American project in Iraq by killing themselves."

The world worries about highly enriched uranium, but "the real danger is highly enriched Islam," Mr. Fandy added. That is, "highly enriched Sunnism" and "highly enriched Shiism" that eats away at the Muslim state, the way Hezbollah is trying to do in Lebanon or the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt or al-Qaida everywhere.

One result: There's no legitimate, decent, accepted source of Arab-Muslim authority today, no center of gravity "for people to anchor their souls in," Mr. Fandy said. As a result, the suicide bombers go uncondemned or subtly extolled.

Arab nationalist media like Al-Jazeera "practically tell bin Laden and his followers, 'Bravo,' " Mr. Fandy said. "The message sent to bin Laden is that 'You are doing to the West what we want done, but we can't do it.' This is the hidden message that the West is not privy to. Unless extreme pressure is applied on Muslims all over the world to come up with counter-fatwas and pronounce these men as pariahs, very little will happen in fighting terrorism.

THE SILENCE THAT KILLS ARABS AND MUSLIMS MUST SPEAK OUT AGAINST THE ATROCITIES COMMITTED IN THEIR NAMES

"The battleground in the Arab world today is not in Palestine or Lebanon, but in the classrooms and newsrooms," Mr. Fandy concluded. That's where "the software programmers" reside who create symbolic images and language glorifying suicide bombers and make their depraved acts look legitimate. Only other Arab-Muslim programmers can defeat them.

Occasionally an honest voice rises, providing a glimmer of hope that others will stand up. The MEMRI translation Web site (memri.org) just posted a poem called "When," from Saudi author Wajeha al-Huwaider that was posted on Arab reform sites:

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"When you cannot find a single garden in your city, but there is a mosque on every corner -- you know that you are in an Arab country.

When you see people living in the past with all the trappings of modernity -- do not be surprised, you are in an Arab country.

When religion has control over science -- you can be sure that you are in an Arab country...

When you see the ruler transformed into a demigod who never dies or relinquishes his power, and nobody is permitted to criticize -- do not be too upset, you are in an Arab country.

When you find that the large majority of people oppose freedom and find joy in slavery -- do not be too distressed, you are in an Arab country.

When you hear the clerics saying that democracy is heresy, but seizing every opportunity provided by democracy to grab high positions -- do not be surprised, you are in an Arab country.

When you discover that a woman is worth half of what a man is worth, or less -- do not be surprised, you are in an Arab country.

When land is more important than human beings -- you are in an Arab country.

When fear constantly lives in the eyes of the people -- you can be certain you are in an Arab country."

Notes

Thomas L. Friedman is a syndicated columnist for The New York Times.

Load-Date: March 8, 2007

Truce fails to curb clashes

The Toronto Star

December 18, 2006 Monday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A06

Length: 779 words

Byline: Mitch Potter, Toronto Star

Dateline: JERUSALEM

Body

Control of the Palestinian streets disintegrated further early today despite a hastily cobbled truce to end spiralling violence between the rival Hamas and Fatah movements.

Gun battles raged into the morning hours at the home of a senior Fatah figure in the Gaza Strip, capping a weekend that saw militant loyalists from both sides threaten to turn an internal political war into a contest of mortars and bullets on the ground.

One day after a risky and controversial promise to end the impasse with early elections, President Mahmoud Abbas yesterday pleaded for calm, asking Palestinians to reclaim their national spirit and "avoid provocations intended to destroy the democracy and blow up the situation."

Ahmed Baher, acting speaker of the Palestinian Parliament and a leading Hamas figure, echoed the call for restraint, urging "all armed people to leave the streets and stop fighting. We ask people not to use weapons to solve political issues and not to take the political issues to the street."

The two sides later issued a formal ceasefire statement, saying all armed Palestinian factions are to withdraw to their previous positions and allow for a period of renewed calm.

But in threatening early elections Saturday, Abbas appeared to set a countdown to further confrontation.

Most of yesterday's clashes played out in the Hamas stronghold of Gaza, where the day began with a Hamas-led assault on a Force 17 Presidential Guard detachment loyal to Abbas.

The Fatah-backed Force 17 countered later by seizing control of two nearby Hamas-controlled Palestinian government buildings as part of an operation to secure a broad footprint around the presidential headquarters in Gaza.

At least four Palestinians were killed in the clashes, including a 19-year-old **female** bystander. Among the wounded were a 10-year-old girl and French journalist Didier Francois, 46, who sustained a bullet wound to his leg during a clash in Gaza.

Later, at least three mortar shells were fired toward the presidential complex, one falling short and injuring two Palestinian civilians, in the first attack of its kind since the internal violence first flared earlier this year.

Truce fails to curb clashes

Much of it stems from almost daily street demonstrations as the rival factions flex their military muscle. The clashes intensified after an embittered Abbas spoke on television Saturday, threatening early elections as the only remaining answer to more than six months of fruitless efforts to persuade the rejectionist Hamas movement to relinquish some of its power in a so-called national unity government.

Israeli officials have said little about the degenerating Palestinian situation, with their own government weakened by widespread public anger over the results of what many regard as a failed and futile summertime war with the Lebanese Hezbollah movement.

But many Israeli observers anticipate further disintegration on the Palestinian side, noting that in calling for an early vote, Abbas may be inviting a third crisis - a constitutional showdown - to add to the dire economic and security situations.

"Essentially, what we are seeing is a collapse on the Palestinian side and I am very skeptical of their ability to re-establish their government," said Gidi Grinstein, founder and president of the Reut Institute, a Tel Aviv based think-tank.

"They have a constitution crisis on their hands because a few years ago they changed their laws to compromise the presidency, then held by Yasser Arafat, and empower the premiership, then held by Mahmoud Abbas," said Grinstein.

"So now today you have Abbas as president, holding these compromised powers, and Hamas with the premiership. That means every major aspect of governance on the Palestinian side, including the question of who has the authority to call an election, is subject to dual questions."

Many saw the election threat as a final act of political brinksmanship on the part of Abbas, who is hoping to pressure Hamas back to a final round of negotiations. He is eager to find a power-sharing formula to end U.S.-led sanctions on international financial aid to the Hamas-led Palestinian Authority, which has failed to meet its \$180-million monthly payroll in each of the past nine months.

Palestinian Central Election Commission officials yesterday declined comment on the legality of early elections, which in any event appear unfeasible for at least the next four months.

Abbas has previously said he would not stand for re-election and it remained unclear whether his Fatah movement can count on his renewed candidacy. A weekend opinion poll by the independent Near East Consulting firm of Ramallah indicated the rival factions are virtually tied in public support.

Graphic

HATEM MOUSSA ap Supporters of the Fatah movement brandish weapons and carry a portrait of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas as they march in the Jabaliya refugee camp in the northern Gaza Strip yesterday.

Load-Date: December 18, 2006

***U.S. move means Canada stuck in Afghanistan; We have no excuse after
Bush commits more troops to war***

The Toronto Star

February 17, 2007 Saturday

Copyright 2007 Toronto Star Newspapers, Ltd.

Section: NATIONAL REPORT; Pg. F02

Length: 738 words

Body

George W. Bush has breathed new life into the Afghan war. With his decision to send 3,500 more U.S. troops to that country, he has also made it more difficult for Canada to get out.

This is the real significance of the U.S. president's speech on Thursday. Bush also forgot to mention Canada when going through a list of nations contributing troops to the conflict. But that's irrelevant.

What's important is that the Americans are turning their attention back to Afghanistan.

That wasn't the original plan. A little over a year ago, U.S. commanders spoke of drawing down their troop strength there from what was then about 21,000 soldiers.

The idea at that time was that America would hand off Afghanistan to allies like Canada in order to focus on Iraq. To that end, the U.S. put the bulk of its troops in Afghanistan under NATO command.

But that was before the last congressional elections, when Bush still thought he had a free hand in Iraq. It was also when he thought he could still pacify that chaotic country.

Now, with Democrats controlling the U.S. Congress, Republican Bush is no longer free to do whatever he wants. What's also become clear is that he cannot succeed in Iraq.

All political leaders seek legacies. So far, that of George W. Bush does not look stellar. He risks being remembered as the first U.S. president to lose a war he deliberately started.

For a man who styles himself a wartime president, this must be difficult to bear. How could someone who revels in the title of commander-in-chief leave office without winning at least one war, somewhere?

For a while, it looked like Iran would provide that war. Hence, Washington backed Israel's invasion of Lebanon last summer, in the hope that Tel Aviv could neutralize Iran's ***Hezbollah*** allies there.

The Israelis botched that task, but Bush remained fixated on Iran. He tried the old weapons of mass destruction gambit, arguing that Iran's attempts to develop nuclear capability made it a world threat.

In the end, not even the Europeans bought that story.

U.S. move means Canada stuck in Afghanistan We have no excuse after Bush commits more troops to war

Then, Washington accused Iran of targeting U.S. troops in Iraq. That culminated in a bizarre but unconvincing show-and-tell in Baghdad this week, where anonymous U.S. officials attempted to prove, from serial numbers on bomb fragments, that Iran was evil.

That didn't go anywhere either. Even Americans were skeptical.

Bush's remarkable U-turn on North Korea can be also explained in terms of his desire to clear the decks before embarking on another war. After years of insisting that America wouldn't bribe North Korea to give up its nuclear weaponry, the U.S. president this week suddenly decided to do just that.

The North Korean turnaround offended some of the president's more conservative partisans. They missed the point. By neutralizing North Korea, Bush ensured that he could better focus American military attention elsewhere.

But where? Was Bush really serious about taking on Iran? Or could he find a war somewhere else that was easier.

His speech on Thursday suggests the latter. Bush, it seems, has rediscovered Afghanistan. His Democratic opponents routinely hector him for not putting enough troops into that country. Now, he is taking their advice.

Conventional wisdom suggests that this is good news for the Canadian and other NATO forces already fighting there. The theory goes that if America finally puts all of its muscle into Afghanistan, the Taliban insurgents will surely be defeated.

In fact, this may not be true. The old Soviet Union adhered to the same theory when it invaded Afghanistan in force in 1979 to bolster a client government which - like that of current President Hamid Karzai - was trying to modernize the country, battle obscurantist insurgents and improve the lot of women. History will show that the Soviets lost.

History also suggests that an American public sick of having their soldiers killed in one far-off foreign country will not necessarily welcome more military deaths in another.

But all of this is for the future. The story now is that the Americans are coming.

Before Bush's speech, even the hawks in Canada had a plausible excuse for withdrawing from Afghanistan. As a Senate committee report put it this week, if other allies aren't willing to ante up more troops, why should Canadians continue to die there?

Now, our biggest ally has stepped up. So, we have no excuse.

Unless Canadians are prepared to rethink the whole rationale of this war, we are fated to remain.

Load-Date: February 17, 2007

Border crossing

The Age (Melbourne, Australia)

February 2, 2007 Friday

First Edition

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Section: ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE; Pg. 5

Length: 784 words

Byline: CRAIG MATHIESON

Body

For the makers of Encounter Point, peace can only come through knowledge and open dialogue, writes Craig Mathieson.

IT WAS not a day for mere entertainment. On July 12 last year, as the Israeli army was beginning its incursions into southern Lebanon in a bid to cripple the Hezbollah organisation, the producers of the documentary Encounter Point held a public screening as part of the Jerusalem Film Festival. The documentary follows the efforts of several grassroots peace campaigners, from within the Israeli and Palestinian communities, to promote dialogue and non-violence as the first step towards a lasting solution. Amid such an entrenched conflict even the picture's existence was provocative to some.

"We'd done a lot of outreach work in advance to bring Palestinians into Israel, because they needed to apply for a travel permit to see the film," recalls Julia Bacha, who filmed much of Encounter Point and served as one of the producers alongside her colleagues from the non-profit Just Vision group. "We'd also done outreach with the Orthodox Jewish community, so there was a very diverse crowd in the audience."

There was tension in the room before the screening began, but afterwards, when the movie's subjects were invited on to the stage, they received a five-minute standing ovation. Then the producers called for questions from the floor. An Israeli man stood up and said the filmmakers were obviously pro-Palestinian because they had used the phrase "occupied territories" in the film, not Judea and Samaria, which he felt was correct. Then a Palestinian woman rose and said the filmmakers were obviously pro-Israeli because they hadn't shown enough civilian population suffering in the West Bank and Gaza.

If it appeared to be an intractable stand-off, Bacha wasn't concerned. This was the film's target audience and she knew that just getting them together, to sit in the same room and acknowledge each other's presence, was a definite start.

"This is the people we want, because both sides can see that the other side had to experience as many difficult moments as they did," Bacha explains. "That opens the way for dialogue, and that's what happened - 300 people literally went for a cigarette afterwards and they end up talking for hours."

That's the kind of breakthrough documented in Encounter Point, which is screening as part of ACMI's Focus on Land & Freedom season. The Brazilian-born Bacha and her female colleagues from Just Vision - Israeli-Canadian Ronit Avni, Palestinian Joline Makhoul and American Nahanni Rous - spent seven months trailing people who work

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at the coalface of the conflict, trying to make a difference one convert at a time as they're constantly surrounded by the detritus, both physical and mental, of the numerous clashes.

Those they trailed include Ali Abu Awwad, a Palestinian advocate of non-violence who'd previously been shot in the leg by an Israeli settler and spent four years in a military prison, and Robi Damelin, whose son was serving with the Israeli Army when he was shot dead by a Palestinian sniper. Both are now members of the Bereaved Families Forum, one of many groups that, according to Bacha, are starting to influence the public perceptions on either side of the barbed wire and concrete walls that starkly divide the two groups.

"It's hard to quantify, but there are polls that show that 60 to 70 per cent of Israelis and Palestinians are ready to sit down and talk and compromise, but each side thinks they're ready to talk and that the other side isn't," she says.

Bacha describes herself as "a true believer in knowledge". Born and raised in Rio de Janeiro, with great-grandparents on her father's side from Lebanon, she moved to New York at the age of 17 to study Iranian history and then Middle Eastern politics at Columbia University. Motivated to learn more and put her studies to quantifiable use after the 9/11 attacks, she helped make Control Room, the 2004 documentary about the Arabic cable news network Al-Jazeera.

"The more you know, the better," Bacha declares. "There's a lot of ignorance when people say that (the Israeli-Palestinian) conflict is an ancient one and that there's no solution. It's too easy to say that and wash your hands. This is a political problem that can be answered with a political solution."

The success of Control Room taught Bacha that producing the piece is not enough. Their motto is: "The work starts when the lights come up and film ends." Encounter Point has been playing at numerous film festivals internationally to attract publicity, and the associated websites (encounterpoint.com and justvision.org) can channel the interest of those motivated to play a part after seeing the movie.

Graphic

PHOTO

Load-Date: July 3, 2007

End of Document

Qaeda's Successful Recruiting Efforts

New York Sun (Archive)

January 19, 2007 Friday

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Section: FOREIGN; Pg. 7

Length: 775 words

Byline: STEVEN STALINSKY

Body

In response to reports that recruitment into America's armed forces is at its lowest level in years, Secretary of Defense Gates has called for increasing the Army and Marine corps by 92,000 troops over the next five years.

On the other hand, Al Qaeda and other Islamist terrorist groups seem to have an unlimited pool of recruits. This is because their followers are brainwashed - through messages that they receive in schools and mosques as well as on television - that if they give their lives for jihad, they will be rewarded in the afterlife with 72 black-eyed virgins.

As Sheik Ahmad Qattan explained on Saudi Iqra TV on January 3, 2005, "The martyrdom seeker ... these heroes who stand in line and await their turn ... to sacrifice themselves for the sake of their God's religion ... seek the ... longest life in the heavens. They want to join their brothers, the martyrs, and to reap martyr's rewards. ... He is married off to 72 black-eyed women."

Al Qaeda in Iraq, an organization led by the late Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi, published a statement addressed to America on January 26, 2005, which discussed what is promised to its recruits: "We have men who love death as you love life. Our fallen [go to] heaven, and yours - to hell. While your reinforcements come from the Jews and the Christians, ours come from the Blessed and Lofty Allah. ... Oh the gardens [of Eden], prepare yourselves; oh black-eye [virgins], approach. ... The martyrs' wedding is at hand." A year and a half later, Zarqawi's clan celebrated his wedding in Jordan after he was killed.

During the second intifada, the Palestinian Arab press frequently reported the death of suicide bombers by printing wedding announcements and "bridal" pictures.

One announcement read, "In the name of Allah, all merciful, all the compassionate, do not consider who died for the sake of Allah as dead. Rather as alive, the Martyr, Ali-Khadha Al-Yassini, who was wedded to the blackeyed virgin in the Garden of Eternity on the morning of September 16, 2001. Congratulations to him for his wedding."

A writer for the official Palestinian Arab daily Al-Hayat Al-Jadida, reported the death of another "groomsman" on October 4, 2001: "The mother of Wail Awad, did not plan on holding a second wedding, after his marriage on August 10, 2001, to his fiancée in a simple ceremony. But yesterday was Wail's real wedding day, and the angels of the Merciful married him ... to 'the black-eyed,' as all around [them] rose the cries of joy."

The mother of a Hezbollah "martyr" Bassel Ala' Al-din gave an interview to Al-Manar TV on May 22, 2005. "Bassel had a wish," she said. "Whenever I told him I wanted to marry him off, he would say, 'Yes, mother, you'll marry me

Qaeda's Successful Recruiting Efforts

off like this in paradise.' And indeed, the martyr Bassel got married in paradise. I congratulate the black-eyed virgins who took Bassel from me."

Earlier this week, the Global Islamic Media Front posted on Islamist Web sites a 20-page book titled "The Desire of the Souls for the Women of Paradise." The book includes excerpts from medieval Islamic sources focusing on the characteristics of the virgins who await those who enter paradise after becoming martyrs.

Chants of "Oh, Muslim, arise, there is a black-eyed virgin in paradise. ... We will return to Kabul. ... Oh, blessings of the all-merciful, the Sunna after the Koran, there is a black-eyed virgin in paradise" were heard on the Islamist Web site Tajded.net, which posted footage of Taliban military commander Mullah Dadallah's visit to an Al Qaeda base in Afghanistan on December 28.

The video, produced by Al-Sahab Productions, then referred to the September 11, 2001, attacks and the black-eyed virgins who were awarded to the hijackers: "Oh, bin Laden, there is a black-eyed virgin in paradise. ... The plane flew above the clouds, and their tower was destroyed in two strikes. ... The first strike awoke the sleeping, and the second divided the people into two camps. ... On the one hand, the camp of Bush and the leaders of darkness, and on the other hand, the camp of the sheik, with their heads held high. ... Whoever sold his life and his property will buy the blessing of the black-eyed virgins." Islamist Web sites, mosques, and some programming on Arab TV are all helping to recruit young Muslims to jihad by celebrating the 72 black-eyed virgins, nothing stipulates that they must martyr themselves only in the Middle East. According to their narrative on September 11, all the hijackers in America got to enjoy their "wedding day."

This should serve as a reminder of what we are facing daily in the war on terror.

Mr. Stalinsky is the executive director of the Middle East Media Research Institute.

Load-Date: January 19, 2007

Under Muslim feet

University Wire

February 7, 2007 Wednesday

Copyright 2007 The Dartmouth via U-Wire

Section: COLUMN

Length: 768 words

Byline: By David Day, The Dartmouth; **SOURCE:** Dartmouth

Dateline: HANOVER, N.H.

Body

On Feb. 1, 2007, British police arrested nine Muslim men in Birmingham for their alleged plan to kidnap and behead a Muslim British serviceman. A large segment of the Muslim population stood up in defense of these men, to an extent that Muslim clerics throughout the country needed to call for calm. Many feel the Muslim community is being unfairly targeted.

However, a Muslim community leader, Shabir Hussein, had a different take on the issue. Regarding the notion of there being terrorists in their midst, he told the BBC, "The [Muslim] community is under stress. They do not know where their children are, they do not know what they do. At the mosque we are saying 'open your eyes, look underneath your feet.'"

I found this to be a telling statement of the beliefs of moderate Muslims: They are not aware or are apathetic about radical behavior in their communities.

We have all heard that terrorists who kill innocents in the name of Allah are not real Muslims and are breaking the fundamental beliefs found in the Quran. We also know that Muslims at their dogmatic core are peaceful, caring individuals.

We also realize that many Muslims, even moderate Muslims, are easily incensed by any assault on their religion or prophet from foreign sources. The Jyllands-Posten cartoons depicting the prophet Muhammad caused such uproar in the Islamic world that Danish embassies were set ablaze in Syria and Lebanon and dozens were killed. Theo van Gogh created a film dealing with domestic violence in Islam and was assassinated by an extremist in Amsterdam. Salman Rushdie and his "Satanic Verses" brought a fatwa on his head causing him to live in fear for years.

However, none of these so-called offenses about the Muslim religion made by private citizens in free nations should even compare to the blasphemy that is being perpetrated in the name of Islam, Allah and the Prophet by the terrorist murderers and bigots of the Islamic world.

I once lived in Israel and can remember the feeling of sitting next to old women on a bus and fearing that we would not make it to our destination. If we had not, would our families have received a sincere apology from the Muslim world or would they have watched a terrorist organization gleefully claim responsibility?

Millions of sick "Muslims" stand under the flags of al Qaeda, Hamas, the al-Aqsa Martyr's Brigade, Muslim Brotherhood and Hezbollah, defaming the Muslim people and their faith for all the world to see. Suicide bombings

Under Muslim feet

against civilian targets in America, England, Spain, Italy, Israel and Iraq shame Islam in the eyes of men and God. Radicals and criminals have hijacked their religion from right under their noses. Yet, the Muslim world remains eerily silent.

We do not see the protests in the street condemning these men. Are these men not impostors blowing up children in the name of Allah?

We do not know of any respected Muslim religious leaders who can tear radicalism from the minds of Muslim youth. Where are the real Muslims? Why worry about cartoons from Denmark when your neighbor's son may be a suicide bomber?

What we see are the leaders of Islamic states and communities becoming more and more radical. Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad wants to wipe Israel off the map. Just last month, New South Wales cleric Ismail Yusanato called for a holy war to bring about an Islamic state in Australia. Hamas places suicide bomber's portraits in town squares for impressionable Palestinian teenagers to lovingly admire.

Perhaps it is fear of reprisal that keeps moderate, sensible Muslims from vocally expressing their feelings of disgust. Indeed, it was just that fear that the recently arrested Muslims in Birmingham were trying to exploit: If you work with the "infidels," you will be killed.

It doesn't matter whether it is fear or apathy that keeps the real Muslims silent. They are unable or unwilling to control the radical elements within their own nations, communities and families.

Members of the Islamic faith in the Western world often feel they are treated unfairly at airports and loathe the looks of suspicion they may receive walking down the street. They blame American foreign policy, British police, Israel, Western decadence, the media, authors, the Pope, filmmakers and cartoonists. Most need to look no farther than in their mosque or out their window.

There is a growing tide of radicalism within the Muslim faith that threatens the entire world, yet most Muslims choose to ignore it. It is simply evidence of the hypocrisy that is destroying the good name of the Muslim faith underneath their feet.

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Load-Date: February 7, 2007

Not-So-Strange Bedfellow

The New York Times

January 31, 2007 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2007 The New York Times Company

Section: Section A; Column 5; Editorial Desk; Pg. 19

Length: 763 words

Byline: By THOMAS L. FRIEDMAN

Body

Here's a little foreign policy test. I am going to describe two countries -- "Country A" and "Country B" -- and you tell me which one is America's ally and which one is not.

Let's start: Country A actively helped the U.S. defeat the Taliban in Afghanistan and replace it with a pro-U.S. elected alliance of moderate Muslims. Country A regularly holds sort-of-free elections. Country A's women vote, hold office, are the majority of its university students and are fully integrated into the work force.

On 9/11, residents of Country A were among the very few in the Muslim world to hold spontaneous pro-U.S. demonstrations. Country A's radical president recently held a conference about why the Holocaust never happened -- to try to gain popularity. A month later, Country A held nationwide elections for local councils, and that same president saw his candidates get wiped out by voters who preferred more moderate conservatives. Country A has a strategic interest in the success of the pro-U.S., Shiite-led, elected Iraqi government. Although it's a Muslim country right next to Iraq, Country A has never sent any suicide bombers to Iraq, and has long protected its Christians and Jews. Country A has more bloggers per capita than any country in the Muslim Middle East.

The brand of Islam practiced by Country A respects women, is open to reinterpretation in light of modernity and rejects Al Qaeda's nihilism.

Now Country B: Country B gave us 15 of the 19 hijackers on 9/11. Country B does not allow its women to drive, vote or run for office. It is illegal in Country B to build a church, synagogue or Hindu temple. Country B helped finance the Taliban.

Country B's private charities help sustain Al Qaeda. Young men from Country B's mosques have been regularly recruited to carry out suicide bombings in Iraq. Mosques and charities in Country B raise funds to support the insurgency in Iraq. Country B does not want the elected, Shiite-led government in Iraq to succeed. While Country B's leaders are pro-U.S., polls show many of its people are hostile to America -- some of them celebrated on 9/11. The brand of Islam supported by Country B and exported by it to mosques around the world is the most hostile to modernity and other faiths.

Question: Which country is America's natural ally: A or B?

Country A is, of course. Country A is Iran. Country B is Saudi Arabia.

Not-So-Strange Bedfellow

Don't worry. I know that Iran has also engaged in terrorism against the U.S. and that the Saudis have supported America at key times in some areas. The point I'm trying to make, though, is that the hostility between Iran and the U.S. since the overthrow of the shah in 1979 is not organic. By dint of culture, history and geography, we actually have a lot of interests in common with Iran's people. And I am not the only one to notice that.

Because the U.S. has destroyed Iran's two biggest enemies -- the Taliban and Saddam -- "there is now a debate in Iran as to whether we should continue to act so harshly against the Americans," Mohammad Hossein Adeli, Iran's former ambassador to London, told me at Davos. "There is now more readiness for dialogue with the United States."

More important, when people say, "The most important thing America could do today to stabilize the Middle East is solve the Israel-Palestine conflict," they are wrong. It's second. The most important thing would be to resolve the Iran-U.S. conflict.

That would change the whole Middle East and open up the way to solving the Israel-Palestine conflict, because Iran is the key backer of Hamas, Islamic Jihad, Hezbollah and Syria. Iran's active help could also be critical for stabilizing Iraq.

This is why I oppose war with Iran. I favor negotiations. Isolating Iran like Castro's Cuba has produced only the same result as in Cuba: strengthening Iran's Castros. But for talks with Iran to bear fruit, we have to negotiate with Iran with leverage.

How do we get leverage? Make it clear that Iran can't push us out of the gulf militarily; bring down the price of oil, which is key to the cockiness of Iran's hard-line leadership; squeeze the hard-liners financially. But all this has to be accompanied with a clear declaration that the U.S. is not seeking regime change in Iran, but a change of behavior, that the U.S. wants to immediately restore its embassy in Tehran and that the first thing it will do is grant 50,000 student visas for young Iranians to study at U.S. universities.

Just do that -- and then sit back and watch the most amazing debate explode inside Iran. You can bet the farm on it.

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Load-Date: January 31, 2007

Diane Sawyer, apple polisher

Pittsburgh Tribune Review

February 11, 2007 Sunday

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Length: 806 words

Byline: L. Brent Bozell III

Body

Never try to say ABC anchor Diane Sawyer hasn't been tough on oppressors. In one interview in 1998, she stared one in the face and said: "You've been compared to Saddam Hussein. Nero. To Torquemada, who was head of the Inquisition."

Oh, forgive me. That wasn't a dictator she was questioning. It was Kenneth Starr, the independent counsel investigating Bill Clinton's lying under oath.

This was a common practice for ABC at the time. Their Web site had an infamous instant poll asking if there was an "Ig-Nobel" prize, who should win it? The choices were Saddam, Slobodan Milosevic, Osama bin Laden and ... Linda Tripp.

So how do ABC news anchors like Sawyer perform when they land "exclusive" interviews with actual dictators? The rings of international thugs are kissed for the privilege. Their obvious lack of respect for the concept of democracy is politely skimmed over. The real threat they pose to America is downplayed -- or ignored.

Last fall, Sawyer traveled to North Korea and interviewed a general in the world's harshest communist tyranny. She was incredibly passive, relating back to her American audience that the general insisted President Bush should be blamed for any nuclear weapons testing in North Korea and added that "the general said to us he does want peace. And he also said, again, reiterated, North Korea will not be the first to use a nuclear weapon."

From there, Sawyer produced a very strange piece about regimented, yet refreshing, North Korean schoolchildren, "a world away from the unruly individualism of any American school." Proclaimed a student, no doubt surrounded by minders watching her every word, "We are the happiest children in the world!"

Last week, ABC and Sawyer were at it again. Another continent, another ruthless anti-American dictator, but the same results. This time, Sawyer flew to Syria, following in the footsteps of Sen. John Kerry, who warmly announced a few weeks back that dictator Bashar Assad is ready to work with the United States. That was exactly Sawyer's message, too, on the Feb. 5 "Good Morning America." Sawyer diplomatically awarded Assad the title of "president," although no one elected him there. Dictatorship was handed down as the family business, but she called him "your excellency."

Sawyer lamely suggested to Assad in the first day's interview that "Americans would say they voted" in Iraq, that there's a democracy. Assad shot back, "What is the benefit of democracy if you're dead?" Sawyer didn't challenge him about, say, his father Hafez Assad's massacre at Hama of more than 10,000 people. She moved on, instead, to discuss gently how a peace process with America would work.

Diane Sawyer, apple polisher

But the truly maddening part was Sawyer trying to take this dictator and turn him into a sympathetic human being. "You like video games? ... Do you have an iPod?" Obviously, she was slavishly toeing a PR line some Syrian functionary spoon-fed her. "You're a country music fan. Faith Hill? Shania Twain?" Assad laughed and said, "Is it considered an ad?" Sawyer played along: "Yes, that's true. They get free advertising." Yippee!

The problem here is the free advertising ABC is handing the dictator of Syria. Can we imagine that if Hitler were alive and still ruling Germany with an iron fist, Sawyer would be asking him about his iPod, too?

On the second day, Feb. 6, Sawyer asked the more serious questions -- about political prisoners in Syria, about Syria's role in assassinating Lebanese political leaders, its support for the terrorist groups Hezbollah and Hamas. But Sawyer had an odd tic throughout all of this, and it's one that drives this writer mad. It was always "Americans say" or "human rights groups say" that Syria is unfree and supports terror, etc. Can't the glorious fact-checkers at ABC News determine for themselves if Syria is oppressive? Or is an obsequious tone before dictators more important than giving American viewers the impression you have a firm grasp on hard facts?

Then, once again, after a few of those questions about democracy and terror, Sawyer went back to humanizing the Assads, not just the dictator, but the "elegant, athletic" dictator's wife, Asma, the "31-year-old former career girl" who once lived in New York. What followed was a pathetic trail of ooze about the "amazing" work this woman is doing for women's and children's rights -- in the middle of this dictatorship. We're told the Assads "famously live in a modest home" and drive the kids to school and bike together.

ABC forbids its reporters to wear flag pins, lest they be seen as tools of the U.S. government. But once again, in their frantic desperation to be "independent" of America, they look instead like enthusiastic apple-polishing tools for every dictatorial enemy America faces in the world.

L. Brent Bozell III is the president of the Media Research Center.

Load-Date: February 11, 2007

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Sexism in politics warrants attention

University Wire

March 5, 2007 Monday

Copyright 2007 Columbia Daily Spectator via U-Wire

Section: COLUMN

Length: 777 words

Byline: By Liz Fink, Columbia Daily Spectator; **SOURCE:** Columbia U.

Dateline: NEW YORK

Body

Senator Joe Biden may be remembered for having one of the shortest presidential candidacies in American history. He was undermined by an ill-conceived attempt to compliment Senator and presidential-hopeful Barack Obama as "the first mainstream African American who is articulate and bright and clean and a nice-looking guy." Indeed, as Lynette Clemetson pointed out in a Feb. 4 "Week in Review" article for the New York Times, it would have been more significant if a senator and former president of the Harvard Law Review wasn't articulate. The label of "articulate" was racism masquerading as a compliment. Biden clearly was not being intentionally racist -- and he wasted no time beginning to make the rounds apologizing -- but the incident has attracted attention to a certain kind of soft racism in how African Americans in positions of power are viewed.

But while Biden's gaffe attracted immediate criticism and has been pounced upon and dissected ad infinitum, the related phenomenon of soft sexism has been ignored. Specifically, it is so embedded in mainstream discourse that it is still promulgated in a virtually unquestioned manner by the media. Alessandra Galloni's article in the Wall Street Journal on Feb. 10 about the French Socialist party's candidate for president, Segolene Royal, treated details of its subject's wardrobe, physical appearance, and love life as at least as important as her politics.

The lede paragraph mentioned that Royal -- who if elected will be France's first **female** president -- was photographed in a turquoise bikini and that friction with her long-term partner have made headlines. As a result, Royal's stance on actual political issues is relegated to the second paragraph. It is a strange choice, considering Royal has attracted more than her fair share of attention over her politics. Presumably, the criticism she attracted after a meeting with **Hezbollah** in Lebanon and her comments about Iran's nuclear activity should be viewed as more controversial than her swimwear or the length of her skirt. In fact, the article seems to spend more energy crowing about Royal's "glamorous looks" and "skirts that just skim the knee" than describing the populism that catapulted Royal into the limelight. I cannot recall a Wall Street Journal article that placed so much significance on a male politician's wardrobe. Galloni even supplies a brief history of Royal's hairstyles, and names her preferred designer (Paule Ka). Of course, the Wall Street Journal is obligated to report how the candidate is seen, and cannot be blamed for reporting societal sexism, which of course affects how **female** politicians are viewed. But the Journal article, rather than critiquing the means by which **women** are judged by their looks and their romantic lives, furthers that same mentality by refusing to foreground Royal's politics over her looks, an editorial choice which is evident in the very structure of the article. I have not read a single profile of Nicolas Sarkozy, the right's candidate in the French presidential race, which engages in a discussion of his wardrobe.

Sexism in politics warrants attention

But the Wall Street Journal article is perhaps an extreme example, and sexism is often subtle and not always as visible as a turquoise bikini. The attitude frequently taken by the media toward female politicians calls attention to the way in which women in power are judged in an entirely different way than men. Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi's wardrobe has been mentioned in countless profiles in major dailies in a way that J. Dennis Hastert's certainly never has been. The Times published an entire story by Lizette Alvarez on Jan. 18 devoted to Nancy Pelosi's style, which echoed a Washington Post story from Nov. 10, 2006 by Robin Givhan. To the Times' credit, though, the story was in the Style section, and made some attempt to examine why women are judged by their clothes.

But these issues are particularly spotlighted when comparing female candidates with male competitors -- like Royal versus Sarkozy, for instance. The emphasis on maternity, love lives, and clothing implicitly make it seem like female politicians have less substance than their male counterparts. When Time magazine asked Pelosi in a Nov. 12 interview by Perry Bacon Jr. if her performance as speaker would impact Senator Clinton's presidential candidacy, Pelosi countered that she wasn't sure it is a question that would be asked of a man about another male candidate. Pelosi went on to say, "But I will respect your question." But the press' penchant for analyzing female politicians in superficial terms is not worthy of the same respect.

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Load-Date: March 5, 2007

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The many colours of bigotry

Ottawa Citizen

August 26, 2006 Saturday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. B6; Leonard Stern

Length: 842 words

Byline: Leonard Stern, The Ottawa Citizen

Body

On the bigotry scale, Andrew Young's remarks were tame. The Wal-Mart spokesman, in a newspaper interview, was defending the retail giant against accusations it puts mom-and-pop operations out of business. Mr. Young suggested that we shouldn't romanticize small businessmen, especially Jewish, Arab and Korean store owners who always "ripped off" their customers, "selling us stale bread and bad meat and wilted vegetables."

Not quite the eye-popping slurs of Mel Gibson, but sufficient to make Mr. Young an ex-spokesman for Wal-Mart. In a strange way, though, Mr. Young furthered inter-ethnic co-operation: Arab and Jewish leaders issued statements expressing shared outrage. For a brief moment they were angry at someone other than each other.

The episode is noteworthy because Mr. Young is black, that is, a member of a minority group with its own history of persecution. The 74-year-old Mr. Young was a prominent civil- rights activist in the 1960s, working closely with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Black men are usually the ones on the receiving end of unflattering stereotypes. It was surprising to hear a man who had made his name fighting intolerance issue his own generalizations about minorities.

Then again, maybe it wasn't surprising. Does anyone really believe the old idea that only white people of European extraction are capable of bias?

Take the community to which Mr. Young belongs. The prevalence of

anti-gay attitudes in black America is well known. Through music and sport, black urban culture celebrates hyper-masculinity and that can translated into extreme homophobia. Health workers regularly complain that these attitudes hinder efforts to create effective AIDS awareness campaigns in black communities.

Although true that Europe was once the world's number one exporter of racist hate, today that honour probably goes to the Muslim Middle East. The object of its contempt is the Jews. All the classical anti-Semitic tropes are there -- the conspiracies, the blood libels, the Holocaust denial.

Students of prejudice note that Muslim anti-Semitism, like the Nazi variety, is "eliminationist." Radical Islamic clerics share with the Nazis an eschatological belief that the destruction of world Jewry is a necessary, purifying step toward the creation of a new order. In other words, the Jew-hatred of Osama bin Laden would not disappear even if Israel did.

The many colours of bigotry

Most disturbing is the nonchalance with which western liberals react to the genocidal racism coursing through parts of the Arab-Muslim world. I've known members of the United Church who, bless their culturally sensitive hearts, chew your head off if you refer to indigenous people as "Indians." Yet these well-meaning progressives will march in demonstrations alongside Arabic-speaking Hezbollah supporters who believe Jews are the agents of Satan.

One explanation for the double standard is that liberal Christians, as descendants of colonizers and imperialists, are so consumed with guilt over their own racist baggage that they give ethnic minorities a free pass. A less charitable explanation is that these progressive types are engaging in reverse racism, by holding the Arab world to a lower standard of decency. An even less charitable explanation is that they have their own Jewish problem, thus their indifference (or "neutrality") when Islamists call for another Holocaust.

Speaking of Jews, they can be as guilty as anyone of xenophobia. There's a whole genre of old Yiddish jokes that poke fun at the supposed intellectual inferiority of non-Jews. Today you can still visit cloistered yeshivas in Jerusalem where pale Talmud students talk in racist terms about Arabs, and sometimes about Christians too. The one good thing is that this crude ethnocentrism resides on the margins of the Jewish world, whereas Arab anti-Semitism emanates from state-sponsored television stations, mass-circulation newspapers and school curriculums.

Nor are women, another historically disadvantaged group, immune to the propagation of noxious prejudices. In one famous case some years ago, a campus anti-harassment committee nearly destroyed the life and career of a young swim coach at Simon Fraser University in British Columbia. The coach was a) a man and b) a jock, either of which was sufficient grounds to designate him a sexual predator despite evidence indicating otherwise. I attended university lectures on feminist literary theory back in the 1990s. There were more ugly generalizations about men than you'd hear about Africans at a Ku Klux Klan rally.

Yes, it's hard not to be nostalgic for the days when white Anglo men were the principal purveyors of intolerance. But those days never existed. Tribalism and race-hatred have wrecked -- and continued to wreck -- societies where the white man doesn't live. Think of Japan before the Second World War. Or Iraq today.

The paradox here is that the one thing human beings have in common is the instinct to despise others who are different.

Leonard Stern is the Citizen's editorial pages editor.

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Load-Date: August 26, 2006

The Silence That Kills

The New York Times

March 2, 2007 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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Section: Section A; Column 1; Editorial Desk; Pg. 17

Length: 767 words

Byline: By THOMAS L. FRIEDMAN

Body

On Feb. 20, The A.P. reported from Afghanistan that a suicide attacker disguised as a health worker blew himself up near "a crowd of about 150 people who had gathered for a ribbon-cutting ceremony to open an emergency ward at the main government hospital in the city of Khost." A few days later, at a Baghdad college, a ***female*** Sunni suicide bomber blew herself up amid students who were ready to sit for exams, killing 40 people.

Stop and think for a moment how sick this is. Then stop for another moment and listen to the silence. The Bush team is mute. It says nothing, because it has no moral authority. No one would listen. Mr. Bush is losing a P.R. war to people who blow up emergency wards. Europeans are mute, lost in their delusion that this is all George Bush's and Tony Blair's fault.

But worst of all, Muslims, the very people whose future is being killed, are also mute. No surge can work in Iraq unless we have a "moral surge," a counternihilism strategy that delegitimizes suicide bombers. The most important restraints are cultural, societal and religious. It takes a village -- but the Arab-Muslim village today is largely silent. The best are indifferent or intimidated; the worst quietly applaud the Sunnis who kill Shiites.

Nobody in the Arab world "has the guts to say that what is happening in Iraq is wrong -- that killing schoolkids is wrong," said Mamoun Fandy, director of the Middle East program at the International Institute for Strategic Studies. "People somehow think that killing Iraqis is good because it will stick it to the Americans, so Arabs are undermining the American project in Iraq by killing themselves."

The world worries about highly enriched uranium, but "the real danger is highly enriched Islam," Mr. Fandy added. That is, "highly enriched Sunnism" and "highly enriched Shiism" that eats away at the Muslim state, the way ***Hezbollah*** is trying to do in Lebanon or the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt or Al Qaeda everywhere.

One result: there's no legitimate, decent, accepted source of Arab-Muslim authority today, no center of gravity "for people to anchor their souls in," Mr. Fandy said. In this welter of confusion, the suicide bombers go uncondemned or subtly extolled.

Arab nationalist media like Al Jazeera "practically tell bin Laden and his followers, 'Bravo,' " Mr. Fandy said. "The message sent to bin Laden is that 'You are doing to the West what we want done, but we can't do it.' This is the hidden message that the West is not privy to. Unless extreme pressure is applied on Muslims all over the world to come up with counter-fatwas and pronounce these men as pariahs, very little will happen in fighting terrorism."

The Silence That Kills

"The battleground in the Arab world today is not in Palestine or Lebanon, but in the classrooms and newsrooms," Mr. Fandy concluded. That's where "the software programmers" reside who create symbolic images and language glorifying suicide bombers and make their depraved acts look legitimate. Only other Arab-Muslim programmers can defeat them.

Occasionally an honest voice rises, giving you a glimmer of hope that others will stand up. The MEMRI translation Web site (memri.org) just posted a poem called "When," from a Saudi author, Wajeha al-Huwaider, that was posted on Arab reform sites like www.aafaq.org.

When you cannot find a single garden in your city, but there is a mosque on every corner -- you know that you are in an Arab country.

When you see people living in the past with all the trappings of modernity -- do not be surprised, you are in an Arab country.

When religion has control over science -- you can be sure that you are in an Arab country.

When clerics are referred to as "scholars" -- don't be astonished, you are in an Arab country.

When you see the ruler transformed into a demigod who never dies or relinquishes his power, and nobody is permitted to criticize -- do not be too upset, you are in an Arab country.

When you find that the large majority of people oppose freedom and find joy in slavery -- do not be too distressed, you are in an Arab country.

When you hear the clerics saying that democracy is heresy, but seizing every opportunity provided by democracy to grab high positions -- do not be surprised, you are in an Arab country.

When you discover that a woman is worth half of what a man is worth, or less -- do not be surprised, you are in an Arab country.

When land is more important than human beings -- you are in an Arab country.

When fear constantly lives in the eyes of the people -- you can be certain you are in an Arab country.

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Load-Date: March 2, 2007

THIS ZOMBIE MUST GO AND GO NOW

Daily Mail (London)

August 4, 2006 Friday

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Section: ED 1ST; Pg. 7

Length: 778 words

Byline: SIR RODRIC BRAITHWAITE

Body

A SPECTRE is stalking British television, a frayed and waxy zombie straight from Madame Tussaud's.

This one, unusually, seems to live and breathe.

Perhaps it comes from the Central Intelligence Agency's box of technical tricks, programmed to spout the language of the White House in an artificial English accent.

There is another possible explanation.

Perhaps what we see on television is the real Tony Blair, the man who believes that he and his friend alone have the key to the horrifying problems of the Middle East.

At first he argued against a ceasefire in Lebanon. Then, after another Israeli airstrike killed dozens of Lebanese women and children, he finally admitted, in California reluctantly, grudgingly and with a host of preconditions that military force alone would not do the trick, and now seems to have told his people to look for something better.

The catastrophe in Lebanon is the latest act of a tragedy rooted in European anti-Semitism and in the expulsion of an Arab people from their ancestral home.

Both sides claim the right to self-defence. Neither hesitates to use force to pursue aims it regards as legitimate. No single event is the proximate cause of the current mayhem neither the Israeli onslaught on Lebanon, nor the Hezbollah rockets, nor the Israeli assassination of Palestinian leaders, nor the suicide bombings.

The causes go back in almost infinite regression. In the desperate pursuit of short-term tactical gain, both sides lose sight of their own long-term interests.

The Israelis remember the Holocaust and the repeated calls from within the Muslim world for the elimination of their state, and they react strongly to real or perceived threats to their existence.

WHETHER their government's methods can achieve their ends is for them to judge. A liberal Israeli columnist has argued that 'in Israel and Lebanon, the blood is being spilled, the horror is intensifying, the price is rising and it is all for naught' a reminder that Israel remains a sophisticated and in many ways an attractive democracy.

But whatever our sympathy for Israel's dilemma, Mr Blair's prime responsibility is to defend the interests of his own country. This he has signally failed to do. Stiff in opinions, but often in the wrong, he has manipulated public

THIS ZOMBIE MUST GO AND GO NOW

opinion, sent our soldiers into distant lands for ill-conceived purposes, misused the intelligence agencies to serve his ends and reduced the Foreign Office to a demoralised cipher because it keeps reminding him of inconvenient facts.

He keeps the dog, but barely notices if it barks or not. He prefers to construct his 'foreign policy' out of self-righteous soundbites and expensive foreign travel.

Mr Blair has done more damage to British interests in the Middle East than Anthony Eden, who led

AND GO NOW the UK to disaster in Suez 50 years ago. In the past 100 years to take the highlights we have bombed and occupied Egypt and Iraq, put down an Arab uprising in Palestine and overthrown governments in Iran, Iraq and the Gulf. We can no longer do these things on our own, so we do them with the Americans. Mr Blair's total identification with the White House has destroyed his influence in Washington, Europe and the Middle East itself: who bothers with the monkey if he can go straight to the organ-grinder?

Mr Blair has seriously damaged our domestic politics, too. His prevarication over a ceasefire confirms to many of our Muslim fellow citizens that Britain is engaged in a secular war against the Arab world and by extension, against the Muslim world. He has thus made it harder to achieve what should be a goal of policy for any British government to build a tolerant multiethnic society within our own islands.

And though he chooses not to admit it, he has made us more vulnerable to terrorist attacks. These are not achievements of which a prime minister should be proud.

But despite the disasters he has wreaked abroad, despite the growing scandal and incoherence of his performance at home, Mr Blair is still a consummate politician. How else can one explain the failure of his party to do the decent thing and get rid of him? Why else does it still appear as though he alone controls the timing and circumstances of his departure?

One day we may feel sorry for Mr Blair for the damage he has done to his place in history and to himself.

But that moment is not yet.

For now, he should no longer attempt to stand upon the order of his going, but go. At once.

Sir Rodric Braithwaite, UK Ambassador to Moscow 1988-92 and then foreign policy adviser to John Major and chairman of the Joint Intelligence Committee, is author of *Moscow 1941* (Profile, 2006). This article first appeared in the Financial Times.

Load-Date: August 4, 2006

Kristof's Own Legacy

New York Sun (Archive)

January 3, 2007 Wednesday

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Section: EDITORIALS; Pg. 6

Length: 722 words

Byline: New York Sun Editorial

Body

Nicholas Kristof has fetched up with a classic of a column for students of what is called the New York Times double standard. In a column offering President Bush "10 suggestions for what you can do in 2007 to try to rescue your legacy," number three on Mr. Kristof's list was "confront the genocide in Darfur."

"President Bill Clinton has said that the biggest regret of his administration is not responding to the Rwandan genocide, and someday you - and your biographers - will rue your lame response to Darfur," writes Mr. Kristof, who goes on to suggest "inviting the leaders of Britain, France, China, Egypt and Saudi Arabia to travel with you to Darfur and Chad to see first-hand the women who have been mutilated and raped, the men whose eyes have been gouged out." He also suggests "a no-fly zone" and "an international force."

We're all for it, incidentally. We don't care whether it's an international force, an American force, a French force, a United Nations force, or a freelance band of mercenaries. The first unit that gets on the ground in the region around Darfur and starts protecting the people there from a murderous Muslim onslaught will be doing humanity a great favor. A rescue can't come too soon, in our view.

But what a contrast is Mr. Kristof's suggestion with number seven on his list, in which he urges Mr. Bush to "put aside those thoughts of a military strike on Iranian nuclear sites, and make it clear to Israel that we oppose it conducting such an attack. A strike would set back Iran's nuclear programs by only five years or so, but it would consolidate hard-line rule there for at least 25 years."

So let's see if we have this straight: Genocide in Rwanda and Darfur is lamentable and should be met with a military response, but Israel and America should not act to prevent Iran from getting a nuclear weapon that it intends to use to commit genocide against the Jews of Israel. That's the classic New York Times double standard.

It is dressed in the flimsy guise of Mr. Kristof's claim that his concern is for the well-being of the people of Iran. The fact is that an Iranian nuclear attack on Israel would almost certainly -and should certainly - be met with an Israeli second strike that would inflict immense casualties on Iran. That is a prospect that Iranian leader Hashemi Rafsanjani, as quoted by the New Republic, finds "not irrational to contemplate." Such is the suicide-bomber mentality.

How is it that journalistic antennae so attuned to genocide in Africa can be so callous to the threats of genocide against the Jews of Israel? Particularly when the current Iranian regime is running around denying the Holocaust in which the Nazis killed 6 million Jews in Europe. It's not as if Iran's rulers and their allies have been concealing their intentions.

Kristof's Own Legacy

On the contrary, President Ahmadinejad, as recently as August 2, told the Jews, via the Iranian news channel IRINN translated by the Middle East Media Research Institute, "They should know that they are nearing the last days of their lives." The leader of Iran's proxy in Lebanon, Hezbollah's Hassan Nasrallah, has stated that if the Jews "all gather in Israel, it will save us the trouble of going after them worldwide," and said, "it is an open war until the elimination of Israel and until the death of the last Jew on earth."

We wouldn't mention all this if we had scorn for Mr. Kristof. On the contrary, he's as smart as a person can get, the winner of two Pulitzer Prizes (one in foreign corresponding and another in commentary), and a wonderful person to boot. Maybe it's just something in the air on West 43rd Street. Sami al-Arian, who pleaded guilty last year to conspiring to aid the terrorist group Palestinian Islamic Jihad, was defended by Mr. Kristof in his column as an innocent professor. When al-Arian pleaded, he specifically stated that he was pleading not because he was forced to but because he was, in fact, guilty.

Somehow Mr. Kristof has yet to level with his readers about al-Arian's belated admission. Maybe if the murderers al-Arian had been aiding had killed Africans instead of Jews, the star columnist of the Times would have found a way to write about the terrorist-aiding professor's guilt. In any event, after Mr. Kristof gets done helping with Mr. Bush's legacy, he's still going to have to attend to his own.

Load-Date: January 3, 2007

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Opinion - Fisk as incisive on Iraq and British bunk as ever - Award-winning journalist and war correspondent Robert Fisk was in Belfast last week to promote the paperback version of his latest book. Luke Ryan caught up with him at the Waterfront Hall

Irish News

October 13, 2006 Friday

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Section: Pg. 10

Length: 730 words

Body

Taking questions from 300 A-level students at Clonard Monastery is one of the less arduous tasks Robert Fisk has taken on in his career but for them it will have been an enlightening experience. Fisk has, after all, reported from the Middle East for 30 years. He writes for the London Independent and used to report for The Times from Northern Ireland. He lives in Lebanon which suffered 34 days of bombardment by Israel in July. Fisk reported that Israeli pilots committed war crimes during the conflict. The Israelis claim to have pinpoint accuracy and highly skilled pilots, yet they killed more than 1,000 civilians. "You can only go so far day after day saying collateral damage, didn't know, official inquiry, sorry, and then you must say either these are war criminals or they're just a bunch of riff-raff, they don't know how to fly properly. You can't have it both ways," he said.

The month-long war began after the Hezbollah kidnapped two soldiers and killed three others.

"I remember IRA men crossing the border from Louth into the north and killing British soldiers. We did not bombard the Republic of Ireland for 34 days, blow up Ringsend Power Station, attack Galway and kill more than 1,000 men, women and children," he said. He railed against Tony Blair for using the ceasefire as a weapon rather than demanding a halt to violence as a message of compassion.

"Why does Tony Blair think it's merely disproportionate out there but he wouldn't dare do it at home?" he asked.

Turning to Iraq, Fisk has written in the past that he did not believe there would be a civil war in that country.

"What I am seeing now is something pretty like it. I think I said at the time that Iraqis didn't want a civil war, somebody does," he said. "Some Iraqis believe that some Western elements inside Iraq have been separately targeting each community so that the insurgency turns its attention away from the Western armies, spares their casualties and gets the Iraqis to kill each other. Having said that, it hasn't done much good if it's true."

"Iraq is not a sectarian society, it's a tribal society. So it's not like Catholic women marrying Catholic men and vice-versa with Protestants. Shi'ite women marry Sunni men and it's quite interwoven," he said. "That's why it's so tragic when you see these people being driven from their homes because one of them is certainly the same religion as the people driving them out."

With the recent crisis surrounding Tehran's nuclear ambitions, it has been argued that a pre-emptive strike on Iran could be justified if it were to prevent a nuclear exchange between Israel and Iran.

Opinion - Fisk as incisive on Iraq and British bunk as ever - Award-winning journalist and war correspondent
Robert Fisk was in Belfast last week to promote the....

"Why must Iran suffer?" Fisk asked.

"The most unstable Muslim state is Pakistan and that has got a nuclear weapon. It's full of Taliban and al-Qaida supporters. But because Musharraf, the president and dictator general is on our side in the 'War on Terror', he is not part of the narrative. So it's a totally false crisis in my view. Why would Iran fire missiles at Israel, when Israel could eliminate it?"

War reports from the Middle East increasingly provoke a sense of responsibility amongst the public, yet what action can be taken?

"War is about the total failure of the human spirit, it's about anger, fury and murder.

"But all I can do as a journalist is to say, well look don't tell me you didn't know about it, I did tell you. I can't go further because then suddenly I become a politician - and I am not.

"Plenty of organisations in Belfast and Derry have taken up political views about Lebanon in particular.

"The problem is that when New Labour perform in a public debate in London, they are so slovenly and mendacious it doesn't have any effect. You vote, and off go the MPs and pay no attention to your views at all."

Fisk said he did not believe in violence anywhere, ever, against anyone. "If you see the things I see, you would never support war, ever, for any reason," he said. "Having said that, if I had been a Catholic in the Falls when the Gloucestershire Regiment was coming up, smashing windows and grabbing men, I'd probably feel there was a necessity to resist that - and I'm sure some Protestants would have felt the same in Fermanagh when they were being shot at by the IRA. But self-defence is not the same as invasion."

- Robert Fisk's book The Great War for Civilisation: The Conquest of the Middle East is out now, published by Fourth Estate.

Load-Date: October 13, 2006

**HORSE RACING: A HILL OF BEANS THAT MAY FALL ON US ALL;
THIS WONDERFUL SPORT**

Racing Post

August 15, 2006, Tuesday

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Section: 1ST Edition; SPORT; Pg. 5

Length: 751 words

Byline: ALASTAIR DOWN

Body

WITH a strong following wind it takes a mere 90 minutes to fly from Stansted down to Perpignan, from where a gutless hire car can be thrashed up into the foothills of the Pyrenees, deep in Catalonia, where residents of the farthest south-eastern outpost of France hold cultural hands with their brethren over the Spanish border.

Despite the relative closeness to home, a week away imposes extraordinary distances in perception. English newspapers are now printed in France and are available even in the shadow of Mont Cigalou on day of publication, but the pace of a week away and the determination to 'be on holiday' mean that events at home are viewed 'through a glass darkly'.

The news of last week's arrests connected with the apparent thwarting of alleged terrorist plots to blow up aircraft outward bound from Britain to America filtered through on the bush telegraph, and having spoken to friends and family, I rang the Racing Post office to be updated on events, as they would have all the latest intelligence on the wires from every news agency on the planet.

I got through to one of the two colleagues I trust most to give an accurate and dispassionate account of important events while the nation doubtless spiralled into uncertainty as the aeronautical transport system faced chaos.

"I hear we are living in troubled times again," I said, "what the hell is going on?" With his trademark enthusiasm, my informant replied: "Well, we are leading on all this Robert Winston business and three other jockeys being charged with corruption by the HRA."

After two minutes of chapter and verse on the allegedly miscreant short people, I turned conversation away to the subject of threats to public safety.

Our man on the news desk, to his eternal credit, had been too preoccupied by goings-on in the narrow confines of the racing village to update me on the levels of concern in government or at Heathrow and, although I was frustrated by this insularity, on reflection he was right.

News, its content and the manner in which it is conveyed to you and I, is very much a matter of self-interested priority whether you like it or not. Thus, nobody dead at British airports or on outbound flights will dominate front pages and news bulletins, not least because those inconvenienced are taking part in the ritual of travel with which we are all familiar.

HORSE RACING: A HILL OF BEANS THAT MAY FALL ON US ALL; THIS WONDERFUL SPORT

We understand more about hand luggage than we do about Hezbollah, and among those who define our views of world events it is considered more important to focus on the frustrations of plucky Brits queuing at Luton rather than the dead of both sides in Lebanon and Israel.

Harder to explain, perhaps, is the fact that before last week's scares, events in Lebanon, with between 1,400 and 2,000 dead, had taken precedence over the catastrophe of Iraq, where the pluckiest of Brits are enmeshed in a nightmare in which tens of thousands have died and the much-denied, unpoliced civil war racks up another 100 dead on a 'good' day.

MAYBE it is yesterday's news, perhaps we are embarrassed by its longevity. But try and tell that to the families of our dead servicemen and women or, just as importantly, the families of Iraqis currently being mangled through the slaughter mill manufactured by two of the most arguably civilised nations on Earth Britain and our historical saviour the USA.

Amid such stunningly repulsive events, the travails of a few jockeys add up to what Humphrey Bogart, in Casablanca, so piercingly described as "a hill of beans". But the problem for us, as for poor old Humph, is that they add up to our hill of beans.

Nobody is dying here, but reputations are being mangled and livelihoods threatened. But it isn't just jockeys who are at risk. Modern news values in print and vision rarely allow genuine analysis - the job now is to locate the corpse and pick the bones white-clean before moving on to the next feast of carrion.

And the carcass will not be anything other than the sport itself slaughtered on the hastily built altar of 'today's news'. Expect no even-handedness, no insight and n the slightest drop of sympathy for a sport either loathed or regarded as fair game by the inflated fat cats of modern journalism.

I hope those under suspicion are blameless. Should that prove not to be the case, then across the red-hot coals we must all go. Whichever way the eventual verdicts fall, if it not a purifying journey then perhaps we are not worth the candle. Or the saving.

Load-Date: August 15, 2006

Hamas urges attacks; A truce is scrapped after Israeli shelling kills 18 civilians.

The Philadelphia Inquirer
November 9, 2006 Thursday

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The Philadelphia Inquirer
Found on Philly.com

Section: NATIONAL; Pg. A02

Length: 785 words

Byline: Richard Boudreaux and Rushdi abu Alouf, Los Angeles Times

Body

Hamas leaders called yesterday for renewed attacks inside Israel after Israeli artillery shells tore into a residential neighborhood here, killing 18 civilians, including five women and eight children.

Angry demonstrations erupted across the Gaza Strip after the killings, the highest civilian death toll from a single incident on either side of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in more than three years. Thousands of Palestinians burned tires and demanded revenge, chanting: "Death to Israel! Death to America!"

The predawn shelling and its aftermath marked a potentially perilous turn in the long-stalemated conflict and raised new risks for the United States, as Hamas' military wing called for striking U.S. targets as well.

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert voiced sorrow over the incident, in which some victims died in their beds, and others perished as they fled into the street. Defense Minister Amir Peretz ordered a halt to shelling in Gaza, where the army had been targeting Palestinian fighters in a week-old offensive, until an investigation of the incident concludes.

A White House statement said the United States was "deeply saddened by the injuries and loss of life," and called on all parties to "act with care and restraint so as to avoid any harm to innocent civilians."

An Israeli army spokesman said artillery guns had been aimed at a site from which a Palestinian cell had launched four rockets into the Israeli city of Ashkelon, seven miles away. Israeli television said investigators were looking into a possible flaw in the system that guided the Israeli shells.

Seven shells landed on Hamad Street here, far from their apparent target, blowing large holes in three apartment buildings. Thirteen of the dead belonged to the extended Athamna family, which occupied one of the buildings.

As weeping neighbors gathered on the shattered block and children combed rubble for shrapnel, witnesses described a scene of desperation and panic after the shelling, which blew some of the victims to pieces.

Hamis urges attacks A truce is scrapped after Israeli shelling kills 18 civilians.

"We saw smoke coming out of one building and ran inside with a stretcher," said ambulance driver Yousri Almasri, who, with a medic, was the first outsider on the scene. "We found ourselves walking in blood and stepping over pieces of bodies."

Riddled with shrapnel wounds, Asma Athamna, 14, recalled scrambling into a narrow alley outside her home with other members of her family, only to see her mother and older sister cut down.

"We were afraid of death inside the house, but death took my mother and sister outside," she told reporters from her bed at Kamal Adwan Hospital in nearby Beit Lahiya.

In another bed, Saad Athamna, 52, screamed: "I want to die! I want to die! I lost everything." Hospital officials said his 80-year-old mother, his wife, and five of their children, ages 4 to 14, were killed.

The civilian toll was the highest in any single attack of the Israel-Palestinian conflict since October 2003, when a Palestinian suicide bomber blew herself up in a beachfront restaurant in Haifa, killing 19 other people.

Khaled Mashaal, the Syria-based political leader of Hamas, declared an end to the Islamic group's self-declared truce with Israel. His call for "a roaring reaction so that we avenge all those victims" was echoed by Nizar Rayan and other Hamas leaders in Gaza.

"Our martyrs are going to sacrifice their lives in the depths of our occupied land," Rayan told a large crowd outside the hospital in Beit Lahiya. "They will strike in Jaffa, in Haifa, inside Ashdod," he said, naming Israeli cities.

Although Hamas' military wing launches Kassam rockets from Gaza almost daily, unimpeded by the Hamas-led Palestinian government, the movement has not carried out a known attack on Israeli soil since August 2005.

In a separate threat, Hamas' military wing said it held the United States, as Israel's ally, partly responsible for the killings in Beit Hanoun and urged Muslims around the world "to teach the American enemy tough lessons." Ghazi Hamad, a spokesman for the Palestinian government, said the movement had no intention of attacking U.S. targets.

Israel's army has been drawn increasingly into Gaza, before and since the inconclusive end of its summer war against Hezbollah militiamen in southern Lebanon. Israel says the rocket attacks from Gaza are unprovoked, because the government withdrew its settlers and military outposts from the coastal territory last year.

The army began periodic incursions into Gaza in June to root out rocket-launching cells, halt weapons smuggling from Egypt and search for one of its captured soldiers. Yesterday's shelling brought the death toll in the heaviest week of fighting to 47 Palestinian fighters, 33 civilians and one Israeli soldier.

Load-Date: November 9, 2006

Iraq's refugee crisis offers problem, opportunity for U.S.

USA TODAY

January 5, 2007 Friday

FINAL EDITION

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 8A

Length: 731 words

Body

Architects of the Iraq war planned for many things that didn't happen and didn't plan for many things that did. One of the things that didn't happen, at least not right away, was a refugee crisis. In fact, from the fall of Saddam Hussein in early 2003 through 2005, about 300,000 Iraqis returned to their homeland from other countries.

Today, with Iraq consumed by chaos and sectarian violence, the flow has reversed. The number of returnees has slowed to a trickle. As many as 1.8 million Iraqis -- about the population of New Mexico -- have fled to neighboring nations, some of them before the war began. Since 2003, about 750,000 more have been displaced within Iraq.

Earlier in the war, it was the wealthier Iraqis who left, often driving Mercedes. Now, says Ron Redmond, spokesman for the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, they're fleeing their homes in battered buses or however they can -- at a rate of 40,000 to 50,000 a month. Many have such meager resources, Redmond says, that women are turning to prostitution and kids to child labor.

The Bush administration has been slow to acknowledge this unfolding disaster. To recognize the refugee crisis is, after all, to undermine the White House insistence that the war was the right decision and that Iraq is on the way to stability. But the situation is so acute that it can't responsibly be ignored. The Iraq Study Group, co-chaired by former secretary of State James Baker, reached a similar conclusion in its exhaustive report last month.

This human tragedy in the making adds a new problem for the United States, as well as an opportunity. U.S. security requires a Middle East that is not a seething hotbed of anti-Americanism. The Iraqis who have fled their country or have been internally displaced have the potential to become the Palestinians of the 21st century: an increasingly militant and anti-American diaspora destabilizing the region.

President Bush's new strategy for Iraq, to be announced next week, ought to include a U.S.-led surge of international attention on the refugee situation. Such humanitarian efforts should be coordinated with the United Nations, which until recently had assumed that Iraq would stabilize enough for the refugees to return home. Now the U.N. is so alarmed at the growing violence and exodus that it is switching gears. It is launching an appeal for money and assistance for three urgent tasks: helping the displaced survive where they are; helping host countries to absorb them; and persuading other countries, including the USA, to let more of them in.

The United States has a moral obligation to take care of the many Iraqis who have risked their lives and their families by cooperating with the U.S. effort. Iraqis associated with the USA are all too often signing their own death warrants. Many have fled and are stuck in limbo, too fearful to return. Yet the United States last year resettled just 202 Iraqis and is not planning any big increase. That needs to change. Much like the Vietnamese refugees who

Iraq 's refugee crisis offers problem, opportunity for U.S.

were taken in after fleeing the Vietnam War, the Iraqis' past help makes them a valuable resource for future investment and possible engine of political change.

Direct U.S. aid programs for refugees could also win influence in the Muslim world, where extremist groups such as Hamas and **Hezbollah** have for too long wooed hearts and minds through social services, and with little competition.

The flow of humanity from Iraq is starting to overwhelm its neighbors. Already, Jordan is refusing entry to most young men, Syria has stopped giving Iraqis free health care, and Saudi Arabia is building a fence along its border. As the Iraq Study Group pointed out, any Iraq solution has to involve the whole region.

The refugee crisis offers an opportunity to appeal to the self-interest of Iraq's neighbors and enlist their help in efforts to subdue the insurgency and contain the violence. Syria, in particular, has been sending signals that it wants to talk, despite snubs from the Bush administration.

During the nearly four years of the Iraq war, the administration has consistently failed to deal with crises before it was too late. Most fundamentally, it was for too long in denial about the insurgency that has plunged the country into civil war. Jumping on the unfolding humanitarian crisis now could break the pattern, forestall future problems and ease an eventual U.S. exit.

Graphic

GRAPHIC, B/W, Sam Ward, USA TODAY, Source: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (BAR GRAPH, MAP)

PHOTO, B/W, Alaa al-Marjani, AP

Load-Date: January 5, 2007

News Summary

The New York Times
November 21, 2006 Tuesday
Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2006 The New York Times Company

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

Length: 802 words

Body

INTERNATIONAL A3-1

Israeli Map Says Posts Sit on Palestinian Land

An Israeli advocacy group, using maps and figures leaked from inside the government, says that 39 percent of the land held by Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank is privately owned by Palestinians. A1

The Israeli military chief of staff ordered an inquiry to determine whether the military had followed his orders when it used large numbers of cluster bombs during the war with Hezbollah in Lebanon this summer.

A8

U.S. May Increase Iraq Troops

Pentagon officials are considering a substantial but temporary increase in American troop levels and the addition of several thousand more trainers to work with Iraqi forces, a senior Defense Department official said. A10

Iraq re-established diplomatic relations with Syria after more than 20 years with no formal avenues of communication. A10

Bush Briefly Visits Indonesia

President Bush made a six-hour, carefully orchestrated visit to Indonesia, seeking to defuse the widespread anger in the world's most populous Islamic country over the American presence in Iraq. A12

China and India Rework Ties

As the president of China arrived in New Delhi to shore up relations between his nation and India, the main focus of those relations has moved from long-running territorial disputes to scrambles for political influence around the world. A14

British Premier Visits Kabul

In his first visit to the Afghan capital, Prime Minister Tony Blair of Britain said NATO had to refocus on its commitment in Afghanistan. A10

News Summary

NATIONAL A18-27

Katrina Thwarts Trials, Freeing Many Defendants

As the New Orleans criminal justice system slowly gears back up after Hurricane Katrina, as many as 500 defendants, mostly in drug, theft and assault cases, have been freed because of problems with evidence, including difficulty in finding the witnesses who have moved away. A1

Simpson Plans Are Canceled

The News Corporation canceled its plans to publish a book and broadcast an interview with O. J. Simpson in which he gives a hypothetical account of how he might have murdered his ex-wife and her friend. A1

Military Tracked Protest Groups

An antiterrorist database used by the Defense Department to prevent attacks against military installations included tips about antiwar planning meetings held in churches, libraries and college campuses, newly disclosed documents show. A18

Bus Plunges, Killing 3 Students

A school bus plunged nearly 40 feet off a highway overpass in Huntsville, Ala., and crashed nose-first into the pavement, killing 3 students and sending 11 others to the intensive care unit, officials said. A18

Elderly Driver Gets Probation

A judge sentenced an 89-year-old man who killed 10 people by plowing his car into a crowded farmer's market to five years of probation, citing the man's failing health. A18

Janitor Strike in Houston Ends

Ending a month-long strike, the union representing 5,300 janitors in Houston and the city's major cleaning companies announced a tentative contract that raises their wages by nearly 50 percent and provides the workers with health coverage. A18

NEW YORK/REGION B1-B7

Court Sets Lower Amount For City School Spending

New York State's highest court ended a landmark legal fight over education financing, ruling that at least \$1.93 billion more must be spent each year on New York City's public schools -- far less than the \$4.7 billion that a lower court called the minimum needed to give city children a sound basic education. A1

Stolen Goya Recovered

F.B.I. officials in Newark and Philadelphia said they had recovered a Goya painting that was stolen from a truck this month while it was being transported from an Ohio museum to the Guggenheim. B1

4 Women's Bodies Found

The bodies of four women were discovered lying face down in a ditch behind a strip of motels near Atlantic City, the Atlantic County prosecutor's office said. B2

Neediest Cases B4

BUSINESS DAY C1-14

Envy Fueling Silicon Valley

Envy may be a sin in some books, but it is a powerful driving force in Silicon Valley. And now that the YouTube purchase has amplified talk of a second dot-com boom, many high-tech entrepreneurs are examining their lives as measured against upstarts who have made it bigger. A1

London Exchange Battle

The Nasdaq Stock Market has intensified a trans-Atlantic battle for the London Stock Exchange in an effort to overtake the rival New York Stock Exchange as the world's leading equity marketplace. C1

Business Digest C2

OBITUARIES B10

Michele Maxian

A Legal Aid Society lawyer who helped spur reform in the New York City justice system, she was 55. B10

EDITORIAL A28-29

Editorials: Rejecting the draft; a discredit to the United Nations; the return of silicone breast implants; if they ran it.

Columns: Nicholas D. Kristof, Thomas B. Edsall.

Crossword E8

TV Listings E9

Weather D8

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Load-Date: November 21, 2006

International: Iranian students hide in fear for lives after venting fury at Ahmadinejad: President's supporters vow revenge on protesters: Activists forecast harsher crackdown on dissent

The Guardian - Final Edition

December 18, 2006 Monday

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Section: GUARDIAN INTERNATIONAL PAGES; Pg. 14

Length: 819 words

Byline: Robert Tait, Tehran

Body

Iranian student activists who staged an angry protest against President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad last week have gone into hiding in fear for their lives after his supporters threatened them with revenge.

One student fled after being photographed holding a banner reading, "Fascist president, the polytechnic is not for you", during Mr Ahmadinejad's visit to Tehran's Amir Kabir university. At least three others have gone underground after being seen burning his picture. Vigilantes from the militant Ansar-e Hezbollah group have been searching for them.

In a startling contrast to the acclaim Mr Ahmadinejad has received in numerous recent appearances around Iran, he faced chants of "Death to the dictator" as he addressed a gathering in the university's sports hall last week. Several hundred students forced their way in to voice anger over a clampdown on universities since he became president last year.

While his aides played down the incident, the Guardian has learned details of the violent and chaotic events.

The disclosures came yesterday as early returns from Friday's council elections indicated that Mr Ahmadinejad's hardline supporters had failed in their attempt to take control of several key local authorities. Turnout was estimated at about 60% after reformers urged liberal-minded electors to vote in large numbers to protest against the government's policies.

Last Monday's university demonstration triggered violent clashes between student activists and crowds of Basij militia, who were there to support the president. A shoe was thrown at Mr Ahmadinejad while a student had his nose broken by an aide to a cabinet minister.

Protesters later surrounded the president's car, prompting a security guard to fire a stun grenade to warn them off. Four cars in the presidential convoy collided in their haste to leave. Mr Ahmadinejad's staff later insisted he had remained calm and ordered that the students should go unpunished. But some of those present say he accused them of being paid United States agents who would be confronted.

"He threatened us directly, saying that what we were doing was against the wishes of the nation," said Babak Zamanian, a spokesman for Amir Kabir university's Islamic students' committee. "After that, the students protested even more sharply, calling him a lying religious dictator and shouting, 'Forget America and start thinking about us!'

International: Iranian students hide in fear for lives after venting fury at Ahmadinejad: President's supporters
vow revenge on protesters: Activists forecast h....

"We were chanting, 'Get lost Ahmadinejad!' and 'Ahmadinejad - element of discrimination and corruption.' You could see from his face that he was really shocked. He wasn't flashing his usual smile, and at one stage I thought he was going to cry. He told his supporters to respond with a religious chant hailing Ahmadinejad, but he was so shaken he was actually chanting it himself."

Another student said: "He was trying to keep control of himself, but you could see he was angry and upset."

Witnesses say Mr Ahmadinejad also tried to ridicule the students by referring to the university disciplinary code, under which those with three penalty points are suspended from studies. "He joked that he was going to issue a presidential order for those with three stars to be enlisted as sergeants in the army. That made the students really angry," said Mr Zamanian.

The university authorities' contentious use of the disciplinary code was said to be a trigger for last week's protest. About 70 students have been suspended and threatened with expulsion for various political activities, including writing articles critical of the government.

Last month, the authorities demolished two building belonging to the Islamic students' committee - a moderate grouping representing diverse opinions. An elected student body was also disbanded. Women students have been told to wear conservative dress and remove any makeup.

In this atmosphere, activists at Amir Kabir university - a traditional hotbed of political activism - regarded Mr Ahmadinejad's visit as a deliberate provocation and decided to protest. While many chanted, a hard core waved banners and burned his portrait, some ignoring instructions to cover their faces.

The 21-year-old student holding the "fascist president" banner was among those threatened with expulsion. He is said to be in grave danger after foreign news outlets, including the Guardian, published a picture of his gesture. Friends say he went into hiding after being confronted by two vigilantes.

"They said they would pull his father out of the grave (an ancient Persian threat)," said one student. "He is in real danger. Vigilantes have been standing at the dormitory doors asking for him."

Students now fear an even fiercer crackdown. "We believe (the authorities) will react much worse than before," said Armin Salmasi, 26, a leading activist. "We are already under constant surveillance. The student movement in Iran is going to be driven underground - just like it was before the revolution."

guardian.co.uk/iran >

Load-Date: December 18, 2006

**Poet denies blanket attack on Quebecers: Muslim controversy: Work
sparked by 'hurtful' town declaration**

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

February 13, 2007 Tuesday

National Edition

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Section: CANADA; Pg. A6

Length: 661 words

Byline: JEFF HEINRICH, CanWest News Service

Dateline: MONTREAL

Body

MONTREAL - A Lebanese Montrealer is defending a poem he wrote in which a Muslim woman praises the wearing of the hijab and calls non-believers drunken sluts.

The poem, by Haydar Moussa, was written in French and published three weeks ago in an Arab-language Montreal newspaper.

It has been posted on the Internet, in blogs and discussion groups and been called an outrage and the work of hypocritical fanatics.

But the 22-year-old poet, who was part of a Muslim delegation that went to Herouxville in Quebec on Sunday to plead for mutual respect and an end to ethnic stereotypes, stands by his words.

He defends them as merely a made-up cry of pain by what could be any devout Muslim woman hurt by anti-Islamic prejudice in Quebec.

"She's criticizing anyone who tries to bring her down, who tells her, 'Your veil is bad for our society', " said Mr. Moussa, who came here from Lebanon when he was eight years old and speaks for the Association of Young Lebanese Muslims.

"She's saying, 'You made mistakes and I never said anything. So why criticize me for something that is very personal?' " Mr. Moussa said.

"My veil is not a kerchief," reads the poem, titled Letter to You.

"It's my skin/My modesty, my dignity, my respect./And if you, old-stock immigrant woman/You have neither faith nor law/And you spent your youth drunk/And went from one male to the next/ That's not the case for me."

The poem was published Jan. 23 in the Montreal biweekly Sada Al Mashrek (Echo of the Orient). It ran beside a column by Najat Boughaba, writing under her nom de plume Najat Moustapha, a French literature scholar who led the Canadian Islamic Congress delegation to Herouxville.

Poet denies blanket attack on Quebecers: Muslim controversy: Work sparked by 'hurtful' town declaration

The village, near Shawinigan in the Mauricie, is at the centre of a daily debate in Quebec society over how far to "reasonably accommodate" the demands of traditional religious minorities.

Herouxville's council made international headlines last month after proclaiming a "code of life" that prospective immigrants should abide by -- for example, by not stoning women.

"I'm not a woman, but I'm an immigrant, and it was hurtful" to hear Herouxville's declaration and see it supported by a section of Quebec public opinion, said Mr. Moussa.

"I was hurt, and I wanted others to get a taste of what I got -- you understand?"

Posted on several Quebec and French Web sites critical of Islamic fundamentalism, including the blog of well-known Quebec commentator Richard Martineau and a Jewish site called Judeoscope.ca, the poem has drawn a flood of criticism, much of it anti-Arab.

"The friends of Hezbollah thank Quebecers by calling their daughters sluts," is the headline of one comment posted to the online forum of Liberty Vox.com, a French site.

"This poem is in bad taste," a writer named Abdelkarim Mohammed commented on Mr. Martineau's site.

"It juxtaposes the modesty and humility of Muslim women with the 'depravity' of Quebec women."

Most Muslim women in Montreal do not wear the hijab, he noted.

"But they're feeling the pressure of veiled women who are preaching and propagandizing for the veil."

But the poet doesn't see it that way, at all. The poem is about individual feelings, and is not a blanket statement about Quebecers and their values, Mr. Moussa said.

"I'm saying you can't generalize, like some people have done with us," he said.

LETTER TO YOU:

To whom it may concern

To the person

Who feels targeted

Who asked you to express yourself

Who gave you the right to speak

To bark like dogs in the street

Only to insult

Judge and say things

Insensitive and damned

That's not freedom of expression

So stop talking about freedom

If you don't know what it means

Stop talking about democracy

Poet denies blanket attack on Quebecers: Muslim controversy: Work sparked by 'hurtful' town declaration

If you behave like a tyrant

Stop talking about dignity

If your words are disrespectful

My veil is not a kerchief

It's my skin

My modesty, My dignity, My respect

And if you old-stock immigrant woman

You have neither faith, nor law

And you spent your youth drunk

And went from one male to another

That's not the case for me

Source: Haydar Moussa

Graphic

Black & White Photo : Marcos Townsend, CanWest News Service / Herouxville, Que., resident Louise Trudel argues with Samira Laouni, a Montrealer who travelled to the small Quebec town to address a code of societal norms passed by the town's council last month that forbids stoning of women, among other conduct. ;

Load-Date: February 13, 2007

Liberal heavyweights clash

The Guardian (Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island)

October 17, 2006 Tuesday

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Section: EDITORIAL; Pg. A6

Length: 769 words

Byline: Martin, Don

Body

It was the only hope for a main event long before the rivals took their places at the final debate of this neverendum referendum on new Liberal leadership.

There had to be clash of the front-runners over Michael Ignatieff's accusation that Israel had committed war crimes by hitting a civilian target which, upon forced reflection, he later declared had been committed by Hezbollah, too.

But an hour passed devoted to mundane topics where the candidates had uniform agreement separated by minor quibbles: Homelessness (bad), gun control (good), more women in politics (even better), same-sex marriages (the more the marryier), the environment (protection-worthy) and federal control over the Internet (huh?).

And then fortuitously, nay miraculously, Ignatieff was assigned a three-way panel spot against former Ontario premier Bob Rae and the smiling moderator announced the topic for discussion was foreign policy. Well, Hallelujah and start the tape recorder.

For a few minutes they circled diplomatically with Ignatieff demanding clarity on foreign matters, quite the appeal from Canada's Muddy Waters of Middle East positions.

Finally Rae couldn't resist his opponent's throbbing jugular any longer.

Rae: "We have to choose our words carefully when we talk about foreign policy. We have to assess our interests carefully when we set our foreign policy. That's what we have to do."

Ignatieff: "But Bob, that's all well and good, but we also have to know where we stand."

Rae: "Exactly."

Ignatieff: ". . . and early on you said you'd vote against an extension of the mission (in Afghanistan). Now you're saying something different, that is we have to prevail and stay. I actually don't know where you stand."

Rae: "Well, for a guy that's changed his mind three times in a week with respect to the Middle East . . ."

Ignatieff: "Absolutely untrue. You know that's not true. You've known me for 40 years and you know that's untrue. . . ."

Liberal heavyweights clash

Well, ain't that grand. Two close friends, who are most likely to be on the final leadership convention ballot, accusing each other of obfuscating, flip-flopping and lying on the discussion topic of the year.

Things might've deteriorated further except fringe candidate Martha Hall Findlay, who was third wheel on the podium, just had to poke her nose into the fray and bring order to the shouting by pointing out this showed divisions in party solidarity. Of course it did. That's why we wanted more. Dammit.

But they'd said their bit and they both emerged looking sheepishly more bashed-about loser than re-energized winner.

Beyond that, the debate was a lousy entertainment value for the \$25 admission ticket, notwithstanding the woman who revealed herself in a bikini before things got started and the heckler shouting into a bullhorn before being evicted. Still, this wasn't about wowing the public as much as it was Montreal-bound delegates trying to figure out their second ballot choice. On that score, most candidates could claim good and bad moments.

Former environment minister Stephane Dion used his mangled English to attack Ignatieff's new scheme for a national sustainability act as a needless pile-on of paperwork when the means to deal with pollution and greenhouse gases sits in existing regulations.

And he was correct to tire of the incessant attacks on Harper's PMO as the White House North. "Yes, yes, Harper is awful," he shrugged, before suggesting the group move onto voter-friendly visions.

The more you listen to Bob Rae, the better he sounds. Sure the Tories salivate at having his deficit-surging record as a premier of Ontario to recycle in their campaign ads, but there's not much doubt Rae would be a more disciplined campaigner than Ignatieff and, if he can find a byelection to win, be Harper's more formidable sparring opponent in the Commons.

Ontario politician Gerard Kennedy did well and nailed a key point by pointing out the debate dodged the most important question: "Do we deserve to be government again?"

But for the front-runner, Michael Ignatieff, things ended poorly after fending off jabs from needling opponents. When it came time to sign off, he opened an "all of us are dreamers" speech in gee- whiz form. "I think this is one of the best afternoons to be a Liberal I can ever remember," he gushed. I guess that's because he's had so few in the last 25 years while he lived outside Canada. So the winner? Well, given the debate highlight was between two Liberal heavyweights accusing each other of being dithering liars on a key policy question heading into the next election, that would be Stephen Harper.

Don Martin writes for the Calgary Herald.

Load-Date: October 19, 2006

Israeli Police Recommend Charges Against President

The New York Times

October 16, 2006 Monday

Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2006 The New York Times Company

Section: Section A; Column 3; Foreign Desk; Pg. 8

Length: 826 words

Byline: By GREG MYRE

Dateline: JERUSALEM, Oct. 15

Body

The Israeli police recommended on Sunday that President Moshe Katsav face charges of rape and sexual assault allegedly committed against several women in his office. Israel's attorney general must now decide whether to file such charges.

Mr. Katsav, who has held the mostly ceremonial post since 2000, has denied any wrongdoing. He has said that at least one of his accusers was trying to extort money and that his political enemies were behind the investigation.

After an inquiry that lasted nearly two months, the police on Sunday handed their findings to the attorney general, Menachem Mazuz. He will review the material and decide whether charges are warranted. It could be weeks before he announces a decision.

A joint statement by the police and the Justice Ministry said there was evidence that the president committed "rape, aggravated sexual assault, indecent acts without permission and offenses under the law to prevent sexual harassment."

According to the police, the inquiry also found evidence that the president had committed fraud and was engaged in illegal wiretapping.

"As far as we're concerned, we've completed the investigation," said Micky Rosenfeld, a police spokesman. "There is hard evidence and hard facts in this case."

Mr. Katsav's lawyer, Zion Amir, said in a statement that Israel's attorney general had in the past dismissed police findings as insufficient and had chosen not to file charges after investigations of senior officials.

Mr. Katsav has been facing calls for his resignation, and Sunday's statement by the police was sure to intensify those demands. Israel's Parliament opens its winter session on Monday, an event Mr. Katsav normally attends. Mr. Katsav's brother, Lior Katsav, told Israeli radio that the president planned to attend but would not address the legislators.

Several female lawmakers have threatened to walk out of the session if Mr. Katsav is present.

Israeli Police Recommend Charges Against President

"The president must resign," Education Minister Yuli Tamir told Israeli television. "If he doesn't do so, I believe a process will be launched to force him to resign."

Mr. Katsav is immune from standing trial while in office. However, if he resigns or is impeached by Parliament, he would have to face any charges against him, according to legal scholars. Mr. Katsav's seven-year term ends next year.

Although the case has received widespread coverage in Israel, any charges against Mr. Katsav are not likely to have broader political ramifications. Israel's president is expected to serve as a unifying force and set a moral tone, but his position is more symbolic than substantive.

Still, the controversy surrounding Mr. Katsav comes at a time when the Israeli public has expressed widespread disappointment in the country's leadership. Many Israelis say that the government and the military mismanaged the recent war with Hezbollah in Lebanon.

Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, a target for much of that criticism, has been under investigation regarding the sale of his Jerusalem home and the purchase of a new one. His critics say he received favored treatment, getting an above-market price for the home he sold and buying the new one at below its true value.

Several other politicians are under investigation or have been charged with wrongdoing, including the former justice minister, Haim Ramon, who quit in August and was subsequently charged with sexual harassment. Mr. Ramon is accused of forcibly kissing a female soldier, a charge he denies.

Mr. Katsav, 60, is married and has five children. He was born in Iran and came to Israel a few years after the country's independence in 1948. When he was 24, he was elected mayor of Kiryat Malachi, a poor town populated by immigrants in southern Israel. He was elected to Parliament in 1977 and served for many years with the right-wing Likud party.

In 2000, the elder statesman Shimon Peres was the heavy favorite to become the president, a position that is filled by a vote in Parliament. However, Mr. Katsav was the surprise winner.

As president, Mr. Katsav has been a low-key figure who frequently attends public ceremonies here and abroad, but has generally steered clear of the frequent controversies and political upheavals in Israel.

The allegations of sexual misconduct against Mr. Katsav first surfaced during the summer, and the formal investigation began in August. The police confiscated a computer and documents from the president's official residence on Aug. 21 and have since questioned him at length on several occasions.

Although his accusers have not been identified, police officials say they are five women who have worked in the president's office.

Israel's previous president, Ezer Weizman, resigned in 2000 amid scandal. During the 1980's, when he was a lawmaker and cabinet minister, he received hundreds of thousands of dollars from a French businessman with interests in Israel. No charges were filed against Mr. Weizman, who died in 2005.

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Load-Date: October 16, 2006

West is not at war with Islam: Bush

The Australian (Australia)
September 21, 2006 Thursday
All-round Country Edition

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 7

Length: 770 words

Byline: David Nason, New York correspondent

Body

MATP

GEORGE W.Bush has appealed to the Muslim world to reject the "false propaganda" of extremists who say the West is at war with Islam.

In a landmark speech to the UN General Assembly, Mr Bush said the propaganda was being used to confuse Muslims and "justify acts of terror" in the twisted belief that violence and martyrdom could restore human dignity.

Aiming his remarks directly at rank-and-file Muslims rather than Islamic governments, the US President returned over and over to the twin pillars of the so-called Bush Doctrine, saying the US would not shirk from fighting terrorists and was as determined as ever to spread freedom and democracy, especially in the Middle East.

"We respect Islam, but we will protect our people from those who pervert Islam to sow death and destruction," Mr Bush said.

"Our goal is to help you build a more tolerant and hopeful society that honours people of all faiths and promotes peace."

But as Mr Bush was speaking in New York, the commander of US forces in the Middle East, General John Abizaid, was delivering gloomy news in Washington, saying there was little prospect of US troop numbers in Iraq being reduced before April-May next year because of the strength of the insurgency.

General Abizaid said it was even possible troop numbers would be increased from the current level of about 140,000, an assessment well short of last year's optimism that troop levels might be reduced to about 100,000 by the end of this year.

Vice-President Dick Cheney was also on the warpath, telling a convention of car salesmen that the hopes of the civilised world depended on a US victory in Iraq, which Mr Cheney regards as a front in the war on terror.

"The war on terror is a test of our strength, a test of our capabilities and, above all, a test of our character," he said.

"We know that the hopes of the civilised world ride with us. Our cause is right, it is just and this nation will prevail."

West is not at war with Islam: Bush

Mr Bush told the UN that it was clear the world was engaged in a great ideological struggle between extremists who used terror as a weapon to create fear and "moderate people who work for peace".

But a world beyond terror, where "the extremists are marginalised by the peaceful majority", was within reach, he said. "This world can be ours if we seek it and if we work together."

Mr Bush cited several examples of democratic advances in Muslim nations as evidence of a bright future taking root in the broader Middle East.

"Some of the changes in the Middle East are happening gradually, but they are real," he said.

"Algeria has held its first competitive presidential election, and the military remained neutral. The United Arab Emirates recently announced that half of the seats in its Federal National Council will be chosen by elections. Kuwait held elections in which women were allowed to vote and run for office for the first time. Citizens have voted in municipal elections in Saudi Arabia, in parliamentary elections in Jordan and Bahrain, and in multi-party presidential elections in Yemen and Egypt.

"Every nation that travels the road to freedom moves at a different pace, and the democracies they build will reflect their own culture and traditions. But the destination is the same: a free society where people live at peace with each other and at peace with the world."

However, Mr Bush also said the millions of people trapped by oppression and hopelessness in the Middle East represented "a breeding ground for extremism".

He called on civilised nations everywhere to support those in the region who offered a more hopeful alternative. "We know that when people have a voice in their future, they are less likely to blow themselves up in suicide attacks," Mr Bush said. "We know that when leaders are accountable to their people, they are more likely to seek national greatness in the achievements of their citizens, rather than in terror and conquest."

Turning to Iran, he said the US respected the Iranian people and their rich and vibrant history.

But Mr Bush said Iran's potential was being shackled by rulers who denied liberty and used the nation's resources to fund terrorism and pursue nuclear weapons.

Similarly, he accused Syria's leadership of making the country a "crossroad for terrorism".

"In your midst, Hamas and Hezbollah are working to destabilise the region, and your Government is turning your country into a tool of Iran," Mr Bush said.

"This is increasing your country's isolation from the world. Your Government must choose a better way forward by ending its support for terror, and living in peace with your neighbours."

Cut & Paste -- Page 13

Load-Date: September 20, 2006

the legacy of the good neighbour has been lost

Ottawa Citizen

August 12, 2006 Saturday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. B6; David Warren

Length: 776 words

Byline: David Warren, The Ottawa Citizen

Body

When the Jewish farmers of Metula, in upper Galilee, were fleeing the Sunni Muslim Arabs in 1920, they went to hide at Nabatiya and other Shia villages in what is now southern Lebanon. Jews of Kfar Giladi went to Taybah, where they received the protection of Shiite Sheikh Kamal Assad Berk. Jews and Shiites were on excellent terms in those days, in the ethnic quilt of the mountains of Galilee, the Golan, and southern Levant. The Jews employed Shiites on their farms and cultivated their friendship in an environment in which they were already often under siege.

I have this from Meir Ben Dov, an elderly resident of Metula, interviewed in the Israeli newspaper, Haaretz. He had it from his grandparents, who lived it.

Druze, Bedouin, Maronite Christians, Roman Catholics and Greek Orthodox Christians were among the other inhabitants of that district, which passed back and forth between the British and French mandates as boundaries were revised. Also Circassians, Kurds, Moughrabi, Turkmen, Alawites and Nawars (the Muslim gypsies). They were not all mixed together, but living apart, in their respective villages and caravanserais. But they traded with each other, and sometimes fought.

They had all been there since Ottoman times, permitted to settle or remain as part of a complex juggle by the authorities, trying to keep the roads open between the coastal plains and interior cities such as Damascus. Minorities were given preference, because their loyalty to the government was assured: each community in its turn needing official protection, whether from feuds with one another or with the Arab majority.

The Sunni Arabs seized villages such as Metula, but then gave them up for fear of reprisal from the authorities. Mr. Ben Dov mentions that when the Jewish families returned, they found their farms intact. The Arabs had been too honourable to loot them.

I know less than I should about the recent history (which is to say the last few centuries), of what is now southern Lebanon and northern Israel; I probably know more about the ancient history. But the memoirs of Mr. Ben Dov seem eminently plausible from the little I do know; and fit with what I know of "colonial" and "imperial" local histories elsewhere. The "ethnic cleansing" that is an almost international phenomenon is chiefly a product of very recent history -- the last few decades.

This is perhaps an inevitable phenomenon once modern conditions are even partially introduced and the old independent village arrangements become insupportable. Contrary to the blather of "multiculturalism," it takes a

the legacy of the good neighbour has been lost

very long time for people of different religious and ethnic persuasions to work out arrangements to live and let live, and these easily fall apart. And contrary to the old "melting pot" blather, the homogenization of cultures happens only under such artificial conditions as we have had in North America. One could almost say that if the second generation of immigrants hasn't assimilated into the majority culture, it isn't going to. A new ethnic crazy quilt will emerge, but with contentions between groups on an unmanageable scale.

For in today's world, there is no such thing as a remote village. Members of each ethnic group become vividly aware of the rest of their diaspora. The grievance of one becomes the grievance of all. Ethnicity easily mutates into ideology.

I return to Mr. Ben Dov. He noticed the sort of thing so simple and obvious that it would escape the attention of most intellectual observers. It was about Hassan Nasrallah, the Hezbollah leader, born and raised in the village of al-Bazuriya, whose great-grandparents might easily have sheltered Mr. Ben Dov's grandparents. It was that Nasrallah wears a Persian turban, and Persian clothes. His ancestors would have worn their own version of kaffiyeh and awal (the headcloth and cord), and sharwal (baggy trousers). Nor would his women have worn veils.

The people of Shia villages in southern Lebanon are still Shiites, to be sure; but they have been transformed, under the influence of a vicious ideology, into agents of fanatics giving orders from far away. And the new clothing is only the outward manifestation. Their religion has been changed within them, from time-honoured custom to something hateful and unspeakably aggressive.

What is their future? For we are, or at least I am, hardly concerned exclusively with the future of the Israeli Jews or the Lebanese Christians. Their leaders have led them into the valley of the shadow of death, and cannot lead them out again. I truly can't imagine how they can recover, or how any outsider can help.

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

Load-Date: August 12, 2006

Boos greet UN chief on Beirut visit

The Advertiser (Australia)
August 30, 2006 Wednesday
State Edition

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Section: FOREIGN; Pg. 31

Length: 180 words

Byline: JOCELYNE ZABLIT, BEIRUT

Body

UNITED Nations chief Kofi Annan was booed by a crowd chanting pro-**Hezbollah** slogans yesterday as he toured Beirut's southern suburbs devastated by Israel's war against the Shi'ite militant group.

Dozens of men, **women** and children waved pictures of **Hezbollah** leader Hassan Nasrallah and shouted, "Allah, Nasrallah and all of the suburbs", as the UN Secretary General surveyed the destruction in the heart of the Haret Hreik area, a **Hezbollah** stronghold. Others booed and shouted "death to Israel" and "long live Syria".

Mr Annan was accompanied by Lebanese Prime Minister Fuad Siniora, Foreign Minister Fawzi Sallukh and **Hezbollah** MPs. His visit lasted barely 10 minutes.

The UN and the West were criticised during Israel's offensive for failing to stop the bloodshed that claimed almost 1500 lives, mainly Lebanese civilians.

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, meanwhile, has announced an inquiry into the war. He has been facing calls to launch an independent probe over the army's preparedness for the conflict, the government's conduct of the war and failure to crush **Hezbollah**.

Load-Date: August 29, 2006

A question of power

The Sunday Times (London)

August 6, 2006

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Section: FEATURES; Culture; Pg. 40

Length: 786 words

Byline: Brendan Simms

Body

ARABS. By Mark Allen. Continuum. £ 14.99. pp145

"The level of noise about the Arabs," Mark Allen tells us at the start of his intriguing book, "has been steadily rising." As the crisis in Lebanon deepens and the turmoil in Iraq is no closer to a solution, one can only agree. It is for this reason that laymen turn to the expert for guidance. Allen is much better qualified than most to supply it: most of his 30-odd years in what he euphemistically describes as the "Foreign Service" were spent in the Arab Middle East: Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt and the Gulf states. He is also the author of a book on Arab falconry.

His aim is not to criticise (he implies that he could have written a "slamming" book if he had wanted) but to understand. He wishes to capture what ornithologists call the "jizz" of a bird, ie its "overall and essential impression". Yet at the same time, he is careful to differentiate: it is striking that his essay is entitled Arabs, not a faux-authoritative The Arabs, and he speaks throughout of "some Arabs".

At the heart of this book is a series of paradoxes. On the one hand, Arabs stress the importance of "blood", that is of patrilinear descent; on the other, they celebrate the universality of the religious community of Islam. Many Arabs shut themselves off in houses that resemble mini-fortresses, yet Allen stresses that they are fundamentally hospitable and gregarious. Indeed, he is "unable to recall finding an Arab all alone". Perhaps that is why they have so little time to read books: the author tells us that the first printing press in the Arab world was opened in Cairo in 1828, and although this is beginning to change, relatively few new books are published and read in the Middle East outside the democracies. All this is communicated in a highly distinctive style, elliptical, anecdotal, compassionate, subtle and sometimes fey, which makes for compelling reading.

Allen works his way relentlessly to the core of the problem: politics and the question of power. Here he notes bleakly that of the 20-odd members of the Arab League, eight are ruled by dynasties and eight by revolutionary or military governments of one sort or another; only three, Iraq, Palestine and the Lebanon, can be described as democracies. The remainder includes the Comoros Islands, Somalia, Eritrea and Mauritania, the classification of which he wisely does not attempt. In this context, he recounts a telling moment in 1989, when news of the fall of Ceausescu reached a session of the "Euro-Arab dialogue". After the Europeans had finished celebrating, they noticed that Arab countenances were "a picture of confusion and apprehension". If we want to know why the fall of Saddam Hussein was received so conflictedly in the Arab world, we need look no further than the fact that the vast majority of Arabs live under some form of political dictatorship. This, of course, is the greatest paradox of all. As Allen tells us, Arabs have an acute sense of their own personality, individuality and dignity. To note this is one thing, to change it, quite another. Allen rather pulls his punches here, observing simply with understatement that the question of whether western democracy "is actually well suited to the region" is still open.

A question of power

This is a short book on a vast subject. No doubt more could have been said about Christian Arabs and other minorities. Some might wish for greater detail on the urbanised public sphere that is now crystallising around al-Jazeera and other media. One also wonders whether the importance of the warrior cult would have repaid greater investigation. To the amateur psychologist, it sometimes seems that the repeated military defeats, some of them sustained long before Israel had American backing, drive an Arab conspiracy culture that seeks to blame the outsider instead of domestic failings. The recent rhetorical flourishes of Hezbollah's Sheikh Nasrallah may be a case in point. If the Arabs had a Churchill, he would tell them that wars are not won by evacuations. But perhaps, as Allen would say, that is simply to make one point and miss another.

Insofar as the author sees a ray of hope, it lies in Arab women. Their lot is by all accounts a hard one: religiously ordained inferiority, public invisibility and sometimes state- tolerated "honour-killings" are part of life in many areas. On the other hand, he points out, women are more skilful at adapting to modernity. When Allen's wife asked some women if heaven held out any equivalent for the virgins promised to the men, she received an unforgettable answer. "My dear," came the response, "in my heaven, there will be no men at all.

Available at the Sunday Times Books First price of £ 13.49 (inc p&p) on 0870 165 858

Load-Date: August 6, 2006

End of Document

Mideast can find peace if U.S. acts, Ellison says; The Minnesota Democrat and first Muslim congressman said he returned from the region impressed with the desire for reconciliation at every stop.

Star Tribune (Minneapolis, MN)

April 8, 2007 Sunday

Metro Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 1B

Length: 755 words

Byline: Rochelle Olson, Staff Writer

Body

U.S. Rep. Keith Ellison, the only Muslim in Congress, says he returned from a high-level trip to the Middle East on Saturday with a strengthened belief in the possibility of peace if the United States is willing to provide leadership.

"If we fold our arms and turn our backs and say people have to meet conditions before we meet with them, things are going to get worse," he said in a telephone interview in a cab after he landed in Washington. "There is no doubt the United States is the world's leading power, and they know it."

Ellison, elected in November to a two-year term representing the Fifth District centered in Minneapolis, kept a low profile as he traveled to Israel, the West Bank, Lebanon, Syria and Saudi Arabia with a congressional delegation led by U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi. "In all those places, I can feel the possibility for healing, for reconciliation and moving forward," he said.

The Bush administration has promoted Ellison's status as the first Muslim in Congress around the world, even though the freshman Democrat disagrees with many of the president's policies and often has preached the importance of negotiating with all sides.

"You don't need peace treaties with your friends," he said.

Ellison said he came away impressed by the warmth of Syrian **women** toward Pelosi, the intelligence of Lebanese parliamentary leader Saad Hariri, the leadership of Saudi King Abdullah and the candor of Mahmoud Abbas, president of the Palestinian Authority.

When the delegation walked into the eighth-century Omayyad Mosque in Syria's capital, he said, the **women** inside turned and waved at Pelosi and followed her outside to be photographed with her. "The people felt like a world leader was demonstrating humanity toward them," he said.

The stop in Damascus was the most controversial because Pelosi, the third-highest ranking elected official behind the president and vice president, is the most senior U.S. leader to visit since Syrian-American relations faltered in 2003.

Mideast can find peace if U.S. acts, Ellison says The Minnesota Democrat and first Muslim congressman said he returned from the region impressed with the desire....

The Bush administration contends that Syria has allowed militant fighters safe passage into neighboring Iraq and meddled in Lebanese politics. Washington has been trying to isolate Syria diplomatically since 2005, when it withdrew its ambassador to protest the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri. Many Lebanese blamed Syria for the assassination, but officials in Damascus denied involvement.

The delegation also brought word from Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert that he is willing to talk peace provided Syria "close the borders" to **Hezbollah** and Hamas. Ellison said Syrian President Bashar al-Assad also expressed a desire for peace but doesn't admit to helping those organizations. "He has his own explanations," Ellison said. "If he claims he's not doing these things, we need an American administration that's going to verify and to verify, we need to be talking to them."

According to Ellison, the delegation also relayed assurances from Olmert that Israel had no plans to attack Syria.

"He very clearly said he was worried that Syria might misinterpret some things that were happening in Israel, and he didn't want to end up in an accidental war with them," Ellison said.

When the U.S. delegation talked to Abbas in the West Bank about strengthening his position against Hamas, Ellison said the Palestinian leader told them that will be difficult because the United States puts conditions on money given to him while Iran recently delivered \$500 million to Hamas.

Ellison said King Abdullah personally invited him to return to Saudi Arabia, a trip he would like to make to see Mecca and Medina, the two holiest sites in Islam.

Since shortly before his election, Ellison has been planning a trip to Israel with the help of the Jewish Community Relations Council of Minnesota and the Dakotas. He said the trip is tentatively being considered for August and will have a different focus - more "neighbor to neighbor," traveling with and meeting with regular people in the streets and cities. On this trip, he said, he felt he was well-received in Israel.

"What I admired in Israel was the very frank and widely diverse points of view that were expressed," Ellison said. "People there love a lively debate. And they had one."

Steve Hunegs, executive director of the JCRC, is looking forward to talking to Ellison about his trip. Ellison, the only member of the delegation who isn't a committee chairman, said he was there to listen and learn.

The Associated Press contributed to this report. Rochelle Olson - 612-673-1747

Graphic

PHOTO

Load-Date: April 10, 2007

The silence that kills

The International Herald Tribune

March 3, 2007 Saturday

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Section: OPINION; Pg. 9

Length: 757 words

Byline: Thomas Friedman - The New York Times Media Group

Body

On Feb. 20, The Associated Press reported from Afghanistan that a suicide attacker disguised as a health worker blew himself up near "a crowd of about 150 people who had gathered for a ribbon-cutting ceremony to open an emergency ward at the main government hospital in the city of Khost." A few days later, at a Baghdad college, a female Sunni suicide bomber blew herself up amid students who were ready to sit for exams, killing 40 people.

Stop and think for a moment how sick this is. Then stop for another moment and listen to the silence. The Bush team is mute. It says nothing, because it has no moral authority. No one would listen.

President George W. Bush is losing a public-relations war to people who blow up emergency wards. Europeans are mute, lost in their delusion that this is all Bush's and Tony Blair's fault.

But worst of all, Muslims, the very people whose future is being killed, are also mute. No surge can work in Iraq unless we have a "moral surge," a counternihilism strategy that delegitimizes suicide bombers. The most important restraints are cultural, societal and religious. It takes a village but the Arab-Muslim village today is largely silent. The best are indifferent or intimidated; the worst quietly applaud the Sunnis who kill Shiites.

Nobody in the Arab world "has the guts to say that what is happening in Iraq is wrong that killing schoolkids is wrong," said Mamoun Fandy, director of the Middle East program at the International Institute for Strategic Studies. "People somehow think that killing Iraqis is good because it will stick it to the Americans, so Arabs are undermining the American project in Iraq by killing themselves."

The world worries about highly enriched uranium, but "the real danger is highly enriched Islam," Fandy added. That is, "highly enriched Sunnism" and "highly enriched Shiism" that eats away at the Muslim state, the way Hezbollah is trying to do in Lebanon or the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt or Al Qaeda everywhere.

One result: There's no legitimate, decent, accepted source of Arab-Muslim authority today, no center of gravity "for people to anchor their souls in," Fandy said. In this welter of confusion, the suicide bombers go uncondemned or subtly extolled.

Arab nationalist media like Al-Jazeera "practically tell bin Laden and his followers, 'Bravo,'" Fandy said. "The message sent to bin Laden is that 'You are doing to the West what we want done, but we can't do it.' This is the hidden message that the West is not privy to. Unless extreme pressure is applied on Muslims all over the world to come up with counter-fatwas and pronounce these men as pariahs, very little will happen in fighting terrorism."

The silence that kills

"The battleground in the Arab world today is not in Palestine or Lebanon, but in the classrooms and newsrooms," Fandy concluded.

That's where "the software programmers" reside who create symbolic images and language glorifying suicide bombers and make their depraved acts look legitimate. Only other Arab-Muslim programmers can defeat them.

Occasionally an honest voice rises, giving you a glimmer of hope that others will stand up. The Memri translation Web site (memri.org) just posted a poem called "When," from a Saudi author, Wajeha al-Huwaider, that was posted on Arab reform sites like www.aafaq.org.

"When you cannot find a single garden in your city, but there is a mosque on every corner you know that you are in an Arab country.

When you see people living in the past with all the trappings of modernity do not be surprised, you are in an Arab country.

When religion has control over science you can be sure that you are in an Arab country.

When clerics are referred to as "scholars" don't be astonished, you are in an Arab country.

When you see the ruler transformed into a demigod who never dies or relinquishes his power, and nobody is permitted to criticize do not be too upset, you are in an Arab country.

When you find that the large majority of people oppose freedom and find joy in slavery do not be too distressed, you are in an Arab country.

When you hear the clerics saying that democracy is heresy, but seizing every opportunity provided by democracy to grab high positions do not be surprised, you are in an Arab country.

When you discover that a woman is worth half of what a man is worth, or less do not be surprised, you are in an Arab country.

When land is more important than human beings you are in an Arab country.

When fear constantly lives in the eyes of the people you can be certain you are in an Arab country."

Load-Date: March 4, 2007

Columbia U. president's blunder teaches bad lesson

University Wire

September 25, 2006 Monday

Copyright 2006 Columbia Daily Spectator via U-Wire

Section: COLUMN

Length: 797 words

Byline: By Jaime Sneider, Columbia Daily Spectator; **SOURCE:** Columbia U.

Dateline: NEW YORK

Body

Accounts differ as to why Columbia University ultimately withdrew its invitation to Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. Some accept the explanation Columbia President Lee Bollinger gave through Public Affairs officials that security could not be arranged in time. Others believe security was a pretext for uninviting Ahmadinejad, and that Bollinger secretly feared the backlash of alumni and the country at large. Whether Bollinger is morally bankrupt or just a coward makes no difference: his blunder teaches a bad lesson.

According to Bollinger, the only hurdle standing between the Iranian president and a podium at Columbia University is the problem of logistics. According to the Columbia Spectator, inviting a man who has made the destruction of America and Israel his *raison d'être* "was well within reason." According to Lisa Anderson, the dean of Columbia's School of International and Public Affairs, remarks by Ahmadinejad would enrich the academic experience of students. What to conclude from these assertions?

Some students, including the Spectator editorial board, believe dialogue and debate are the way to go. They argue that we must understand Ahmadinejad if we hope to resume diplomacy between the United States and Iran, suspended 27 years ago when the then-new Islamic regime allowed 52 Americans at the U.S. Embassy to be held hostage for 444 days. These individuals argue that only those unwilling to make small talk with Ahmadinejad are responsible for our two countries' lack of diplomatic relations.

The problem with this argument is that it's wrong. These statements are premised on the notion that we are in doubt as to what Ahmadinejad believes. Yet, Ahmadinejad has not been shy in sharing his opinions with the world: he led the official celebrations on Iran's "Death to America" day; he wants Israel "wiped off the map"; he accuses Jewish people of having "invented the myth" of the Holocaust; and he boasts of providing material support to Hezbollah, the terrorists who have killed hundreds of Americans and Israelis. In what context could any of these assertions be justified and how can they possibly be explained?

Spectator simultaneously argues Columbia should provide Ahmadinejad with a forum so students have the opportunity to skewer him. This is a red herring: if we all agree that Ahmadinejad has nothing new or admirable to teach, then there is no need to host him in the first place. Giving Ahmadinejad yet another platform on which to speak may display our Western concepts of freedom and tolerance but does nothing to advance them. Iran is a religious dictatorship that executes gays, oppresses women, and imprisons anyone who stands at odds with the government. If inviting this man to our community, under the guise of breaking bread, is well within reason, then no idea is off limits, every disagreement is reasonable, black is white, and up is down.

Columbia U. president's blunder teaches bad lesson

In autumn 1998, a conservative group from off campus paid Columbia to rent its Faculty House and host a series of speakers all opposed to racial preferences. Spectator called upon the campus to protest, and the University locked conference attendees out of the building on the second day of the event. The speakers tried to give their talks, but were often drowned out by shrieking student protestors. The University explained its decision in a letter to the student body, indicating that the administration strongly supports racial preferences. Does the administration honestly believe Ahmadinejad poses any less of a threat to the values Columbia embodies?

If Dean Anderson had invited the know-nothing who pickets military funerals with a sign reading "God Hates Fags," no one can doubt that Spectator would find this speaker's arguments beyond the pale. And rightfully so: people can reasonably disagree about certain ideas, but there are still others that no enlightened person can possibly entertain. Sometimes it will be difficult to parse out what beliefs are "over the line," but Ahmadinejad's ideas do not present a close call. Unfortunately, many faculty members and students make the mistake of assuming any belief, no matter how ludicrous, automatically falls within the camp of reasonable ideas if it is couched in anti-American rhetoric.

The evil before us is not banal. Ironically, the very individuals who want to share a room with Ahmadinejad, and stare him in the face, seem the blindest to his evil. But our country, and its most esteemed institutions, cannot afford to give away what our enemy seeks to take. Just wavering carries an enormous cost. People across the world are picking sides. What will our potential allies assume if we invite our most grievous enemy to be our guest and host him warmly, as we would a friend?

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Load-Date: September 25, 2006

A TV drama will show the fictional assassination of President Bush. But what if it had really happened?

Daily Mail (London)

September 1, 2006 Friday

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Section: ED 1ST; Pg. 8

Length: 1728 words

Byline: MARK ALMOND

Body

HELD UP by a Secret Service bodyguard in his dying moments after being shot in the stomach, this is President Bush being assassinated.

The American leader is surrounded by a crowd of panicking onlookers just seconds after being gunned down by a Syrian-born U.S. citizen outside a Chicago hotel.

But this shocking image, created by putting the President's face onto an actor with digital wizardry, is part of a new British drama for Channel Four about the War on Terror.

In *Death Of A President*, which has caused outrage in America and will premiere at the Toronto Film Festival this month, the shooting is a starting point for a fictional documentary about what happened next.

So what would happen if President Bush was assassinated? Here, a historian looks to the future - and imagines the terrifying consequences.

BEFORE that fateful day - November 9, 2006 - historians liked to say the world could never again lurch into global crisis because of one man's death, as it had in 1914 when Austria's Archduke Franz Ferdinand was murdered in Sarajevo, sparking World War I.

The assassination of John Kennedy at the height of the Cold War hadn't led to Armageddon in 1963, so why should things spiral out of control now if a president was murdered?

That confident view was shattered as global communications networks froze from overload while transmitting round the world the picture of the 43rd President of the United States slumping forward after being fatally shot in the stomach.

The murder of George W. Bush set off a global crisis with which we still live today, ten years after he was killed.

Of course, in retrospect, we historians could see it all coming. In the summer of 2006, there had been the 'proxy war' between America and Iran fought out in Lebanon between their two regional allies, Israel and *Hezbollah*. That war ended badly for Israel and emboldened Iran to defy the United Nations and, more to the point, the United States over its nuclear ambitions.

A TV drama will show the fictional assassination of President Bush. But what if it had really happened?

George W. Bush's hopes of bringing 'peace through democracy' to the Middle East after his invasion of Iraq had already worn thin by autumn 2006. Antiwar demonstrations had become more numerous and security tightened everywhere.

The crude dum- dum bullet fired into the President's stomach that November day caused fatal bleeding and the media were reporting the suspected assassin's details within minutes.

Few people in America needed to know more than that the suspected killer of their President was Syrian-born. As the spotlight of blame focused on Syria, regarded by Americans as Iran's poodle, the Iranian Foreign Ministry didn't help its cause by issuing a perfunctory statement expressing regret that the President had 'died in a violent manner' and hoping that the American people would soon choose a new one who would be more peace-loving.

It outraged Americans and George W's mother Barbara was overheard at the state funeral telling Cherie Blair: 'It was like what you say to the maid when her dog gets run over. Get a new one, dear, you'll get over it.' The American public wasn't interested in the formal regrets from Damascus and Tehran.

Television coverage showed scenes of jubilation on the streets of Syrian and Iranian cities.

The new President, speaking from a 'secure location' soon nicknamed Bunker One, announced that 'those who celebrate death will learn to taste it soon enough'. Dick Cheney appeared unfazed by the day's gruesome events.

While America closed ranks and mourned, across the Islamic world Bush's death was greeted with outpourings of joy. American troops in Iraq and Afghanistan got into firefights with local militias shooting in the air.

Saddam's trial was suspended as the defendants hugged each other in the dock.

But what hurt Americans most was the

Europeans' lack of grief. Officially, Europe, from Brussels to Berlin and Paris, expressed sorrow and outrage, and President Chirac led the EU mourners in Washington.

But there was nothing like the sadness which greeted Kennedy's murder four decades earlier.

Despite Britain's own experience of Islamic terrorism, the public response to the murder of the American president here was muted, at best - and in some quarters, not all Muslim, it was joyful.

The Independent newspaper published its obituary with a frontpage collage under the headline 'Latest victim of war on terror'.

A passport-style photograph of the late President was put in alphabetical order between a Marine sergeant, George Urban Bush, killed in Iraq the day before and an Air Force pilot, Ryan Caldwell, killed in a helicopter crash near Kabul on the same day the President was shot.

The BBC played a montage of Bush's malapropisms from 'Don't mis-underestimate me' to 'The nostalgia for my administration will only begin after it's over'.

The book of condolence at the U.S. embassy in London was thin, though the ambassador diplomatically put the short queue waiting to sign down to 'fear of a terrorist attack'.

At home and abroad, the gloating over Bush's death soon gave way to a sober realisation that he had actually been a check on Dick Cheney's ruthless way of defending America from enemies at home or abroad.

Executive orders authorising detention without trial of citizens as well as aliens suspected of 'terrorist affiliations' and closing America's borders were signed off with astonishing alacrity, as were military plans to strike regimes that had celebrated Bush's death.

A TV drama will show the fictional assassination of President Bush. But what if it had really happened?

Syria was attacked, but Iran bore the brunt. Mass strikes by bombers and cruise missiles knocked out any capacity Iran had for making modern weapons, let alone nuclear bombs, but at a huge price. A country of 70million cowered under the shadow of burning oil wells and the pollution from devastated petrochemical plants.

Fighting Iran turned out to be much bloodier than the blitzkrieg against Saddam's Iraq. Iran's Revolutionary Guards had learned the lessons of Hezbollah's war with Israel. They avoided head-on confrontation with the U.S.

Army's armoured columns. Ambush and sabotage were their weapons.

A grim war went on year after year in the lunar landscape which was much of Iran. As America struggled to find a replacement for the Ayatollahs' regime, even the willing support of Iranian EmigrEs from America wanting to wipe away the stain of the assassin's crime could not build a stable pro-U.S.

government in Tehran.

In Britain, America's strike against Iran set off protests from East London to Yorkshire. Islamic radicals declared emirates in Blackburn and Bradford.

Petrol bombs flew as the police tried to restore order.

Tony Blair decided he couldn't retire in a crisis. Instead David Cameron's Tories joined him in a National Government as endemic disorder in some urban areas was compounded by a dramatic increase in attacks on British troops in Basra and in parts of Afghanistan.

When Tony Blair stepped down in 2009 to join President Cheney's Anti-Assassination Commission, it was David Cameron who won the election, attacking Gordon Brown as out of touch with a world in crisis.

Oil prices went on climbing steadily, and no one needs reminding that petrol today is still Pounds 3 a litre here and that David Cameron's 'green is the colour of national security' government only lets you buy 30 litres a week.

But for America, it was crises closer to home following George Bush's murder that shaped events.

Donald Rumsfeld at the Pentagon seemed rejuvenated. Even as U.S. planes and cruise missiles struck at targets across Iran, American naval power went into action against Iran's ally Hugo Chavez, the President of Venezuela. A wave of protests swept Latin America. Chaos engulfed much of Mexico, sending waves of refugees north to the American border.

US troops tried to keep them out and 'suspect types' were shipped to Guantanamo Bay for screening.

The Guantanamo Bay camp was enlarged to accommodate the internees. Castro's regime protested. The ailing Fidel wasn't really in charge any more and his brother, Raul, tried to boost his own public image by organising a mass march to the U.S. base.

Whatever the younger Castro meant to happen, the carefully orchestrated crowds began to pull at the fences around the camp and then to try to climb it.

What happened next is disputed. The U.S.

Marines guarding the camp claimed Cuban secret policemen shot at the people trying to climb into the base to stop them escaping from communism.

The Cuban authorities said their security forces opened fire to defend the protesters, who were being attacked by the Yankee soldiers. Soon 113 people, including women and children, were dead.

The 'Guantanamo Massacre' provoked outrage in Havana. Cheney told Rumsfeld to 'swat' Castro's regime once and for all.

A TV drama will show the fictional assassination of President Bush. But what if it had really happened?

Another war of liberation broke out.

The backlash from these attempts to resolve America's foreign problems with decisive military strikes overshadowed the domestic impact of Bush's death.

Iranian and Arab Americans weathered the wave of revenge pogroms set off by the assassination, but the bureaucracy of Homeland Security extended its surveillance over them, and pretty well anyone else.

Cheney's re-election campaign in 2008 was conducted in a virtual state of emergency, with him addressing the Republican convention by 3D video link from a secure location. The mood of ongoing crisis, combined with the choice of Jeb Bush as his Vice President, widely seen in America as a tribute to the slain President, ensured him a landslide.

For a man with a history of heart problems, Cheney's survival for almost ten years as president during what the New York Times called 'Our Time of Troubles' was remarkable.

'I thrive on crisis,' Cheney explained, 'it was peace that got me tense.'

Occasionally he was short of breath, but Cheney even turned this to his advantage. Images of President Cheney in a wheelchair at Thanksgiving 2010 were carefully choreographed to recall Franklin Roosevelt in charge of the war effort 70 years earlier.

Despite the mayhem since Bush's murder, most Americans had preferred to stick by Dick Cheney. His no-nonsense manner reassured, even as crises kept recurring.

For an embattled America and its allies, this endless war, with its relentless suicide bombings, anarchy in countries all over the globe and brutal reprisals, became known as a 'clash of civilisations'. But how much worthy of the name civilisation remained to be defended?

MARK ALMOND is Reader in Modern History at Oriel College, Oxford.

Graphic

THE DEATH OF DEMOCRACY? THE ASSASSINATION OF GEORGE W. BUSH AS SHOWN IN THE FICTIONAL DOCUMENTARY FILM DEATH OF A PRESIDENT, WHICH HAS OUTRAGED AMERICANS

Load-Date: September 1, 2006

Honestly, I never want to be leader again

The Sunday Times (London)

August 13, 2006

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Section: FEATURES; News Review; Pg. 5

Length: 1732 words

Byline: Isabel Oakeshott

Body

There's an old joke about how to tell when politicians are lying: it's when their lips move. But body language experts say there's a more subtle giveaway: touching the nose. William Hague does this just once when he claims to know nothing about branding during a discussion about David Cameron's decision last week to change the Tory logo from the traditional blue flaming torch to a green oak tree. But the skill with which Hague has rebranded himself tells another story. From baseball cap-wearing dork to Westminster's most feted debater, the transformation has been remarkable.

Not long ago he was written off as a failed anorak who flunked the Tories' chances with cringey stunts. But his popularity now is such that in the last Tory leadership campaign gamblers gave him an 8-1 chance of being the next leader when he was not even standing.

He is such a hot property on television shows and the after-dinner speech circuit that he was making close to £ 1m a year as a backbencher. But for now all that is having to take a back seat to his day job, as shadow foreign secretary, after Cameron persuaded him to return to the front bench.

"I've not stopped all that completely, but I'm having to be much more selective.

I'm only doing about a third of the number I was," he says ruefully. He particularly misses appearing on Have I Got News for You.

But perhaps for the first time since his return from political exile, Hague is throwing himself wholeheartedly into frontline politics. Astutely, he's come back just when things are starting to get fun. "I'm enjoying it very much, because it's a completely different atmosphere. It's quite different being in politics when there really is a good chance of winning."

The past fortnight has been a sharp reminder of what it's like to be back in the firing line. Hague has found himself at the centre of a firestorm over his position on the Lebanon crisis. In a highly significant choice of words, he criticised some Israeli attacks on Lebanon as "disproportionate" - a term Downing Street and the White House have resolutely refused to use - infuriating Jewish supporters.

It prompted Lord Kalms, former Conservative treasurer, to label him an "ignorant armchair critic" whose position was "downright dangerous". But Hague has no regrets.

"Our concern about Israeli actions has been those that appear to have been only tenuously or unrelated to Hezbollah, which includes things like the bombing of Christian areas of Beirut, the total destruction of aspects of

Honestly, I never want to be leader again

the infrastructure, attacks on what appear to be unrelated areas of Lebanon or factories that produce peaceful goods that are nothing to do with armaments. We've said that those elements of Israeli action have been disproportionate."

He argues that while Hezbollah started it, giving Israel "every right to defend itself", Israel must retain the moral high ground. "In fighting terror, whether it be Israel fighting against terrorists or how this country or the United States conducts itself, we've got to show that we retain higher values than they do. They are the ones who make indiscriminate attacks on civilians. We have to uphold our highest possible standards."

It's a theme he began earlier this year when he warned the White House it was losing its moral authority because of Guantanamo Bay. "The reason we're worried about Israel is that we don't want Israel to lose the moral high ground in this," he explains.

His line is winding up influential Jewish supporters of the Tory party -one leading donor is so incensed he is said to be muttering about giving his money to Labour instead. The Conservative Friends of Israel, a hugely influential sector of the party, is incandescent. Hague is unruffled.

"We're not going to frame foreign policy on the grounds of who's going to get upset. If we tried to do that, we'd never be able to say anything at all," he shrugs. With the air of someone trying to be as diplomatic as possible, he adds: "I welcome the input of Conservative Friends of Israel, but the important thing to understand is that does not mean we always agree with every action of Israel."

It's all a bit of a shock, coming from someone with a longstanding reputation as a hawk. Is this new softly, softly approach to the political underdog -in this case Lebanon -all part of the great Tory rebranding? There's a pregnant pause.

"It's up to others to judge whether it's part of that. It's a pure foreign policy decision as far as I'm concerned."

Whether it's idealism or opportunism, Cameron is relying heavily on Hague to get it right. It is no secret at Westminster that the Tory leader, now sunning himself in Corfu, knows little about foreign policy, although Hague is too loyal to admit this. "He's very, very well informed about foreign policy, and he and I work together on it," he says, looking me straight in the eye. "Everything we say is carefully agreed together."

But he acknowledges that as a former party leader, he has a wealth of useful tips for Cameron. The best ones, of course, he can't reveal, but he does admit that he has advised Cameron to eat vegetable soup. Being a successful leader of the opposition, he says "requires the right sort of food, sleep and exercise, which needs rigorous policing". Sebastian Coe put together a diet and exercise regime for Hague which, he says, meant he was "never tired".

As a former leader of the opposition he has one of the nicest offices at Westminster -with floor-to-ceiling windows overlooking Big Ben. His bookshelves are packed with dusty tomes on historical figures: the Correspondence of George III (five volumes); a life of Lord Sidmouth (a Speaker in the House of Commons in 1789; three volumes) and a glossy hardback called The Underdog Advantage.

The only hint of personality in the office is a glamorous photo of his wife, Ffion and his cufflinks -tiny lapis lazuli-coloured globes of the world. Despite the ritzy office, he must miss being the leader.

"I've got that all out of my system. Totally," he replies emphatically. "I'm glad I was the leader but I'm glad I stopped. I'd had enough. I thought someone else would turn out to be more effective than me and that's very much the case. I'm a fan of DC and I enjoy working with him, and I've only come back to help him win the next election. I don't ever want to be leader again myself. I could happily write books instead. I enjoy that at least as much as politics."

But why is he so adamant that he would never lead the party again? "No sane human being who's done it before would want to do it again," he says. "You have to have self-knowledge, in any job. I came to the conclusion that someone else should be doing it."

Honestly, I never want to be leader again

He says his resignation in 2001 taught him that there's more to life than politics. Some party insiders claim, very privately, that Hague, now 45, suffered a near nervous breakdown in the aftermath of his exit. But if he was knocked back, he claims it was "only for a few hours. For someone who has been a political addict all my life, I was pleasantly and enormously surprised by how happily I slid out of it. That was a big lesson to me. I haven't ever felt since, and won't ever feel again, that I am dependent on politics".

He admits he made mistakes as opposition leader, but believes he was more a victim of the zeitgeist, than his own shortcomings.

"The job was going to be difficult for any politician. I don't think whatever we did we were going to be able to win, in retrospect. We were up against a very difficult situation, but someone had to take it on. I don't regret doing it, and I think I'm possibly of more use to the party now, and to DC, because I did that before."

He claims the party simply wouldn't have stomached some of Cameron's most lauded policies -such as the drive to recruit more women candidates -when he was at the helm.

"As someone who tried to ensure there were more women candidates while I was leader, I wish we had done more earlier, more radically, about this. At the beginning of our time in opposition, many of us had a sense that we needed to change, but not just how much we needed to. I floated the idea that there must be a woman on every shortlist compulsorily, and even that met a lot of resistance.

Because I was trying to get many other things through, I had to drop the idea, but actually I wish I hadn't. Now the party's ready to accept change, very willing."

Hague has said before how much he would like to have children, but he and Ffion are childless, a hugely sensitive subject. He says having children is "absolutely" an aspiration, but won't discuss whether the couple are undergoing IVF.

"Of course we want a family. Of course. And that's all I'm going to say. A paper said Ffion was pregnant, and it was just not true, so I'm not saying more."

Meanwhile, he's focusing on what he'll do if the Tories find themselves in power.

Next month, he, Cameron, George Osborne, the shadow chancellor, and Liam Fox, the shadow defence secretary, will travel to India and the Far East, marking a shift in the approach to foreign policy.

The Tory obsession with Europe is likely to be overtaken by an emphasis on forging relationships with the tiger economies and moderate Arab countries. "It's time for a reappraisal of British foreign policy. It has been too Eurocentric in the past 20 years. A much higher level of engagement with the Pacific and Indian Ocean nations is important. The world is changing so rapidly."

Unlike Malcolm Rifkind (a former foreign secretary) who launched an attack on Hague's direction last week, Hague still believes it was right to go to war with Iraq. But he does not believe the zealous espousal of democracy, and military force, preached by Tony Blair, is enough to defeat Islamic terrorism.

"We really do have to move on from that. It includes things like the western world being very careful about things like Guantanamo, so we don't give ammunition to the other side or damage our own values. It certainly includes a whole new level of engagement with the moderate Arab world. It can be cultural, it can be parliamentary, it can be educational, it can be military.

"For a long time, ministers have neglected the moderate countries of the Gulf and north Africa. There's so much more that can be done. It shouldn't be Lord Levy who is a special envoy. You know, you don't send your fundraiser."

That may be true, but Hague still has to prove that he's got what it takes.

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Load-Date: August 13, 2006

End of Document

Place the blame in Lebanon where it belongs

The Vancouver Sun (British Columbia)

August 12, 2006 Saturday

Final Edition

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Section: EDITORIAL; Pg. C3

Length: 183 words

Byline: Martin L. Thompson, Vancouver Sun

Body

The disturbing television images of Lebanese civilian casualties resulting from Israel's bombing of Hezbollah rocket launch sites mistakenly sparks outrage and condemnation against Israel, rather than placing the blame where it really belongs -- with the cowardly Hezbollah fighters who set up these sites in civilian areas and use Lebanese women and children as human shields. Hezbollah sacrifices their lives because it suits its public relations campaign.

Israel's critics would prefer that Israel not fight back, or at least retaliate with a "measured" response. How measured should that response be when a well-armed, well-financed and highly trained militia of Islamic extremists dedicated to erasing Israel from the planet sets up shop a few miles from the Israeli border with 20,000 rockets and starts intermittently launching them into Israel for two years, during which time Israel has posed no threat to Lebanon whatsoever? Does Israel not have the right to eliminate Hezbollah rocket launch sites used to kill Israelis, even if they are in Lebanese civilian areas?

Martin L. Thompson

Vancouver

Load-Date: August 12, 2006

Not-so-strange bedfellow

The International Herald Tribune

February 1, 2007 Thursday

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Section: OPINION; Pg. 7

Length: 771 words

Byline: Thomas L. Friedman - The New York Times Media Group

Dateline: DAVOS, Switzerland

Body

Here's a little foreign policy test. I am going to describe two countries "Country A" and "Country B" and you tell me which one is America's ally and which one is not.

Let's start: Country A actively helped the United States defeat the Taliban in Afghanistan and replace it with a pro-U.S. elected alliance of moderate Muslims. Country A regularly holds sort-of-free elections.

Country A's women vote, hold office, are the majority of its university students and are fully integrated into the work force.

On 9/11, residents of Country A were among the very few in the Muslim world to hold spontaneous pro-U.S. demonstrations. Country A's radical president recently held a conference about why the Holocaust never happened to try to gain popularity. A month later, Country A held nationwide elections for local councils, and that same president saw his candidates get wiped out by voters who preferred more moderate conservatives. Country A has a strategic interest in the success of the pro-U.S., Shiite-led, elected Iraqi government. Although it's a Muslim country right next to Iraq, Country A has never sent any suicide bombers to Iraq, and has long protected its Christians and Jews. Country A has more bloggers per capita than any country in the Muslim Middle East.

The brand of Islam practiced by Country A respects women, is open to reinterpretation in light of modernity and rejects Al Qaeda's nihilism.

Now Country B: Country B gave America 14 of the 19 hijackers on 9/11. Country B does not allow its women to drive, vote or run for office. It is illegal in Country B to build a church, synagogue or Hindu temple. Country B helped finance the Taliban.

Country B's private charities help sustain Al Qaeda. Young men from Country B's mosques have been regularly recruited to carry out suicide bombings in Iraq. Mosques and charities in Country B raise funds to support the insurgency in Iraq. Country B does not want the elected, Shiite-led government in Iraq to succeed. While Country B's leaders are pro-United States, polls show many of its people are hostile to America some of them celebrated on 9/11. The brand of Islam supported by Country B and exported by it to mosques around the world is the most hostile to modernity and other faiths.

Question: Which country is America's natural ally: A or B?

Not-so-strange bedfellow

Country A is, of course. Country A is Iran. Country B is Saudi Arabia.

Don't worry. I know that Iran has also engaged in terrorism against the United States and that the Saudis have supported America at key times in some areas. The point I'm trying to make, though, is that the hostility between Iran and the United States since the overthrow of the shah in 1979 is not organic. By dint of culture, history and geography, Americans actually have a lot of interests in common with Iran's people. And I am not the only one to notice that.

Because the United States has destroyed Iran's two biggest enemies the Taliban and Saddam "there is now a debate in Iran as to whether we should continue to act so harshly against the Americans," Mohammad Hossein Adeli, Iran's former ambassador to London, told me at Davos. "There is now more readiness for dialogue with the United States."

More important, when people say, "The most important thing America could do today to stabilize the Middle East is solve the Israel-Palestine conflict," they are wrong. It's second. The most important thing would be to resolve the Iran-U.S. conflict.

That would change the whole Middle East and open up the way to solving the Israel-Palestine conflict, because Iran is the key backer of Hamas, Islamic Jihad, Hezbollah and Syria. Iran's active help could also be critical for stabilizing Iraq.

This is why I oppose war with Iran. I favor negotiations. Isolating Iran like Castro's Cuba has produced only the same result as in Cuba: strengthening Iran's Castros. But for talks with Iran to bear fruit, America has to negotiate with Iran with leverage.

How does the United States get leverage? Make it clear that Iran can't push America out of the gulf militarily; bring down the price of oil, which is key to the cockiness of Iran's hardline leadership; squeeze the hard-liners financially. But all this has to be accompanied with a clear declaration that the United States is not seeking regime change in Iran, but a change of behavior, that the United States wants to immediately restore its embassy in Tehran and that the first thing it will do is grant 50,000 student visas for young Iranians to study at U.S. universities.

Just do that and then sit back and watch the most amazing debate explode inside Iran. You can bet the farm on it.

Load-Date: February 2, 2007

Stop the killing

UK Newsquest Regional Press - This is Buckinghamshire

August 15, 2006 Tuesday

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Section: LETTERS

Length: 152 words

Dateline: Bucks Free Press

Body

YOUR readers should be aware that the Wycombe Constituency Labour Party is not prepared to stand idly by accepting the situation in Lebanon.

We call upon the Government to acknowledge Kim Howells' statement as Minister of State in the Foreign Office that Israel is using disproportionate force in its dispute with **Hizbullah**.

Britain must use its position on the UN to bring about an immediate cease-fire by both sides.

It is not enough for the Government to call for restraint whilst tacitly allowing the USA to permit Israel to destroy the infrastructure of Lebanon, in the process killing innocent men, **women** and children. Both sides must stop. Now.

The current policy is likely to further destabilise the Middle East and increase sectarian killing in Iraq and Afghanistan. All sides should respect United Nations' resolutions, including returning Palestinian lands to Palestine.

J P Barlow

Secretary

Wycombe CLP

Load-Date: August 15, 2006

Which country is America's natural ally?: One is progressive, democratic and tolerant; the other is not

The Gazette (Montreal)

February 3, 2007 Saturday

Final Edition

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Section: EDITORIAL / OP-ED; Pg. B7; THOMAS L. FRIEDMAN

Length: 768 words

Byline: THOMAS L. FRIEDMAN, New York Times

Body

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Which country is America 's natural ally?: One is progressive, democratic and tolerant; the other is not

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Load-Date: February 5, 2007

Ex-President of Iran Is Due To Parley at United Nations

New York Sun (Archive)

August 28, 2006 Monday

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Section: FOREIGN; Pg. 1

Length: 848 words

Byline: ELI LAKE -, Staff Reporter of the Sun

Body

With Iran on the military offensive, its ex-president is scheduled to address a U.N. conference next week as part of a charm offensive that may extend to Washington - if the White House lets him have a visa.

Mohammed Khatemi is scheduled to speak September 5 and 6 as part of the United Nations's Alliance of Civilizations project. But the preparations for his visit come amid a round of military exercises in Iran. Yesterday, an Iranian naval commander announced the successful test of a new submarine-to-surface missile, and on Saturday, President Ahmadinejad attended the opening of a heavy-water uranium enrichment facility.

In addition to the Turtle Bay conference, hosted by the socialist government of Spain and the Islamist government of Turkey, Mr. Khatemi has been invited to speak September 7 at the Washington National Cathedral's Center for Global Justice and Reconciliation. The Council on American-Islamic Relations also has asked him to speak at its annual convention September 8.

In light of the military news coming out of Iran - which appears to be in defiance of the U.N. Security Council's Thursday deadline for Iran to suspend uranium enrichment - the State Department and White House may be leaning against giving Mr. Khatemi the visa he would need to travel outside New York.

"He informed us through the Iranian mission in New York City of his intent to visit here and give speeches around the country, and we've been debating the merits ever since," a Bush administration official who spoke on condition of anonymity told The New York Sun. "I wouldn't say there's any real advocate for his coming. No one wants him here. The real question is whether we lose more in terms of international leverage by denying him a visit. That's being weighed, not debated."

One Democratic congressman already is urging the State Department to deny Mr. Khatemi a visa. Rep. Brad Sherman, a Democrat of California, wrote to Secretary of State Rice on Friday and asked her not to grant a visa to Mr. Khatemi, who won two Iranian presidential elections on a campaign of reforms his initial supporters have said he did not deliver.

"A visit by the so-called reformist president would no doubt be utilized for maximum propaganda benefit by the Iranian government in the current standoff over Iran's nuclear program," Mr. Sherman wrote. He added that should Mr. Khatemi be granted a visa, "he and any members of his delegation should be fingerprinted and photographed, given a rigorous interview, and their names sent through the myriad terrorist and security databases by consular, DHS, law enforcement and intelligence community officials."

Ex-President of Iran Is Due To Parley at United Nations

In the letter, Mr. Sherman contended that Iran's support for terrorism did not lessen during Mr. Khatemi's tenure, between 1997 and 2005. Some analysts allege that in his first government position as minister of culture in 1984, Mr. Khatemi played a role in the founding of Hezbollah.

Nonetheless, Mr. Khatemi shook hands with President Katsav of Israel at the funeral of Pope John Paul II in 2005. And in her memoir, President Clinton's secretary of state, Madeleine Albright, wrote that Iran secretly offered to support the Oslo talks between Israel and the Palestinian Authority in 1999. During this period, however, Iran's Revolutionary Guard, which the Iranian president does not control, maintained its support for Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad, two terrorist groups that rejected the Oslo peace process.

The last Israeli ambassador to Iran while the shah was in power and a current adviser to his country's Ministry of Defense, Uri Lubrani, said yesterday that Mr. Khatemi's visit was part of Iran's psychological war against the West.

"Iran is waging this psychological war to distract attention about their negative reaction to the offer from the international community. Khatemi always shows the smiling face of the regime. Very rarely he shows his fangs. He is being used by the regime in order to distract the attention of the international community to the European and American demand," Mr. Lubrani said.

A spokesman for the Council on American-Islamic Relations, Ibrahim Hooper, said his organization invited Mr. Khatemi to speak in an effort to reduce tensions between Iran and America. "Given the tensions that seem to be growing between Iran and the United States, it is vital the lines of communications are open between the two nations, and this is one way to keep them open," he said.

Mr. Hooper said he expects the former Iranian president to receive a visa and that his organization has no position on Iran's nuclear program.

If Mr. Khatemi does receive a visa, some Iranian-Americans are planning to protest his visit. One of the organizers from the Alliance of Iranian Women, Manda Ervin, said she has already reserved space across from the National Cathedral for the demonstrations. "The only signs we will carry will be ones calling for regime change," she said.

"This is about the good cop and the bad cop," she added. "Ahmadinejad is the bad cop. Khatemi is the good cop. And they are doing this because they want the bomb."

Load-Date: August 28, 2006

Former spy lines up for top job as Israel's leader falters

The Sunday Telegraph (LONDON)

January 21, 2007 Sunday

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Section: NEWS; International; Pg. 30

Length: 786 words

Byline: HARRY DE QUETTEVILLE in Jerusalem

Body

AN ENERGETIC and ambitious former spy who says that "guy issues" have clouded crucial Israeli government decisions is being urged to assume the country's premiership as Ehud Olmert's rule appears to be on the brink of collapse.

For Tzipi Livni, her role as vice-prime minister means that in an emergency - such as the sudden illness that snatched the former prime minister, Ariel Sharon, from office last year - the position would automatically be hers.

More likely is that Mr Olmert, Israel's 61-year-old prime minister, who is known for his dedication to jogging, will be forced out by criticism surrounding his handling of last year's war in Lebanon, and a separate corruption scandal.

Pressure on him reached a new intensity last week with the resignation of the chief of the general staff, Lt-Gen Dan Halutz, for the Israeli army's failures against Hezbollah in Lebanon. Since then, Mr Olmert has faced a barrage of calls from politicians on the Left and Right to follow suit. One veteran left-wing MP, Yossi Beilin, demanded that the prime minister step aside specifically to make way for Miss Livni.

Miss Livni is a deeply private 48-year-old mother of two. One of her children is in compulsory military service, while the other is still at school. On the political stage, however, she cuts a composed and stylish figure, without resorting to power dressing. "She is not as aggressive as most of the women politicians I've met," said Colette Avital, a fellow MP and former diplomat.

None the less, she is not shy of declaring her ambitions to become the country's first female leader since Golda Meir and appears determined not to take over by default. Refusing to rule out a challenge to Mr Olmert, she has been relentlessly burnishing her credentials and insisted recently that she was "qualified to be prime minister".

A Livni challenge would be enormously popular with supporters of the centrist Kadima party that Mr Olmert still nominally leads. In a recent poll, only eight per cent of Kadima voters wanted him as leader - putting him in humiliating fifth place behind "none of the above", which scored 12 per cent. Miss Livni topped the poll with 50 per cent.

She is already looking and acting like a leader. While Mr Olmert noted after the summer war in Lebanon that "a prime minister doesn't have to have an agenda, he just has to run a country", Miss Livni has been actively drawing up plans for the future of Israel's most crucial policies.

She has come up with her own ideas for establishing peace with the Palestinians, adapting the US-backed "road map for peace" to try to free it from stagnation.

Former spy lines up for top job as Israel 's leader falters

Her frequent trips to America have helped raise her profile. As foreign minister leading Israel's rallying cry against the nuclear ambitions of Iran, she has effectively become her country's most prominent figure on the international stage. When the Israeli newspaper Haaretz reported last week that secret peace talks had been under way for two years between Israel and Syria, she was named as an instigator.

Such covert diplomacy would come naturally to Miss Livni, who worked for Mossad, Israel's foreign intelligence service, for four years in the 1980s, before becoming a lawyer.

She was first elected to the Knesset as a member for the right-wing Likud party only eight years ago, but since then, with astute politicking, her rise has been assured.

Her most powerful ally was Ariel Sharon, for whom she helped broker the controversial Jewish pullout of the Palestinian Gaza Strip with his internal Likud party critics.

When Mr Sharon left Likud to form Kadima, Miss Livni went with him, becoming the party's number three. When Mr Sharon was plunged into a coma by a stroke in January last year, she rallied behind Ehud Olmert and became number two. Now she appears to be aiming higher still.

"There is no question that she's ambitious for the top job," said Yael Yishai, a professor of political science who specialises on the role of women in Israeli politics. "She's very capable, very talented, very shrewd and knows what she wants."

But Prof Yishai predicted that Miss Livni would face serious obstacles. "Israeli politics is very tribal and you need military and social connections, which she doesn't have and can't make at her age. She's a bit of a loner," she said.

Miss Livni has revealed that she has had to struggle against the boys' club atmosphere at the top levels of Israeli decision-making.

"Sometimes there are guy issues," she said in a recent interview. Asked if there had been a "guy problem" in the conduct of the Lebanon war, she replied: "Not only in the war. In all kinds of discussions, I hear arguments between generals and admirals and such and I say, 'Guys, stop it.'"

Load-Date: January 21, 2007

A blind eye to genocide

The Sunday Times (London)

September 17, 2006

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Section: FEATURES; News; Pg. 23

Length: 855 words

Byline: Desmond Tutu

Body

Here is an inconvenient fact about Africa: our genocides tend to happen away from television cameras. Almost 1m people were killed in Rwanda in 1994; 2m died in southern Sudan in the past two decades; and 4m people in the Democratic Republic of Congo have died since 1997. The totals are staggering, and hardly a column inch or minute of airtime have marked them.

On the 10th anniversary of Rwanda there was talk of never again allowing innocent civilians to be butchered with impunity. But even as the politicians were deploring the inaction of the international community, another African genocide was under way.

In our world of 24-hour news cycles, people could be forgiven for thinking Darfur did not exist. The Sudanese government's policy of making it hard for the media and humanitarian groups to get access to its remote western region has paid off.

In Darfur 2m people have been ethnically cleansed since 2003, women and girls are systematically raped and tortured daily, there is cholera in the refugee camps and the violence is spilling into next door Chad, and all without the attention, or response, it deserves.

The World Food Programme warns it cannot reach half the people in Darfur who need help, and those it can feed are on rations below the daily minimum requirement.

The Sudanese armed forces and their proxies, the Janjaweed militias, have stepped up their attacks on civilians, and aid workers are being killed despite a recently signed peace deal.

This summer, after 30 days of war between Israel and Hezbollah, and a thousand dead, the international community rightly intervened and dispatched UN peacekeepers. After 3A years, and an estimated 300,000 to 400,000 dead in Darfur, it is still unclear if a United Nations force will be sent. We Africans conclude that double standards apply to our continent.

Today is the international day of action for Darfur. Around the world from Cape Town to London, Moscow to New York, concerned citizens are asking why the UN security council's resolutions on Darfur have yet to be enforced. We are still waiting for a no-fly zone, targeted sanctions against the architects of the genocide, and referrals to the International War Crimes Tribunal. No wonder the Khartoum regime denies UN peacekeepers access to Darfur.

A blind eye to genocide

Today is also the first anniversary of the adoption by the UN of a policy called the Responsibility to Protect. According to that document the international community should put aside its narrow self-interest and act to prevent genocide or ethnic cleansing.

In practice, people are still being terrorised and murdered in Darfur with impunity. The UN has recognised Darfur as the world's worst humanitarian crisis, but it has not applied sustained pressure on the government of Sudan to accept a strong international peacekeeping force.

Meanwhile, amid the scramble to find excuses to abandon Darfur, experts scour the history books for evidence of "ancient tribal or ethnic hatreds" on which to blame the "savagery" of African genocides (as if it had not in fact occurred in the centre of Europe a mere 60 years ago).

We should be suspicious when people say the ethnic cleansing of defenceless civilians is in fact a civil war. They really mean: "These exotic people are all as bad as each other." How can we be expected to put our soldiers in harm's way when there is no good side to defend?

Another justification for our inaction is: "The situation is more complicated than you idealists appreciate." In Darfur, they say, you cannot conveniently divide the population into Arab aggressors and black African victims.

True, there is intermarriage, and there are underlying issues about land ownership and the shortage of water due to climate change. But people who identify themselves as black Africans are being killed by others who describe them as racially inferior and not entitled to live in the land of their birth. Ninety per cent of black African villages in Darfur have been destroyed.

Here is another inconvenient fact about Africa: many of our nations have been cursed by their natural mineral wealth. Darfur has the misfortune to be in a country with vast oil reserves. China, France and Russia, all members of the UN security council, do business with the government of Sudan and they are reluctant to jeopardise their commercial relationships.

In 2001 Tony Blair declared that if Rwanda were to happen again Britain would have a duty to act. Britain deserves enormous credit for leading the world in the generosity of its humanitarian emergency response in Darfur. The government must also lead the international community in stiffening their resolve to act in the face of genocide.

A few years ago an American politician commented that if his phone had rung off the hook with his concerned voters asking him to do something about Rwanda he would have been forced to act.

Please pray for Darfur today. Then let your prayer inform your actions: ask your elected representatives to call for a significant UN force with an effective mandate to protect the civilians in Darfur. "Faith without works is dead" (James 2:26).

Bush backs calls for UN action page 28

Load-Date: September 17, 2006

Secular Muslims in minority; The West should pay more attention to the quiet majority searching for a middle ground that fuses modernity with Islamic tradition

thespec.com

March 22, 2007 Thursday

Final Edition

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Section: OPINION; Pg. A15

Length: 855 words

Byline: Geneive Abdo, The Hamilton Spectator

Dateline: FORT LAUDERDALE, FLA.

Body

A small group of self-proclaimed secular Muslims from North America and elsewhere gathered in St. Petersburg, Fla., recently for what they billed as a new global movement to correct the assumed wrongs of Islam and call for an Islamic Reformation.

Across the state in Fort Lauderdale, Muslim leaders from the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), the advocacy group whose members the "secular" Muslims claim are radicals, denounced any notion of a Reformation as another attempt by the West to impose its history and philosophy on the Islamic world.

The self-proclaimed secularists represent only a small minority of Muslims.

The views among religious Muslims from CAIR more closely reflect the views of the majority, not only in the United States but worldwide. Yet Western media, governments and neoconservative pundits pay more attention to the secular minority.

The St. Petersburg convention is but one example. Some of the organizers and speakers at the convention are well known thanks to the media spotlight: Irshad Manji, author of *The Trouble With Islam Today*, and Ayaan Hirsi Ali, the former Dutch parliamentarian and author of *Infidel*, were but a few there claiming to have suffered personally at the hands of "radical" Islam.

One participant, Wafa Sultan, declared on CNN that she doesn't "see any difference between radical Islam and regular Islam."

The secular Muslim agenda is promoted because these ideas reflect a western vision for the future of Islam. Since the Sept. 11 attacks, everyone from high-ranking officials in the Bush administration to the author Salman Rushdie has prescribed a preferred remedy for Islam: reform the faith so it is imbued with western values -- the privatization of religion, the flourishing of western-style democracy -- and rulers who are secular, not religious, Muslims.

Secular Muslims in minority; The West should pay more attention to the quiet majority searching for a middle ground that fuses modernity with Islamic tradition

The problem with this prescription is that it is divorced from reality. It is built upon the principle that if Muslims are fed a steady diet of western influence, they, too, will embrace modernity, secularism and everything else the West has to offer.

Consider the facts: Islamic revivalism has spread across the globe in the past 30 years from the Middle East to parts of Africa.

In Egypt, it is hard to find a woman on the street who does not wear a head scarf.

Islamic political groups and movements are on the rise -- from Hezbollah in Lebanon, to Hamas in the Gaza Strip and West Bank, to the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt.

Even in the United States, more and more American Muslims, particularly the young, are embracing Islam and religious symbolism in ways their more secular, immigrant parents did not.

I travelled to Florida to serve as the keynote speaker at an annual convention hosted by CAIR. On my way to the event, I spoke with Imam Siraj Wahaj, a charismatic intellectual from the Masjid Al-Taqla in Brooklyn who has thousands of followers here and abroad.

His words summarized the aspirations of mainstream Muslims in the United States and around the globe: "What we need to do is borrow those attributes from the West that we admire and reject those that we don't. That is the wave of the future."

Already, signs support Imam Wahaj's words. Muslims living in the West and those in the Islamic world are searching for this middle ground -- one that fuses aspects of globalization with the Islamic tradition.

For example, Muslim women have far greater access to higher education today than ever before. In Iran, there are more women than men in universities, a first in the country's history.

But as increasing numbers of Muslim women become more educated, majorities are becoming more religious while also taking part in what are called Islamic feminist movements, which stretch from Egypt to Turkey and Morocco.

These women, who often wear head scarves to express their religiosity, have found this grey area between modernity and traditionalism. They are fighting for more rights to participate in politics and greater equality in "personal status" laws -- the right to gain custody of children or to initiate divorce -- but also view Islam as their moral compass.

Similarly, the political future of the Arab world is likely to consist of Islamic parties that are far less tolerant of what has historically been the U.S. foreign policy agenda in the region and that domestically are far more committed to implementing Shariah law in varying degrees.

In Europe and the United States, where Muslims have maximum exposure to western culture, they are increasingly embracing Islamic values.

In Britain, a growing number of Muslims advocate creating a court system based upon Islamic principles.

What all this means is that western hopes for full integration by Muslims in the West are unlikely to be realized and that the future of the Islamic world will be much more Islamic than western.

Instead of championing the loud voices of the secular minority who are capturing media attention with their conferences, manifestos and memoirs, the West would be wise instead to pay more attention to the far less loquacious majority.

Geneive Abdo is the author of Mecca and Main Street: Muslim Life in America After 9/11.

Secular Muslims in minority; The West should pay more attention to the quiet majority searching for a middle ground that fuses modernity with Islamic tradition

Load-Date: March 22, 2007

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Daniels In the Lions' Den

New York Sun (Archive)

January 25, 2007 Thursday

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Section: OPINION; Pg. 9

Length: 868 words

Byline: DANIEL JOHNSON

Body

Last Saturday many thousands of Londoners - plus a small but determined corps of Americans - came to Westminster to debate the clash of civilizations. Ken Livingstone, the notoriously pro-Islamist mayor of London, had invited Daniel Pipes, director of the Middle East Forum, to be the neoconservative fall guy.

Not only Mr. Livingstone, but also almost everybody else expected the professor to be eaten alive by the politician. Mr. Pipes was warned by his British friends that he was walking into a trap.

But it didn't turn out that way. The audience - eccentrically attired and coiffed, sporting cranky badges and sandals - were atypical political activists, and to judge from their questions, heavily inclined to the left. "This is liberal hell!" muttered one New Yorker, contemplating the "Free Palestine" and anti-racism stalls to which the mayor was giving house room. Yet the loudest cheers were not for him, but for the Daniel who had ventured into this lions' den.

As soon as the self-styled "young British mom" in a hijab who was seconding the mayor, Salma Yaqoob, referred to the July 7 London suicide bombings as "reprisal events," I felt the audience shudder. There was another shudder when Ms. Yaqoob refused to utter the word "Israel."

Then the biographer of Winston Churchill, Sir Martin Gilbert, rose. "My son was on the subway when these 'reprisal events' took place on 7/7. Would you mind telling me what these reprisals were for?" Ms. Yaqoob had no answer. What could she say to him? A great historian who has done the British state some service, who happens to be a Zionist? How could she justify the killing of scores of innocent people, and the attempted murder of countless others, including his son, as a "reprisal event"?

The mayor himself seemed taken aback by the lack of enthusiasm for his side. It is fashionable to describe figures like Mr. Livingstone as "former" Marxists, Leninists, Stalinists, Trotskyists, or whatever. But there was nothing in his demagoguery to indicate that he has really changed his mind about anything for 40 years. His heroes are Fidel Castro and Hugo Chavez. The only difference is that instead of Marx, he now quotes Mill - though he couldn't resist reprimanding that great advocate of women's emancipation for failing to write "he or she."

Mr. Livingstone's world is one gigantic conspiracy, with American neoconservatives pulling the strings. The Cold War was, he said, a conspiracy cooked up in Washington in 1943, just as the war on terror was devised by a "nexus around the White House and Wall Street." He stopped short of claiming that the CIA had ordered the September 11 attacks, but they had certainly created Al Qaeda. The state of Israel was an American conspiracy too: It "should never have been created" but the Americans, who of course control the United Nations, set it up on Arab land because they and the British were too anti-Semitic to accept Jewish refugees in their own countries. This

Daniels In the Lions' Den

is pretty rich coming from Mr. Livingstone - the mayor who was censured by his own party for abusing a Jewish reporter as a Nazi concentration camp guard.

Such fantasies are as commonplace as his assertions of moral equivalence between the "crude Islamophobia" of American neoconservatives and Islamist terrorists. But when Mr. Pipes pointed out that the Americans would have been mad to invade Iraq for the sake of oil, since the predictable effect had been to raise oil prices, the mayor replied that "the people in the White House were mad" and went on to make the apocalyptic prediction that if the war on terror continued, there would be "casualties in the tens of millions." The audience did not know what to make of this, and gave the mayor a distinctly muted response.

Mr. Pipes, however, was rewarded for his sweet reasonableness - which contrasted sharply with the malevolent extremism of Mr. Livingstone and Ms. Yaqoob - with hearty rounds of applause. He got a few laughs, too, as when he told one of his critics that Hezbollah "did not get to eliminate Israel this time round - I give you my condolences." Much of the audience having never seen a real, live American neoconservative in the flesh before and doubtless surprised that he had neither horns nor a tail, listened with rapt attention to what he had to say.

In essence, Mr. Pipes had a warning for Londoners: Thanks to the multicultural policies of politicians like Mayor Livingstone, "your city is a threat to the rest of the world." He listed 15 countries in which Islamists from Britain had carried out terrorist attacks, ranging from Pakistan to America. Since last weekend he could have added a 16th - Somalia. Britain, he said, was now regarded by some experts as the biggest threat to American security.

British audiences aren't usually told this. They aren't told that "the Islamists have declared war on us," let alone have the war aim stated clearly: victory. They need to hear the likes of Daniel Pipes much more often. If the State Department won't send them over, let the think tanks do it. We want to hear them echo George Cohan's 1917 song, "Over There": "The Yanks are coming/ ... We'll be over, we're coming over/ And we won't come back till it's over/ Over there."

Load-Date: January 26, 2007

Uri Dan's Famous Phrase; On Language

The Forward

February 16, 2007

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Section: Arts & Culture; Pg. B4

Length: 829 words

Byline:

Questions for Philologos can be sent to philologos@forward.com.

Body

Israel, as you may have heard, has a new justice minister, law professor Daniel Friedmann, who has replaced acting justice minister Tzipi Livni, who replaced former justice minister Haim Ramon, who was just convicted by a Jerusalem court of an obscene act for kissing a young ***female*** soldier against her will. Ramon had charged that he was the victim of a frame-up by elements in the police and judicial system opposed to reforms he wished to institute, a claim with which Friedmann, who is known for his strong criticism of Israel's judiciary, reportedly sympathized all of which led political commentator Yossi Verter to write in the pages of last week's daily Ha'aretz:

Paraphrasing Uri Dan's famous comment about Ariel Sharon, one wag declared yesterday: 'Whoever didn't want Ramon as justice minister got Daniel Friedmann.' Compared to Friedmann, Ramon was a puppy dog. He threatened a few reforms and occasionally went a little wild, but he did no real harm [to the judicial system]. Friedmann's potential to cause damage is incomparably greater.

This may lead you to ask these questions: Who was Uri Dan, and what was his comment about Ariel Sharon?

Dan, who died two months ago at the age of 71, was a well-known Israeli journalist and biographer of Sharon, to whom he was personally and politically close ever since being attached to his paratroop battalion as a young combat reporter in the 1956 Sinai Campaign. When, in 1972, Sharon, then a general, resigned from the army because he had been passed over for the position of chief of staff, Dan predicted in the newspaper Ma'ariv, Whoever doesn't want him [Sharon] as chief of staff will get him as defense minister. This prophecy was fulfilled nine years later, when Prime Minister Menachem Begin appointed Sharon minister of defense.

Sharon served as defense minister for only two years before he was ousted, after the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, for alleged negligence in the massacre of Palestinians by a Christian militia in the Beirut refugee camps of Sabra and Shatila. Dan, who defended Sharon's role in this incident, then made a second prediction, writing, Whoever doesn't want Sharon as defense minister will get him as prime minister. Although this time it took nearly twice as long for Dan's words to come true, in the year 2000 Sharon was elected prime minister.

Yet long before Sharon's electoral victory, Dan's first prediction had acquired proverbial status and was being copied in the form of the Hebrew expression Whoever doesn't want X will get Y, meaning, He who is unwilling to accept a lesser evil will end up having to accept a greater one. Thus, for example, in the 1980s, when the government of Yitzhak Shamir rejected overtures from King Hussein of Jordan to reach a peace agreement on

Uri Dan's Famous Phrase On Language

the basis of an Israeli withdrawal to the 1967 borders, a frequent criticism on the Israeli left was, Whoever doesn't want Hussein will get Arafat.

Needless to say, this, too, came to pass at the time of the 1993 Oslo agreement, as did the warning, issued by dovish detractors of Israel's handling of relations with Arafat in the years following Oslo, Whoever doesn't want Arafat will get Hamas. And, going one step further, veteran Israeli peace activist Uri Avnery darkly prognosticated last year, after Israel's decision to boycott the newly elected Hamas government of the Palestinian Authority: Whoever doesn't want Hamas will get Islamic Jihad.

Let us hope that Avnery at least, proves wrong. Meanwhile, the whoever doesn't [or didn't] want X will get Y formula continues to prosper. A few recent examples are:

Whoever didn't want him as chief of staff will get him as a literary character. (Israeli journalist Amos Harel writing about a new novel in which the hero is based on Dan Halutz, the recently resigned commander of Israel's army in last summer's war against Hezbollah.)

Whoever didn't want him in Ribu'a Kahol [The Blue Square, an Israeli supermarket chain] will get him in Supersol [another Israeli supermarket chain]. (The Hebrew business newspaper Globes on Matthew Bronfman, whose bid to buy The Blue Square was rejected.)

Whoever didn't want him at night will get him at six in the evening." (A remark made about Israeli talk-show moderator Gabi Gazit, reportedly in danger of being fired because of his high salary.)

Whoever didn't want us in Blich High School will get us in the Knesset. (The lawyer for Green Leaf, a pro-marijuana party that was barred by a court from running its own candidate in a high school election in Tel Aviv.)

It can be about anything. Not long ago, while having dinner at the house of friends, I witnessed the mother of the family trying to persuade her recalcitrant son to eat his mashed potatoes. Whoever doesn't want potatoes will get spinach, she said to the stubborn child. Uri Dan didn't know what he started.

Load-Date: February 14, 2007

U.N.'S obsession with Israel crosses the line into anti-semitism

The Salt Lake Tribune

March 15, 2007 Thursday

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Section: OPINION; Columnists

Length: 841 words

Byline: By Robyn Blumner Tribune Media Services

Body

"Commie Jew traitor Blumner," the handwritten letter began, "you ugly Jew swine b----," it shrieked, suggesting that Guantanamo be converted into an "Aushwitz style creamatorium (sic)" for people like me.

I get letters like this with varying degrees of venom. They always remind me that anti-Semitism is a virulent affliction that is very much alive.

I'd like to believe that the hatred of Jews was relegated to those who can't spell - like my letter writer. Ignorant, shrivel-hearted people who stew over their own failures in life by blaming historic scapegoats. But the epidemic afflicts many, many more.

You might even call it the U.N. disease.

Just to be clear, I am not one of those who thinks the state of Israel can do no wrong or should be above criticism for its human rights violations. But I do call it anti-Semitism when the only Jewish state in the world is singled out and condemned repeatedly for actions that pale in comparison to those committed by the very nations pointing the accusatory finger.

"It is legitimate for the U.N. bodies to criticize Israel, but not when they do so unfairly, selectively, massively, sometimes exclusively, and always obsessively," writes the Geneva-based U.N. Watch, an organization devoted to monitoring the United Nations and promoting human rights.

The record of bias is unassailable. The current 61st U.N. General Assembly has passed 22 anti-Israel resolutions and condemned only a handful of the U.N.'s 191 other member states. Every year, the body passes about 19 anti-Israel resolutions, while not once censuring systematic human rights violators such as Cuba, Zimbabwe, Uzbekistan, Syria, China and countless others.

U.N. Watch reports that at the 2005 annual assembly of the World Health Organization, only one country was singled out by special resolution. Israel was found to violate the health rights of Palestinians. Similarly, that same year, at the annual meeting of the International Labour Organization, only one country-specific report was made part of its agenda. Israel was charged with violating the rights of Palestinian workers.

All this ferocious attention on Israel not only gives ammunition and cover to those who would ignite and spread anti-Semitism, it delegitimizes the U.N. and its mission. Equality is guaranteed under the U.N. Charter. Yet the U.N. has launched itself on a near-hysterical campaign against only one country and one people.

U.N. 'S obsession with Israel crosses the line into anti-semitism

Uzbekistan's president Islam Karimov allegedly boils political prisoners in oil; China offers its billion people no political or religious freedom; Zimbabwe's Robert Mugabe is starving his population and beating and jailing opposition members; children are forced to be soldiers in Uganda; there's a genocide taking place in Sudan; Saudi Arabia denies women the vote and outlaws any religion but Islam.

The world is a cesspool of human rights violations, but investigating and condemning Israel - the only true democracy in the Middle East, where Arab-Israeli citizens enjoy religious freedom, the vote and participation at high levels of government - is what preoccupies the U.N.

And the U.N.'s Human Rights Council might be the most obsessed of all. The council has been in existence since June and has held four special sessions. Three of them focused on Israel's actions. The one on the Israeli military's "gross human rights violations in Lebanon," failed to mention the terror group Hezbollah's rocket attacks on Israeli civilians and the kidnapping of two Israeli soldiers that provoked the incursion.

The council's predecessor, the Human Rights Commission, was disbanded because of its persistent prejudice against Israel, and because some of its member countries were notorious rights violators. This new council appears to be little better.

Then there's John Dugard, the U.N.'s "Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967." He seems to relish accusing Israel of a kind of racial cleansing, using phraseology reminiscent of Nazi Germany.

In a report issued in January that barely acknowledges the extreme security issues Israel faces, Dugard wrote scathingly about Israel's new barrier. "The Wall being built in East Jerusalem is an instrument of social engineering designed to achieve the Judaization of Jerusalem," Dugard said.

Judaization is a term that could have been spit out of Eichmann's mouth. Now it's spit out of the U.N.'s.

Had Dugard been an objective observer, he would have at least noted these statistics: In 2002 and 2003, 140 Israeli citizens a month were murdered by terrorists with 20,000 such attacks in all. In 2006, the country reports suffering fewer successful suicide bombings all year than it had in one week in 2002. These results are attributed largely to the wall.

Not all criticism leveled at Israel is animated by anti-Semitism, just most of it. Maybe the U.N.'s diplomats don't use the same colorful language as my uncouth letter writer, but their alignment of interests is very clear.

You can respond to Robyn's column at blumner@sptimes.com.

Load-Date: March 16, 2007

Israelis swimmers persevere; Levy, Shpaizer focused after war hits country

Bangor Daily News (Maine)
November 16, 2006 Thursday
All Editions

Copyright 2006 Bangor Daily News

Section: Pg. C5

Length: 751 words

Byline: JESSICA BLOCH OF THE NEWS STAFF

Dateline: ORONO

Body

Adi Levy and Tal Shpaizer were out of harm's way, or as far from it as one can get in a country used to violence.

As war broke out along the northern border of Israel and Lebanon in July, the two members of the University of Maine women's swimming team were continuing their training at home in Israel.

They're back in Orono now, nearing the end of the first semester of the school year and starting the swimming season.

Neither was in direct danger from bombing, but both women said there was a pervasive, increased sense of fear in a country accustomed to suicide bombings on buses, bomb shelters and tight security.

"I couldn't believe we had a war this summer," Shpaizer said after a recent meet against New Brunswick. "It was kind of tough. I don't live in the north so I wasn't in any danger, but the atmosphere was bad."

Shpaizer, a 23-year-old senior, focused on swimming this summer in her hometown of Shoham. Levy, a 21-year-old sophomore, worked as a waitress in Givatayim but didn't swim as intensely because of a back problem.

Both towns are far enough from the fighting, which erupted in July when Hezbollah militia in Lebanon bombed Israeli border villages and kidnapped Israeli soldiers.

Still, it was unsettling and disruptive for Israelis all over the country until a United Nations-brokered cease-fire ended the fighting on Aug. 14.

"[In one way] I wasn't scared because I grew up like that," Levy said. "But I got really scared because the TV was news all the time. It was like, you do your routine because you have to, but you know that something's happening."

Levy said she also became worried about rumors that there might be bombing in Tel Aviv, one of the largest cities in Israel. Levy and Shpaizer, who have both completed their mandatory two-year military service, had friends or family called back into the Army.

The person everybody was worried about, however, was Karin Feldman, a 2005 Maine graduate and former swimming record-holder.

Israelis swimmers persevere Levy, Shpaizer focused after war hits country

Feldman was the first Israeli to swim at Maine and the reason Levy and Shpaizer are here now.

The decision to come to the U.S. to swim is a popular one for many Israeli swimmers who want to attend school and can get a full athletic scholarship.

There are Israelis swimming in universities all over the country, from Maine to Columbia to West Virginia, Georgia Tech and the University of Washington. Athletes use the Internet to research their college options and make contact with coaches. Maine head coach Jeff Wren and his staff get e-mails from Israel more frequently now, Shpaizer said.

The Israeli swimming community is small, so Feldman, Shpaizer and Levy all knew each other.

"I didn't know anything about Maine," Levy said. "I just knew Karin was happy here. I trust her enough to know it's a good place."

Feldman lives in Kiryat-Motzkin, which is located on the west coast about 20 miles from the border. She is coaching a club team while finishing more schooling.

"I was trying to talk to her as much as I could daily," Levy said. "Her team would have to step out of the water five times a day during practice because there would be an alarm, and they'd have to go to shelters."

Wren and assistant coach Susie Herrick tried to keep in touch with their Israelis.

"We got tons of e-mails from everyone here saying, we hope you're safe, we're praying for you," Spaizer said.

Before the terrorist events on Sept. 11, 2001, Shpaizer said most Israelis, who are used to strict security at airports and metal detectors at shopping malls, thought Americans were naive about security.

Not anymore.

"We get it small here, little here, like suicide bombers on the bus," she said. "You got it in one big bam with a lot of losses."

Now that Levy and Shpaizer are back in the U.S. they can focus on school and swimming.

Levy placed in the 500-yard freestyle and the 100 and 200 butterfly at last season's America East championships. She is also a member of the school record-holding 800 free and 400 medley relay teams.

Shpaizer, one of the Black Bears' top returnees, has already been named the America East women's swimmer of the week twice this season. She set a school record in the 200 individual medley and placed in the 100 fly, 200 backstroke and also swam on the record-setting relay teams.

Shpaizer, who also holds the 100 fly record, wants to set the 200 back record this season.

"It's still pretty early but I started faster than previous years," she said. "I'm hoping to get my records again. It's my last year of swimming ever so it should be a good year."

Load-Date: November 16, 2006

There is no 'us' and 'them'

University Wire

September 13, 2006 Wednesday

Copyright 2006 Arizona Daily Wildcat via U-Wire

Section: COLUMN

Length: 861 words

Byline: By Marian Lacey, Arizona Daily Wildcat; **SOURCE:** U. Arizona

Dateline: TUCSON, Ariz.

Body

Ahmad, a 19-year-old foreign exchange student from a Persian Gulf country, recounted to me the reactions of his friends and family when he told them he was going to America to study English. Almost everyone told him, "Watch out for those American women." His friends harbor anxiety about the notorious American woman, not because she wears tank tops or has a college degree, but because she is "morally loose."

What would make reasonable, good-intentioned people fear another group of people? Before his trip to America, Ahmad's only view of American women was supplied by a TV screen.

We Americans know that not every woman in our country is a Jenna Jameson who commits lewd acts on videotape for money, but to many, this image of the American woman is one of the only available ones.

What an inaccurate - even offensive - stereotype!

But wait. Before we launch into a diatribe about the evils of closed societies and their fear of foreigners, let's exercise a little self-examination. Who? Us? No, we're different. Our society is open-minded. We have free access to a lot of information. We are not like them.

But that kind of thinking is the problem. "They" are not a homogenous mass with one mind, soul and will. If it is irksome that many in the Middle East and Asia view Americans as morally loose, how much more problematic is it that many Americans view Middle Easterners as dogmatic, regressive, irrational, violent or ignorant?

As I packed my bags and said my goodbyes this week in preparation for my trip to Nazareth, I sensed a growing anxiety: What will "they" be like? How will "they" react to me? I had to remind myself that "they," like people anywhere, would hold diverse beliefs and behave in diverse ways.

While the U.S. has numerous ethnicities and religious groups, the Middle East is composed not only of diverse subcultures, but also of many nations. "We" cannot view Middle Easterners as a simple "they" when there are so many layers of complexity: nations with different allies, tribal and family ties that cross national borders, religious affiliations that unite or divide allegiances. How could "they" be all the same?

One of the most common misconceptions about the Middle East is that it is a vast swath of uniform Islam. But the Middle East is the birthplace of Judaism and Christianity as well. Before Israel was established in 1948, small Jewish populations existed in North Africa and the Levant (Lebanon, Jordan, Palestine and Syria).

There is no 'us' and 'them'

And Christianity has a rich history there as well. Until the civil war forced many Lebanese to emigrate, Lebanon had a majority Christian population. Even today, about 25 percent of Lebanese are Christian, and Jordan, Syria and the Palestinian territories have significant Christian minorities, according to the Middle East Institute at Columbia University. The Coptic Orthodox Church in Egypt is one of the oldest groups of Christians in the world.

Diversity in Islamic beliefs is also widespread. Sunni and Shia Islam are the two major sects, but Morocco's mystical Sufis also draw many pilgrims. The Druze in the Levant hold beliefs distinct from both Christianity and Islam. Given the rich religious diversity of the Middle East, it is a mistake to think of "them" as uniform in religious beliefs.

Also, many people, Americans especially, think of the entire Middle East as a place of oppression, both in culture and government. In reality, Middle Easterners differ in their views of society and the role of women, the individual and the government. In the Levant, for example, even non-Muslim women can enter mosques, but in North Africa, non-Muslims often cannot even enter the compound. According to the BBC, 6.5 percent of Parliamentary seats in countries such as Jordan and Tunisia are held by women, while Saudi women cannot legally drive a car or even a golf cart.

It's not a solely American problem that we see "us" and "them" in black and white. It's a human problem. But it's important to address, because it produces a paradoxical combination of arrogance and fear. When we think we know all about "them" because we see "them" rioting on CNN, we tend to project our darkest fears onto them. "They" are the violent ones, the irrational ones, the intolerant ones. "They" are a threat to "us."

This attitude does not just affect how we see people but also how we view conflicts - conflicts in which we often interfere. For example, during Israel's invasion of southern Lebanon this summer, there was not just an Arab side and an Israeli side. Hezbollah and the Lebanese government, though both comprised of Arabs, were definitely not on the same side. But I still hear people, in the media and in conversation, approach this conflict as if it were a simple ethnic or religious conflict between Arabs and Jews.

As this column goes to press, I will be arriving in Nazareth. I hope, with my astounding wit and incisiveness, to illustrate the Middle East and its people. More likely, though, the cluelessness, cultural bias and black-and-white thinking that I share with most humans will illuminate our common plight to co-exist in a paradigm of "us" and "them."

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Load-Date: September 13, 2006

Before summit, a Rice shuttle; She traveled between Israeli and Palestinian leaders a day before talks. "I am committed to this," she said.

The Philadelphia Inquirer

February 19, 2007 Monday

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The Philadelphia Inquirer

Found on Philly.com

Section: NATIONAL; Pg. A02

Length: 841 words

Byline: Glenn Kessler, Washington Post

Body

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice shuttled yesterday between meetings with Palestinian and Israeli leaders, seeking to lay the groundwork for a successful three-way summit today in the face of Israeli anger at a new Palestinian government that includes Hamas.

Rice made it clear she was staking her reputation as secretary of state on her ability to leverage the talks into a new effort at forging Middle East peace that includes not only the two parties but also neighboring Arab nations.

"I am committed to this," Rice told a group of U.S. reporters last night. "This takes hard work. It takes patience. It takes perseverance. It takes getting up after a bad day and trying to make a better day. And that's what I am going to do. As long as I am secretary of state, that's what I am going to do. And that's what the president wants me to do."

The talks are officially "informal discussions" on what Rice calls a "political horizon" for a possible Palestinian state. By all accounts, Rice faces daunting odds.

Both Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas are politically weakened, making it difficult for either side to make tough compromises. Olmert also is feuding openly with his foreign minister, Tzipi Livni; she is also Olmert's chief political rival, making him less interested in backing diplomacy that might enhance her position.

Abbas, meanwhile, recently agreed to have his Fatah party join a new government dominated by Hamas, which is dedicated to the destruction of Israel. Israeli officials, in particular Olmert, have condemned the new government, saying it cannot be a partner in peace.

Yesterday, Olmert touted a phone conversation he had Friday with President Bush, in which the Israeli leader said they agreed to shun the Palestinian government unless it recognized Israel, renounced violence, and committed to previous Israeli-Palestinian agreements.

Before summit, a Rice shuttle She traveled between Israeli and Palestinian leaders a day before talks. "I am committed to this," she said.

Those principles had earlier been outlined as conditions for the government's recognition by the mediating group known as the Quartet, made up of the United States, the European Union, the United Nations and Russia.

Palestinian officials said Abbas, in a meeting in the West Bank city of Ramallah, asked Rice to promote the idea of launching regular, exploratory talks on the contours of a Palestinian state. Palestinian officials reported she favored it, but Olmert was skeptical.

Rice declined to say whether she raised the concept when she met later yesterday with Olmert. "We have to be open to determining how to explore the political horizon," she said. "But I don't want to get ahead of the discussions tomorrow."

Palestinian Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh of Hamas, who will remain in his post, has said he hopes to assemble the government in the next three weeks and only then will outline the specifics of its policies. But Hamas officials have made clear that the new government will not explicitly recognize Israel, among the Quartet's conditions for restoring vital economic aid.

Abbas assigned Haniyeh last week to form a power-sharing government that "respects" previously signed agreements that recognize Israel. The guideline was set out in the Mecca accord reached this month between Fatah and Hamas.

Rice has walked a careful line in recent days, saying that thus far it appeared the new government would fall short of the Quartet's demands but that no decisions would be made until the Palestinian government was formed.

Israel's Top Cop Resigns

Israel's police commander resigned yesterday, after a government commission said he ignored ties between senior officers and underworld figures and failed to ensure a thorough investigation into the 1999 killing of a suspected crime boss.

The resignation of Moshe Karadi was the latest in a series of public scandals and controversies involving Israel's top leadership - including rape allegations against the president and questions over the prime minister's role in a bank sale.

Commission chairman Vardi Zeiler, a retired judge, said Karadi should lose his job for the incomplete investigation and for ignoring ties between senior police officers and top organized-crime figures. Karadi was not police commissioner at the time of the killing but was a departmental head.

Karadi insisted that the allegations against him were untrue but said he was resigning to "set a personal example" and spare the police the harm of a scandal.

Other recent government controversies:

Lt. Gen. Dan Halutz recently resigned as military chief of staff after coming under withering criticism for the flawed summer war against Hezbollah in Lebanon.

President Moshe Katsav, now on a leave of absence, has been accused of preying on women who worked for him, and faces allegations of rape, sexual assault and abuse of power.

Former Justice Minister Haim Ramon was recently convicted in a separate sexual-misconduct case.

Prime Minister Ehud Olmert is under investigation for his

role in the sale of a government-controlled bank, and accused of improprieties in a string of real estate deals.

Associated Press

Before summit, a Rice shuttle She traveled between Israeli and Palestinian leaders a day before talks. "I am committed to this," she said.

Load-Date: February 19, 2007

End of Document

My strategic plan for the battle between them and US

The Times (London)

February 5, 2007, Monday

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Section: FEATURES; Times2; Pg. 7

Length: 824 words

Byline: Caitlin Moran

Body

Last week a leading UK think-tank issued a report on both the position, and the power, held by the US in a post-9/11 world. While the report by the International Institute for Strategic Studies went into an incredibly detailed breakdown of the global military/industrial/cultural Gestalt -including a quote from Lawrence of Arabia, which is always nice in the middle of a pile of dry-bread stats, because you can imagine Peter O'Toole said it while looking all noble -no mention was made of what exactly would now happen to the report. Independent observers may conclude that, based on previous evidence, it might well have been greeted with, "Yeah yeah yeah", then thrown on to a big pile in the corner of the Oval Office.

The one that has the unopened copies of the Boden catalogue in it, and those fabric samples from Neiman Marcus that they were considering for re-covering the pouffes.

This is unfortunate because, had the Americans read the report, they would have noted two vital findings. The first is that while the same old countries Iran, China, North Korea, France probably, haha -want to have a pop at the US, America has to accept that we are now in a "non-polar" world and must redefine its strategies to cope with "non-state actors" -your Hezbollahs and al-Qaedas. These are defined as forces that are "strong enough to resist an American agenda but too weak to shape an internationally attractive alternative".

Of course, by those criteria, America's newest enemies are not merely Hezbollah and al-Qaeda. They would also include atheists, pedestrians, socialists, European film directors who make films with unhappy endings, drizzly weather and Courtney Love -but not, interestingly, vegetarians, who have been pretty strong in "shaping internationally attractive alternatives", what with the Quorn burger and McDonald's Toasted Deli Grill Veggie Melt.

The IISS's second conclusion was that, in the "complex battlefield" of the 21st century, America needs to concentrate more on psychological warfare. Of course, those who have read Jon Ronson's excellent *The Men Who Stare At Goats* will know that the US has already been, albeit in a low-key and mad way, experimenting with psychological warfare. The conclusion of its 20-year-long experiments resulted in the playing of heavy rock music, including Guns'n'Roses' *Welcome to the Jungle*, within earshot of the former Panamanian President Manuel Noriega when he was holed up the Vatican Embassy in 1989. As many will have subsequently noticed, this particular tactic of psychological warfare did remarkably little in ending the siege, but oddly coincided with the high-water mark in Guns'n'Roses' career - possibly marking out the thin red line between state-sponsored psychological combat and a very effective marketing campaign.

However, once an entity loses the ability to use Guns'n'Roses as a weapon, it's understandable why the ensuing period would be one of intense confusion, bordering on panic, with no obvious alternative taking its place. US

My strategic plan for the battle between them and US

psychological warfare is at an all-time low at the moment. Luckily, however, I do have a few suggestions for future activity:

1) Stage a massive army-recruitment drive among the table-staff of Hollywood, and assemble a battalion of actresses/models/whatevers. When invading a city, send in the Ninth Battalion of Hot Chicks first, dressed in skin-tight catsuits. Get them to enter the city with a series of excitable screams and yelps, while doing leaps, rolls and cartwheels down the high street -like Catherine Zeta-Jones's training scene in Entrapment but, obviously, without Sean Connery sitting on a chair and watching. A man may well be devout enough to shoot old men in the head, but I'm pretty sure he would at least pause for a few vital seconds before shooting at an Angelina Jolie lookalike doing the splits in mid-air. And while he's pausing, some giant Marine can shoot him.

2) Militant Muslim extremists believe in the destruction of Western civilisation.

We have to accept, as the comedian Stewart Lee points out, that this doesn't leave a great deal of room for negotiation. They're just not going to settle for the dismantling of Blackpool Pleasure Beach, then back down with the suicide bombs.

However, if the US could use its peerless scientific resources to prove incontrovertibly that God/Allah does not exist, that would be pretty handy, from a psychological point of view.

3) No two ways about it: American tourists leaving from any Midwestern airport will have to be taken into a special booth and styled before we inflict them on, say, the French.

4) State funding of whatever therapy, emergency hairstyling, dirty women and cheap drugs Axl Rose needs to write another song as good as Welcome to the Jungle. It would be good to have it as back-up, just in case.

5) On reflection, immediate cessation of the recording, broadcast and overseas sale of Lost would be useful, too. It just makes America look a bit nuts.

Load-Date: February 5, 2007

End of Document

International Briefs

Telegraph Herald (Dubuque, IA)

December 15, 2006 Friday

Copyright 2006 Woodward Communications, Inc. All Rights Reserved

Section: LOCAL; Pg. a11

Length: 885 words

Byline: ASSOCIATED PRESS

Body

Victim in killings spoke to reporters

IPSWICH, England - Five slain prostitutes were mourned Thursday at a memorial service, and police identified one victim as a woman who told reporters days before her death that she was afraid of a suspected serial killer but needed money to support her heroin habit.

The naked body of Paula Clennel, 24, was found on the side of the road this week. Police said she died from "compression to the neck" but refused to elaborate. She was interviewed on television last week and said she was determined to get back on the street because she needed money for heroin. Days later, she vanished.

The killings have reminded Britons of the so-called Yorkshire Ripper who killed 13 women over five years in the 1970s. This time, police have found the naked bodies of five prostitutes in just 10 days.

The identity of one victim still is pending, but she is thought to be Annette Nicholls, 29, a prostitute who recently was reported missing, according to Detective Chief Superintendent Stewart Gull.

All five were found within a few miles of each other in and around Ipswich, a city of 120,000 people about 70 miles northeast of London.

British army refutes Kenyan rape charges

LONDON - A British army investigation into more than 200 alleged rapes of Kenyan women by British soldiers has found no evidence that could lead to prosecution, a spokeswoman said Thursday.

The two-year Royal Military Police investigation into allegations that Maasai and Samburu tribeswomen were raped in a remote area where the British army conducts training found Kenyan police records were forged and DNA tests proved negative, The Times newspaper reported.

"The British army has taken this extremely seriously, and the allegations were investigated extensively," a Defense Ministry spokeswoman said on condition of anonymity in line with ministry policy.

"In terms of a criminal investigation, no corroborative evidence was found that would lead to the prosecution of a named individual," the spokeswoman said.

International Briefs

Investigators looked into 2,187 reported rapes - some dating back to before Kenya's independence from Britain in 1963 - and found 281 cases worthy of closer examination, the newspaper said. However, no evidence was found that could stand up in a British court.

Egyptian police cuff Muslim Brotherhood

CAIRO, Egypt - Police arrested the outlawed Muslim Brotherhood's chief strategist along with at least 140 others Thursday after a protest by uniformed students raised fears the Islamist political group is creating a military wing.

Mohammed Khayrat el-Shater, the group's main financier and third-highest ranking member, was taken from his home, security officials said, speaking on condition of anonymity because they were not allowed to speak to the media.

They said 140 others were arrested on suspicion of belonging to the Brotherhood, participation in a plot to infiltrate student and worker organizations, and engaging in "unprecedented actions" - including participation in a militia-style demonstration a few days ago at Al-Azhar University outside Cairo.

In that protest, demonstrators wore masks resembling those of the military wing of the Palestinian Hamas organization.

Arab League chief cites progress in Lebanon

BEIRUT, Lebanon - The government and opposition have agreed on a national unity Cabinet in which major decisions could be made only by consensus, the head of the Arab League said Thursday in a major step toward ending Lebanon's political crisis.

A new Cabinet is the key demand of the Hezbollah-led opposition, whose thousands of supporters have staged mass protests and daily sit-ins since Dec. 1, forcing Prime Minister Fuad Saniora to live in his office complex in central Beirut, surrounded by security forces and barbed wire.

Arab League chief Amr Moussa told reporters that more talks are required to conclude the deal, and he might return to Lebanon in the coming days.

Dutch parliament defuses political crisis

THE HAGUE, Netherlands - Parliament defused a 24-hour constitutional crisis Thursday by halting the deportation of rejected asylum-seekers and stripping the hard-line immigration minister of responsibility for most immigration policy.

Dutch politics had faced chaos Wednesday after the newly elected parliament censured Immigration Minister Rita Verdonk - nicknamed "Iron Rita" for her tough anti-immigration measures - after she refused to halt the expulsion of asylum-seekers under a policy the government calls "Project Return Home."

Rights group criticizes Bangladesh for killings

DHAKA, Bangladesh - An elite security force in Bangladesh has become little more than a government death squad, employing torture and murdering more than 350 suspects in custody, according to a Human Rights Watch report released Thursday.

The force, known as the Rapid Action Battalion, or RAB, carried out widespread torture, including boring holes in suspects with electric drills, according to a 79-page report released by the group.

"Bangladesh's Rapid Action Battalion has become a government death squad," said Brad Adams, Asia Director at Human Rights Watch.

"Its methods are illegal and especially shameful to a nation whose citizen just won the Nobel Prize for peace," he said, referring to Muhammad Yunus, founder of the Grameen Bank, who accepted the prize earlier this week.

International Briefs

Load-Date: December 15, 2006

End of Document

Immigration mistakes return to haunt us

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

October 31, 2006 Tuesday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; Comment; Pg. 11

Length: 905 words

Byline: Gerard Henderson

Body

WHATEVER its rights or wrongs, unlawful migration to Australia over the past three decades has not had a deleterious outcome. Most unauthorised entrants who have attained visas have settled relatively well. This includes the Indochinese and Chinese intakes in the late 1970s, 1980s and early 1990s, and the Afghans and Iraqis. When immigration has led to poor social outcomes, this has resulted from the decisions of government - of both political persuasions.

The Liberal leader Malcolm Fraser became prime minister in late 1975, around the time of the outbreak of the Lebanese civil war between left-leaning Muslims and right-leaning Maronite Christians. Initially Fraser and his immigration and ethnic affairs minister, Michael MacKellar, were approached by Maronite Australians to allow some Lebanese Christians, who had close relatives in Australia, to settle here.

Fraser agreed. However, it was not long before the process got out of hand. As it turned out, very few Christians wanted to, or were able to, come to Australia at the time. Department officials sent to Lebanon to administer the program began granting visas mainly to Muslims - often on the flimsiest evidence they had close relatives or, indeed, any relative in Australia.

The program soon became known as "the Lebanese concession". The concession involved was that the Lebanese concerned would be admitted to Australia under the refugee intake, despite the fact that strictly speaking, they were not refugees. They were not fleeing persecution but rather, the impact of a civil war.

In her book *Muslims in Australia*, the Perth academic Nahid Kabir writes that the Lebanese were sometimes referred to as "quasi-refugees".

For a long time, Christian Lebanese have been successful migrants. Their descendants include the NSW Governor, Dr Marie Bashir, and the Victorian Premier, Steve Bracks. The unintended consequence of the Fraser government's decision was to allow, for the first time, numerous Lebanese Muslims to enter Australia. They were from rural areas, had little education and minimal English language skills.

As Kabir documents, the numbers grew. There were about 3500 Lebanese Muslims in Australia in 1971. Just two decades later, the number had increased to more than 25,000. The number grew quickly, due primarily to Australia's then family reunion policy. Most Muslim Lebanese migrants settled in south-western Sydney. The Shia gathered around the Arncliffe mosque and the Sunnis at the Lakemba mosque.

Immigration mistakes return to haunt us

At the time some Maronite leaders warned the Fraser government, at the highest levels, that the decision to allow large numbers of poorly educated Lebanese Muslims into Australia would have unexpected and unwanted policy outcomes. They were dismissed with the "you-would-say-that-wouldn't-you?" refrain, meaning the Lebanese Christians opposed the Muslims simply on account of religion.

This was inaccurate and unfair. The Turks were the first large group of Muslims to settle here, arriving in the late 1960s when a Coalition government was headed by John Gorton and William McMahon. Despite the usual initial difficulties, the Turks settled well and soon found employment. The problem with Lebanese Muslims was that they were ill equipped to enter the workforce. Also, a number were fundamentalist Islamists. In time, some Shias became supporters of Hezbollah while some Sunnis became admirers of Osama bin Laden. The fundamentalists gave other Muslims a bad name, many of whom have had no connection with Lebanon or the Middle East or, indeed, Islamism.

When I recently spoke to Fraser about this, he said he had no memory of the Lebanese concession but added it was the sort of policy he might have supported. There is no mention of the Lebanese concession in biographies of Fraser. Some Coalition ministers and backbenchers at the time have a clearer recall than Fraser.

In 1982, during the final years of the Fraser government, the Egyptian-born Sheik Taj el-Din al Hilaly entered Australia on a tourist visa. He overstayed his visa and soon became prominent at the Lakemba mosque. In 1988 he told a Sydney University meeting that "the Jews try to control the world through sex, then sexual perversion, then the promotion of espionage, treason and economic hoarding".

Al Hilaly's language has not changed much in 20 years. In the past week The Australian has quoted the sheik making outrageous claims about women and supporting jihad in Iraq and Afghanistan, where Australian troops are supporting the UN-sanctioned and Muslim-led governments in Baghdad and Kabul.

In The Adelaide Review in January 2003, Chris Hurford, the immigration minister from 1984 to 1987, said the decision to give al Hilaly permanent residence was done for political reasons: to appease some Australian Muslims. His view has not been challenged by al Hilaly's main Labor Party supporters at the time, including Paul Keating and Leo McLeay.

As Denis MacShane (the former British union official and Blair Government minister) said in London's Daily Telegraph last week, the 10,000 Muslims in his constituency "can only benefit from removing the dead hand of ideological Islamism - allowing their faith to be respected and their children to flourish".

The unfortunate fact is that in Australia and Britain, the best intentions of conservative and social democrat governments alike have resulted in bad policy.

Gerard Henderson is the executive director of the Sydney Institute.

Load-Date: July 17, 2007

News Summary

The New York Times

August 26, 2006 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2006 The New York Times Company

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

Length: 886 words

Body

INTERNATIONAL A2-8

Europe Agrees to Send 6,900 Troops Into Lebanon

After a week of confusion and missteps, Europe pledged to add up to 6,900 troops to the United Nations peacekeeping force in southern Lebanon. But the job of disarming Hezbollah will be left to the Lebanese, if it is done at all. A1

Iraqi Economy Causing Concern

Violence, corruption and the fallout from decades of government control are driving up the price of almost everything in Iraq, which, coupled with flat wages, are making Iraqis increasingly concerned about the future of the country's economy. A1

No Word on Hostage Journalists

The Hamas-run Palestinian Authority said some progress was being made to secure the release of two kidnapped Western journalists a day before a deadline of midday today. But it was not clear that anyone was in communication with the group that claimed responsibility for the abductions. A7

Jittery Day for Airlines

Several instances of continued jitters in the air after the London bombing alert caused alarm in Britain and the United States, including a passenger jet flying from New York to Ireland that was evacuated and searched after a caller told the police that a liquid explosive had been planted on board. A4

Russia Opposes Iran Sanctions

Russia's defense minister said it was premature to consider punitive actions against Iran despite its refusal so far to suspend its efforts to enrich uranium. A7

Times Researcher May Appeal

Lawyers for a Chinese researcher for The New York Times said they would probably appeal his conviction on a fraud charge but also expressed satisfaction that he was acquitted of a more serious charge, leaking state secrets. A6

News Summary

Lost Fishermen Return Home

Three fishermen who survived months adrift at sea returned home to Mexico, where some greeted them as heroes but others cast a skeptical eye on their epic story of seamanship and survival. A3

Arrests in Japan Over Exports

Five executives of a precision instruments maker in Japan were arrested on suspicion of illegally exporting equipment to Malaysia that could be used in making nuclear weapons, the police said. A8

OBITUARIES A13

Marie Tharp

An oceanographic cartographer whose work in the 1950's, 60's and 70's helped throw into relief -- literally -- the largely uncharted landscape of the world's ocean floor, she was 86. A13

Vashti McCollum

A mother whose suit to stop religious instruction on school property led to a landmark ruling by the United States Supreme Court in 1948 to protect the separation of church and state in education, she was 93. A13

NATIONAL A9-12

FEMA Is Better Prepared, But Not Ready Everywhere

Along the Gulf Coast and in other locations struck by disaster, like New York City, FEMA has made important advances to prepare for the next catastrophe. But in large chunks of the country, far more limited progress has been made, a recent federal assessment concluded. A1

Women in Clergy Find Limits

Whether they come from theologically liberal denominations or conservative ones, black churches or white, **women** in the clergy still bump against what many call the stained-glass ceiling -- longstanding limits, preferences and prejudices within their denominations. A1

Robbers Target Restaurants

Working in pairs, robbers have hit more than 50 restaurants across the San Fernando Valley, killing one person and terrifying scores of workers and patrons. The criminals have stubbornly foiled police efforts over the last two years. A9

Motions in Ramsey Case

John M. Karr, the former school teacher who faces possible murder charges in the death of 6-year-old JonBenet Ramsey, began fighting back with a flurry of defense motions including a request that the judge bar any DNA testing until a hearing can be held on the matter. A11

NEW YORK/REGION B1-6

Mayor's Panel on Poverty Narrows Its Focus

Leaders of a mayoral commission charged with working to eradicate poverty in New York are scaling back wider ambitions to instead focus on helping three distinct populations: young children, young adults and the working poor. B1

At Least 6 Are Shot in Queens

News Summary

At least six people were shot in various neighborhoods across Queens by a gunman who was driving around in a car, apparently firing at people at random, the police said. The victims were mostly hit in their hands, legs and other limbs, the police said. B1

State Senator Indicted

Efrain Gonzalez Jr., one of the longest-serving Latino members of the New York State Senate, was indicted on federal charges of mail fraud, accused of using \$37,000 from a nonprofit organization for personal expenses. B1

Religion Journal B6

SPORTSSATURDAY D1-6

Nike Splits With Track Coach

Nike ended its contract with the track coach Trevor Graham and stepped into the debate over Graham's role in doping violations by many of his athletes. D2

BUSINESS DAY C1-10

Northwest Strike Blocked

A federal judge temporarily blocked a potential strike by flight attendants at Northwest Airlines and urged the company and its workers to resume contract talks. The union representing flight attendants said it would hold off on work stoppages. C1

Business Digest C2

EDITORIAL A14-15

Editorials: No place for cluster bombs; stem cells without embryo loss; greening up the grass roots; Verlyn Klinkenborg on the hayloft.

Columns: Maureen Dowd, John Tierney.

Bridge B15

Crossword B14

TV Listings B16

Weather A16

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Load-Date: August 26, 2006

Ramadan over, women of Beirut prowl for mates

The International Herald Tribune

November 3, 2006 Friday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 2

Length: 807 words

Byline: Katherine Zoepf

Dateline: BEIRUT

Body

This is a city of nightclubs, but the night life is something else these days, and not just because of the feverish edge sharpened by the war last summer.

By 8 p.m., women in their 20s and early 30s are prowling in packs of five and six, casting meaningful glances at any and all passing men. In the bars the women dance for hours often on top of the bar and legs, midribs, bare shoulders and barely covered bosoms are offered for public admiration.

Samir Khalaf, a professor of sociology at the American University of Beirut, said the scene astonished his American colleagues. "They are just shocked," he said. "'This is Lebanon, the Middle East?' they say. They can't stop talking about all the belly buttons, about all these highly eroticized bodies. You see it everywhere here, this combination of consumerism and postmodernism and female competition."

For a few weeks twice a year, after Ramadan and before Christmas, thousands of Lebanon's young men return from jobs abroad and run smack into one of the world's most aggressive cultures of female display. Young women of means have spent weeks primping and planning how to sift through as many men as possible in the short time available. The austere month of Ramadan ended a week ago.

The country's high rate of unemployment pushes the young men to seek work elsewhere, sometimes in Western countries like France and Canada, but mainly in the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and the other oil states on the Gulf. The women, inhibited by family pressures, are generally left behind.

"The demographic reality is truly alarming," Khalaf said. "There are no jobs for university graduates, and with the boys leaving, the sex ratios are simply out of control. It is now almost five to one: five young girls for every young man. When men my sons' age come back to Lebanon, they can't keep the girls from leaping at them."

For the men, who return with deep pockets and high spirits, the holiday welcome is gratifying.

"In Doha it is completely impossible, because you can't talk to women in the Gulf," said Wisam Hamdan, 35, back from Qatar, where he manages hairdressing salons. "But Lebanese girls are very friendly. I am hoping to meet lots of girls, and then I will pick one."

The other night Roula Hallak, 27, was wandering the bars of Gemmayzeh, an eastern Beirut neighborhood, with a troupe of six meticulously dressed and made-up girlfriends.

Ramadan over, women of Beirut prowl for mates

"I'm not looking, but she is, and so is she," Hallak said, poking two of them, who giggled and declined to give their names. "It's so hard to meet the perfect guy this way, but there are so many out in Beirut at this time of year. You go out and you look and you're always hoping."

According to Khalaf, Lebanese Christians have been migrating for economic reasons since Ottoman times. But as the nation's economic crisis has deepened, the exodus has come to include young men from all religious groups and across the socioeconomic spectrum, as well as a tiny but growing number of young women.

Over the past two decades, the Gulf has become the economic pole, and its pull has only grown stronger since the monthlong war this summer between Israel and the Hezbollah militia in Lebanon. With the political situation here still so uncertain, investment and work opportunities are growing even scarcer, and the gender imbalance worsens.

For young women here, dressing fashionably is a competitive game; stare-down contests between young women in restaurants and malls are common.

Kareen Yazbek, a Beirut psychologist, says that the lack of available men is a constant theme in her discussions with young women recovering from depression and drug addiction.

"Throughout my practice, the main issue that comes up with many young women is that they can't find anyone to be with or to marry," Yazbek said. "Among college-age girls it's not such a problem, but after graduation there's a big change as the men start seeking work outside of Lebanon."

"The social pressures on young women are just huge," Yazbek continued. "The focus is more and more on being beautiful, on pleasing other people. The competition is intense, conformity is a big thing, and everyone, rich and poor, gets plastic surgery. You can go to parts of Beirut where almost every young woman has the same little nose."

And the big prize, all seem to agree, is the attention of one of the visiting native sons.

"The guys that remain in Lebanon are the stupid ones!" exclaimed Nayiri Kalayjian, 19, who was hitting the bars on Monot Street, in central Beirut, with three girlfriends.

"We're too good for them," she said. "The ones who remain in Lebanon are the ones with closed mentalities, the ones who just want a virgin girl. You start to feel that the men who stay in Lebanon are the ones with no ambition in their work, and so you wonder, why are they still here?"

Load-Date: November 3, 2006

Gaza's pain: 'We're bored of this life and want to die'

The Times (London)

November 4, 2006, Saturday

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Section: OVERSEAS NEWS; Pg. 44

Length: 765 words

Byline: Stephen Farrell

Body

HE WAS a small man in a small hospital ward about to hear words that no father ever should. Outside the window, a short drive away, Israeli battle tanks and snipers fought Palestinian gunmen in Beit Hanoun during the fiercest street fights in Gaza for months.

Muhammad Zakout's 14-year-old son, Alaa, leaked blood on to a hospital pillow as his family gathered around the bed, incredulous that after repeated warnings to stay out of trouble he had been shot while throwing stones at Israeli tanks.

After muttered lies and evasions -to smirks from teenage accomplices -the truth was even more unwelcome.

"I'll tell you why," he finally mumbled. "We are just bored of this life and we want to die."

Silence.

"He doesn't listen to me," lamented Mr Zakout, 44, a labourer from the Jabalya refugee camp who vainly hopes that his eldest son's shoulder wound will jolt sense into him.

"It's very hard to keep him away. If he's older and he chooses to join the resistance, I could understand. But not why they throw stones. It is because they don't have a real life. They are looking for excitement."

Mr Zakout, a refugee whose family fled the Arab village that is now Ashkelon in 1948, has not worked for seven years and spurns political affiliations. He exists on UN handouts and odd jobs and knows that, as an attraction for the loyalties of his son, this cannot compete with the glamour of armed militants fighting Israel.

Mr Zakout left his house briefly to visit his mother on Thursday and Alaa was missing when he returned. Then teenagers arrived at his home carrying one of the boy's shoes, saying that he was injured.

Racing around hospitals he eventually found the right ward, rushing in with his wife, Amal, and began venting at everyone in a situation that he cannot control.

"It is not easy to raise a child in this society," he said. "He becomes a young man and all of a sudden you lose him. He promises me he won't go to these things, and the next day he goes."

Gaza's pain: 'We're bored of this life and want to die'

"I blame both the Israelis and the big Palestinian politicians. I have nothing against fighting the (Israeli) occupation. They are the terrorists and the ones with the upper hand. If you don't stop them at a certain point they will carry on and on. If you are occupied, it is your right to resist.

"But older people can make the choice. It is the duty of the mosques and the teachers to tell children that is not their role. And the factions -I don't support either one."

Palestinian Qassam rockets fizz through the night air. In between is the whirr of missile-laden drones operated by Israel and the chop-chop of its helicopter gunships.

Inside the hospital, the grandmother and mother of Alaa ask why he wants to die: "Is it to meet the shahids (martyrs)? To see the next life? Has the cat got your tongue?" He looks away, his explaining done.

"Will you do it again?" we ask, before his family leaves.

"No," he replies.

"Damn liar -of course he will," snorts his uncle, exiting through a door bearing a picture of Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah, the secretary-general of Hezbollah and a new hero to the Palestinians.

"Yes," Alaa says as soon as they have gone.

His friends look blank when asked what they want to do if they grow up, envisaging a future without jobs or hope in a sealed-off Gaza Strip.

"We have already grown up," shrugs Muhammad Abu al-Jidyan, 16. "We have no chance to do anything else. Probably when we grow up a little more we will just carry Kalashnikovs and fight. What else do we have to do?

"The resistance don't ask us to throw stones, they kick our asses for it. But we do it anyway. At least it means the soldiers will not be able to put their heads out of the tank to shoot people, or to move into buildings. We want to become shahids and we want to help the resistance, whether they like it or not."

THE BLIGHTED CHILDHOODS OF GAZA

*Half the population of Gaza is under the age of 18

*Chronic malnutrition affects nearly 10 per cent of under-5s in the Palestinian territories. The situation is most acute in Gaza, where 50,000 children are malnourished

*In September, health workers in Gaza went on strike after non-payment for months. Storage and transport of vaccines failed, and thousands of children were not immunised

*In Gaza and West Bank, nearly half of students have seen their school besieged by troops; more than 10 per cent have witnessed the killing of a teacher in school

811 per cent of children in Gaza are stunted and 43 per cent of pregnant women are anaemic

*Levels of violence and dropping-out have increased in Gazan schools over the past year. School activities have been abandoned owing to lack of funding

Load-Date: November 4, 2006

Americans are tolerant, but not toward extremists

USA TODAY

December 20, 2006 Wednesday

FINAL EDITION

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 19A

Length: 855 words

Body

USA TODAY's recent article on the plight of Arab Muslims in this country makes it sound as if any concerns about Muslims are completely unfounded and discriminatory. I would remind readers that while certainly most Muslims do not support terror attacks on the West, virtually all the terror attacks have been committed by Muslims in the name of their religion ("Fear 'as bad as after 9/11," Cover story, News, Dec. 13).

Attacks in Canada, the USA, England and Germany have been prevented by vigilance on the part of the police within the past year. The most disturbing part of these attempted attacks is that they were planned by second- and third-generation immigrants who had been thought to have completely assimilated in the host country.

Americans are tolerant people, but that tolerance is coupled with an expectation that all immigrant groups work toward the common good. If Muslims are serious about acceptance, then they need to work to rid their religion of extremist elements. This includes the hate literature that is for sale in many mosques right here in the USA as well as the condemnation of any religious leaders who call for the destruction of our country.

As far as their obligation to make charitable contributions, why do the contributions have to go to Muslim charities? Make a contribution to a domestic charity such as the United Way.

Greg Hall

Winterville, Ga.

Reach out, don't retreat

USA TODAY portrayed Muslims in Dearborn, Mich., as afraid to give to charity, afraid to demonstrate, afraid to travel and afraid to give their children Arabic names.

The fact that major Islamic charities were fundraising fronts for terrorist organizations does not mean there are not many charitable organizations in the USA that Muslims could donate to. If Muslims are worried they will look bad if they demonstrate, then perhaps they should reconsider signs such as "We are all Hezbollah."

Instead of decrying increased security at airports, Muslims should welcome it as it increases their chance of getting to their destination safely. And if they are afraid to give their children Arabic names, they should consider making an effort to reach out to their Arab brothers and sisters and teach them to love and not hate the "infidel."

Gamaliel Isaac

Americans are tolerant, but not toward extremists

Highland Park, N.J.

Effort needed both ways

As a resident of suburban Detroit near Dearborn, I am amazed at the attitude of Osama Siblani and the Muslim leaders from Dearborn. I have yet to hear of any attacks on local Muslims in the metro Detroit area. What has been more common is the outreach from other faith and community leaders to the Muslim community. And shouldn't it be necessary for Muslims to reach out to the community and allow people to get to know them?

What does not help Muslims in the USA is the stunt by the six Muslim clerics at the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport last month. Of course Americans are fearful when traveling on airlines, but can you blame them? It was Middle Eastern Muslims who hijacked flights and crashed them into buildings. It would be nice to see the Muslim clerics reach out to people of other faiths and quit trying to create incidents.

Ron Amen, a former police officer and Vietnam War veteran, said he is looking over his shoulder. Why? He can't name a single incident where he was attacked or assaulted, yet he feels scared for himself and his children.

American Muslims have fought and died for this country for generations, and the vast number of Americans do not blame Arab-Americans for what happened on 9/11. We in Detroit also understand that no American Muslim citizen has ever been convicted for a terrorist attack on this country.

But communication goes both ways, doesn't it? The Muslim community should try to understand other Americans instead of just demanding we accept them.

Thomas Baker

Sterling Heights, Mich.

Less comfortable for all

I would agree that life is probably a lot less comfortable for Arab-Americans. Life is less comfortable for all Americans -- forget the hyphen. Until Arab-Americans begin to speak out in the press and on television to vehemently denounce the sects of their faith that wish to destroy the United States and Israel, it will stay uncomfortable.

The overwhelming silence of Arab-Americans and Arab nations that profess to be our allies only reinforces the attitudes of those with anti-Muslim sentiments. If Arab-Americans want their children to have a better life in the USA, an organized and concerted effort must be taken on their part to denounce terrorism in a public manner.

I would speculate that the parents of a dead American soldier have little or no sympathy for the discomfort of Arab-Americans. Indeed, the cover story on the fears of Arab-Americans is accompanied by a photo of an Arab-American woman utilizing her freedom to enjoy a vacation to New York's Times Square. On page 10A there was an article about Marine Maj. Megan McClung, the highest ranking **female** U.S. servicemember killed in Iraq. How badly do Arab-Americans have it compared with Maj. McClung's parents? Which article should have been on the cover of USA TODAY?

Jay P. McMahan

Santa Rosa Beach, Fla.

Graphic

PHOTO, B/W, Jennifer S. Altman for USA TODAY

Americans are tolerant, but not toward extremists

Load-Date: December 20, 2006

End of Document

Hanson: Given enough small taps, Iran regime will crack

The Salt Lake Tribune
February 15, 2007 Thursday

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Section: OPINION; Columnists

Length: 840 words

Byline: Victor Davis Hanson

Body

We all know the Iranian M.O. - nuclear proliferation, Holocaust denial, threats to wipe out Israel, vicious anti-Western rhetoric, lavish sponsorship of terrorists at work attacking Israel and destabilizing Lebanon.

If that were not enough, we now learn that Iran has been sending agents into Iraq to destroy the fledgling democracy and supplying sophisticated roadside bombs to blow up Americans.

Lunatic state-run media keep boasting that Iran will kidnap American soldiers, shut down the Straits of Hormuz, send out global jihadists and raise the price of oil.

Most international observers agree on two things about this loony theocracy that promises to take the world down with it: We should not yet bomb Iran, and it should not get the bomb. Yet the former forbearance could well ensure the latter reality.

What, then, should the United States do other than keep offering meaningless platitudes about "dialogue" and "talking"?

Imagine that Iran is a hardboiled egg with a thin shell. We should tap it lightly wherever we can - until tiny fissures join and shatter the shell.

We can begin to do this by pushing international accords and doggedly ratcheting up the weak United Nations sanctions. Even if they don't do much to Iran in any significant way, the resolutions seem to enrage Ahmadinejad. And when he rages at the United Nations, he only loses further support, especially in the Third World.

We should start another fissure by prodding the European Union, presently Iran's chief trading partner, to be more vocal and resolute in pressuring Iran. The so-called EU3 - Britain, France and Germany - failed completely to stop Iran's nuclear proliferation. But out of that setback came a growing realization among Europeans that a nuclear-tipped missile from theocratic Iran could soon hit Europe just as easily as it could Israel. Now Europeans should adopt a complete trade embargo to prevent Iranian access to precision machinery and high technology otherwise unobtainable from mischievous Russia and China.

Americans should continue to support Iranian dissidents. We need not encourage dissidents to go into the street, where they could be shot. Instead we can offer them media help and access to the West. Americans can highlight the plight of women, minorities and liberals in Iran - just the groups that so appeal to the elite Western left.

Hanson: Given enough small taps, Iran regime will crack

And we should announce in advance that we don't want any bases in Iran, that we don't want its oil, and that we won't send American infantry there. That would preempt the tired charges of imperialism and colonialism.

The United States also must stabilize Iraq and Afghanistan. The last thing Iran wants is a democratic and prosperous Middle East surrounding its borders. The televised sight of Afghans, Iraqis, Kurds, Lebanese and Turks voting and speaking freely could galvanize Iranian popular opinion that in time might overwhelm the mullahs.

At the same time, we need to remind the Gulf monarchies that a nuclear Shiite theocracy is far more dangerous to them than either the United States or Israel - and that America's efforts to contain Iran depend on their own to rein in Wahhabis in Iraq.

We should say nothing much about the presence of two or three U.S. carrier groups in the Persian Gulf and Mediterranean. Iran will soon grasp on its own that the build-up of such forces might presage air strikes that the United States excels in - and not more ground fighting that the American public apparently won't any longer stomach.

We must continue to make clear that Israel is a sovereign nation with a perfect right to protect itself. Sixty years after the Holocaust, no Israeli prime minister will sit still idly while seventh-century theocrats grandstand about wiping out Israel.

Let's also keep our distance and moderate our rhetoric. There's no reason to frighten average Iranians - who may share our antipathy to their country's regime - or to make therapeutic pleas to talk with those leaders in bunkers whom we know are our enemies.

Finally, and most importantly, Americans must conserve energy, gasify coal, diversify fuels, drill more petroleum and invent new energy sources. Only that can collapse the world price of petroleum.

When oil is priced at \$60 a barrel, Ahmadinejad is a charismatic Third World benefactor who throws cash to every thug who wants a roadside bomb or shouldered-fired missile - and has plenty of money to buy Pakistani, North Korean or Russian nuclear components. But when oil is \$30 a barrel, Ahmadinejad will be despised by his own masses, who will become enraged as state-subsidized food and gas skyrocket, and scarce Iranian petrodollars are wasted on Hezbollah and Hamas.

None of these taps alone will fracture Iran and stop it from going nuclear. But all of them together might well crack Ahmadinejad's thin shell before he gets the bomb.

So let's start tapping.

U.S. should tap Ahmadinejad's egg

* VICTOR DAVIS HANSON is a classicist and historian at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University. You can reach him by e-mailing author@victorhanson.com.

Load-Date: February 16, 2007

Letter: YourSay - Karren's views so naive

Birmingham Evening Mail

August 7, 2006, Monday

Worcs Edition

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Section: LETTERS; Pg. 46

Length: 187 words

Byline: Carol Yarm

Body

I AM appalled by what I feel is a biased column by Karren Brady about the Middle East (Mail, July 30).

Karren's little knowledge is a dangerous tool and she should not comment without knowing her facts, not the truth according to **Hezbollah**.

Unfortunately, innocents do get caught up in conflict and there are plenty of Israeli children who have suffered over a number of years from rockets aimed at their homes, over 300,000 families have had to move from their homes in the Northern part of Israel.

I do not hear that **Hezbollah** drop leaflets to warn Israelis to leave before they fire their missiles.

There is more to Qana than we know. Why were **women** and children left there? Where were their husbands, firing missiles at Israel perhaps?

Hezbollah work in wicked ways and Karren should not be hoodwinked into their convincing propaganda.

Hezbollah and Hamas are terrorists, they indoctrinate their children with hate, unless this is changed, the next generation fights on, they do not want peace only conflict.

Israel has a difficult job and Karren's comments are naive given the complexity of the politics.

Carol Yarm, Edgbaston

Graphic

INNOCENT VICTIM... a civil defence worker carries a child's body from the rubble of Qana.

Load-Date: August 7, 2006

Letter: YourSay - Karren's views so naive

End of Document

It's the limit

Guardian.com

September 14, 2006

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theguardian

Length: 1512 words

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

Body

TOUGHER DRINK-DRIVING LAWS URGED

Young drivers should face tougher drink-drive limits that would put many over the limit after just one pint of lager or glass of wine, government advisors say.

Today's papers reveal that the government's advisory committee on the misuse of drugs (ACMD) is calling for the measure as a way of cutting the rising numbers of fatalities on the roads. The ACMD wants to target young drivers because they are most likely to be involved in fatal drink-drive crashes.

It advises that for drivers under 25 the drink-drive limit should be cut by around 40%, from 80mg of alcohol per 100mg of blood to 50mg per 100mg.

The Guardian, the Times and the Telegraph all lead on the ACMD report. The Times says that ministers were last night resisting the demand, but that "pressure is likely to grow as concern mounts about the rising toll of Britain's binge drinking culture." Road-safety groups yesterday backed the committee's recommendation.

The committee, which says British youths are among the worst drink and drug abusers in Europe, also wants the legal age for buying cigarettes to be raised from 16 to 18.

The ACMD's recommendations have surprised some, because in the past the advisors have concentrated on the dangers of illegal drugs. However, while there is evidence that the occasional use of cannabis is increasing, for example, the ACMD calculates that far more harm is being done by alcohol and cigarettes. It "marks a major departure in the 30-year history of the drug advisory body," the Guardian reports.

Drink drive deaths are the highest level since 1992, with 590 fatalities last year, the Mail says. The ACMD's report also calls for a ban on television adverts for alcoholic drinks, the Mirror reports.

* Call for tougher drink laws

* Mail: Drink and drugs ruining British youngsters

* Times: French get the taste for binge-drinking

It's the limit

* Telegraph: Curb on teenage drinkers and smokers

GUNMAN OPENS FIRE IN MONTREAL COLLEGE

The front of today's Telegraph shows a photograph of a terrified young woman fleeing Dawson College in Montreal yesterday after a gunman opened fire in the college's cafeteria.

A 20-year-old woman died in the attack and 20 people were injured; at least eight people were in a critical condition last night. The gunman, who was wearing military fatigues and a trench coat, was shot dead by police.

The motivation for the attack is not yet clear and police said there appeared to be no terrorist or "racial connotation". The Times says the attack revived memories of Marc Lepine's rampage in Montreal in 1989, when he shot dead 14 female engineering students. The paper adds that yesterday's violence had shaken Canada's image as a relative "haven from the violence so prevalent in the United States".

* Telegraph: He had a stone cold face

NO RELIEF FOR BRITISH TROOPS IN AFGHANISTAN

Nato members have refused to send more troops to Afghanistan despite calls from the organisation's commanders for 2,500 more soldiers to fight a resurgent Taliban. A total of 40 British service personnel have died in Afghanistan since November 2001, and British troops are currently bearing the brunt of the fighting in the south of the country, the Telegraph says.

The Sun says senior officers have slipped it a dossier of accounts from British troops about the hellish conditions they are facing, including relentless attacks, nightly fire from snipers, a lack of sleep, squalid conditions, rats and mosquitoes and blistering heat.

In a move that the Herald Tribune says will have repercussions for Nato, Germany yesterday agreed to send 2,400 air and naval troops to join the 15,000-strong UN stabilisation force in southern Lebanon. German chancellor Angela Merkel called the German cabinet's decision "historic"; the troops will not engage in patrols that could mean fighting Israeli soldiers.

The Independent splashes on the foreign office minister Kim Howells' remarks yesterday that Tony Blair's refusal to call for an immediate ceasefire during the Israeli-Lebanese Hizbullah conflict may have been a mistake.

Meanwhile, the Mail reports that the Labour-run Manchester council has blocked plans by some families of servicemen killed in Iraq to stage a peaceful protest outside Labour's annual conference, which begins in the city later this month. Rose Gentle, whose 19-year-old son Gordon died in 2004, says the council was doing the "government's bidding".

* Telegraph: Nato nations refuse troops

* Sun: PM blast for allies over troops

* IHT: Germany to deploy UN troops to Lebanon

* Mail: Families of British soldiers banned from Labour conference

* Independent: Minister admits Lebanon ceasefire 'mistake'

CHRIS LANGHAM CHARGED

Chris Langham, a 57-year-old comedy actor and one of the BBC's most prized talents, was yesterday charged with eight counts of [word omitted] assaulting a 14-year-old girl.

It's the limit

Mr Langham, who four months earlier was charged with downloading child [word omitted], will appear before magistrates today in Sevenoaks, Kent. He said yesterday that he was putting his BBC commitments on hold while he fought to clear his name.

* Actor accused of offences against teenage girl

POLICE RAID ARMOURY IN KENT SEMI

"Armoury in a semi ... raid cops grab 1,000 guns in suburban home", says the Mirror, next to a photograph of a weapons cache discovered in Dartford, Kent.

There were assault rifles, sub-machine guns, pump action shotguns and ammunition strewn around. "Enough guns to start a war," says the Mail, which reports that almost 700 weapons were found in the nondescript four-bedroom house.

The raid was the biggest ever carried out by Scotland Yard officers investigating murders and shootings linked to drug crime. Officers from the Met's Operation Trident unit, which investigates "black on black" gun crime, were involved in the raids. Eleven people have died this year in murders investigated by Operation Trident.

A 55-year-old man, believed to be a registered gun dealer, was arrested on suspicion of supplying firearms from a residential address, the Guardian reports.

* Police seize hundreds of weapons in raid on home

UNITED V CELTIC: BRING IT ON

Media Sport Investment (MSI), the firm behind the transfer of two Argentinean stars to West Ham, and which has been linked with a takeover bid for the club, is being investigated in Brazil after an initial inquiry raised concerns about money laundering, the Guardian reports. The paper examines various figures linked to MSI, which it says is a subsidiary of a secretive offshore investment company.

Man United beat Celtic 3-2 in an engaging "Battle of Britain" in the Champions League last night. Louis Saha got two of the goals and "serves up magic amid the mayhem", says the Guardian. By all accounts, the Celtic fans, stirred by the strong challenge by their team, were very loud and helped create a great atmosphere at Old Trafford, leading some to wonder anew about the old debate about whether Scotland's top teams should be in the English Premiership.

Elsewhere, a fantastic 25-yard strike from Thomas Rosicky gave Arsenal a 1-2 win away at Hamburg in their Champions League qualifier. "Rosicky rocket", says the Express.

The Independent reports that one of Chelsea coach Jose Mourinho's favourite restaurants, Portal, in the City of London, has hired a counter-intelligence firm after staff found a listening device in a socket by one table. Chelsea players had recently dined at the restaurant; kitchen staff started hearing people from the restaurant talking while listening to a radio.

* The boys from Argentina

* Independent: Show of strength quells Celtic uprising

POOR DOWNTRODDEN MASSES

Doormats, it seems, are suddenly not so welcome.

Bristol city council has written to thousands of residents ordering them to remove them from outside their homes, citing the "tripping risk", the Express reports.

It's the limit

"By all means have your own mat 'inside' your front door but please do not leave them outside, creating a risk to others," says the letter, which is headlined "Hazardous Mats".

And they are going to get tough with anyone not complying with the new mat rules. From Monday, mats will be "removed and subsequently disposed of", presumably by a new unit of SWAT-style Mat police. You can probably guess what the Express makes of the council in its opinion column: "... the health and safety fascists, they want to walk all over us".

COMING UP ON GUARDIAN UNLIMITED TODAY

Clare Short has launched a withering attack on Tony Blair and New Labour as she confirmed she would step down as an MP at the next election.

Norwich Union owner Aviva says it will cut 4,000 jobs in the UK by 2008.

The shortlist for this year's Man Booker Prize will be announced.

The Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said that his country's nuclear stand-off with the west can be solved through dialogue, adding that he was ready to talk about "new conditions".

In today's podcast, available from noon, David Hencke reports on the TUC, Luke Harding talks about Jews in Germany, and Rebecca Smithers discusses how green Britain's supermarkets are. You can also hear Mark Oliver talking about today's papers.

Load-Date: September 14, 2006

Stop the killing

UK Newsquest Regional Press - This is Buckinghamshire

August 31, 2006 Thursday

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Section: LETTERS

Length: 152 words

Dateline: Bucks Free Press

Body

YOUR readers should be aware that the Wycombe Constituency Labour Party is not prepared to stand idly by accepting the situation in Lebanon.

We call upon the Government to acknowledge Kim Howells' statement as Minister of State in the Foreign Office that Israel is using disproportionate force in its dispute with **Hizbullah**.

Britain must use its position on the UN to bring about an immediate cease-fire by both sides.

It is not enough for the Government to call for restraint whilst tacitly allowing the USA to permit Israel to destroy the infrastructure of Lebanon, in the process killing innocent men, **women** and children. Both sides must stop. Now.

The current policy is likely to further destabilise the Middle East and increase sectarian killing in Iraq and Afghanistan. All sides should respect United Nations' resolutions, including returning Palestinian lands to Palestine.

J P Barlow

Secretary

Wycombe CLP

Load-Date: August 31, 2006

Scrutiny Increases for a Group Advocating for Muslims in U.S.

The New York Times

March 14, 2007 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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

Length: 1673 words

Byline: By NEIL MacFARQUHAR; David Johnston contributed reporting.

Body

With violence across the Middle East fixing Islam smack at the center of the American political debate, an organization partly financed by donors closely identified with wealthy Persian Gulf governments has emerged as the most vocal advocate for American Muslims -- and an object of wide suspicion.

The group, the Council on American-Islamic Relations, defines its mission as spreading the understanding of Islam and protecting civil liberties. Its officers appear frequently on television and are often quoted in newspapers, and its director has met with President Bush. Some 500,000 people receive the group's daily e-mail newsletter.

Yet a debate rages behind the scenes in Washington about the group, commonly known as CAIR, its financing and its motives. A small band of critics have made a determined but unsuccessful effort to link it to Hamas and Hezbollah, which have been designated as terrorist organizations by the State Department, and have gone so far as calling the group an American front for the two.

In the latest confrontation yesterday, CAIR held a panel discussion on Islam and the West in a Capitol meeting room despite demands by House Republicans that Speaker Nancy Pelosi, a Democrat, not allow the event. The Republicans called its members "terrorist apologists."

Caley Gray, a spokesman for Representative Bill Pascrell Jr., a New Jersey Democrat who helped book the room, rejected that label in a phone interview and said CAIR held similar meetings when Congress was controlled by Republicans. Still, Mr. Gray called back to specify that Mr. Pascrell did not endorse all of the group's positions.

Last fall, Senator Barbara Boxer of California issued a routine Certificate of Appreciation to the organization representative in Sacramento, but she quickly revoked it when critics assailed her on the Web under headlines like "Senators for Terror."

"There are things there I don't want to be associated with," Ms. Boxer said later of the revocation, explaining that her California office had not vetted the group sufficiently.

CAIR and its supporters say its accusers are a small band of people who hate Muslims and deal in half-truths. Ms. Boxer's decision to revoke the Sacramento commendation provoked an outcry from organizations that vouch for the group's advocacy, including the American Civil Liberties Union and the California Council of Churches.

Scrutiny Increases for a Group Advocating for Muslims in U.S.

"They have been a leading organization that has advocated for civil rights and civil liberties in the face of fear and intolerance, in the face of religious and ethnic profiling," said Maya Harris, the executive director of the A.C.L.U. of Northern California.

Government officials in Washington said they were not aware of any criminal investigation of the group. More than one described the standards used by critics to link CAIR to terrorism as akin to McCarthyism, essentially guilt by association.

"Of all the groups, there is probably more suspicion about CAIR, but when you ask people for cold hard facts, you get blank stares," said Michael Rolince, a retired F.B.I. official who directed counterterrorism in the Washington field office from 2002 to 2005.

Outreach to all Muslims via groups they support is an important aspect of ensuring that extremists cannot get a foothold here as they have in Europe, Mr. Rolince said.

The cloud kicked up by the constant scrutiny is such that spokesmen at several federal agencies refused to comment about the group and some spoke only on the condition of anonymity.

After a brief interview, Ms. Boxer declined to answer additional questions about the commendation to the Sacramento representative, Basim Elkarra. A spokeswoman, Natalie Ravitz, said in an e-mail message that the senator had decided "to put this entire incident behind her."

Joe Kaufman, who Ms. Boxer's office said first drew her attention to CAIR's reputation, is the founder of a Web site that tracks what he calls the group's extremism, cairwatch.com. Other critics include the Investigative Project, a conservative group that tries to identify terrorist organizations, and the Middle East Forum, a conservative research center that says its goal is to promote American interests in the region.

"You can't fight a war on terrorism directly when you are acting with a terror front," said Mr. Kaufman, who advocates shutting down the organization.

Founded in 1994, CAIR had eight chapters at the time of the Sept. 11 attacks, said Ibrahim Hooper, a spokesman for the group, but has grown to some 30 chapters as American Muslims have felt unjustly scrutinized ever since.

Broadly summarized, critics accuse CAIR of pursuing an extreme Islamist political agenda and say at least five figures with ties to the group or its leadership have either been convicted or deported for links to terrorist groups. They include Mousa Abu Marzook, a Hamas leader deported in 1997 after the United States failed to produce any evidence directly linking him to any attacks.

There were no charges linked to CAIR in any of the cases involved, and law enforcement officials said that in the current climate, any hint of suspicious behavior would have resulted in a racketeering charge.

The group's officials say the accusations are rooted in its refusal to endorse the American government's blanket condemnations of [Hezbollah](#) and Hamas, although it has criticized Hamas for civilian deaths.

Several federal officials said CAIR's Washington office frequently issued controversial statements that made it hard for senior government figures to be associated with the group, particularly since some pro-Israeli lobbyists have created what one official called a "cottage industry" of attacking the group and anyone dealing with it.

Last summer, the group urged a halt to weapons shipments to Israel as civilian casualties in Lebanon swelled. In September, it held a dinner for former President Mohamed Khatami of Iran at a time when much of official Washington had ostracized that Islamic republic. In November, the group sponsored a panel discussion by two prominent academics who argue that the pro-Israeli lobby exercises detrimental influence on United States policy on the Middle East.

Scrutiny Increases for a Group Advocating for Muslims in U.S.

"Traditionally within the government there is only one point of view that is acceptable, which is the pro-Israel line," said Nihad Awad, a founder of CAIR and its executive director. "Another enlightened perspective on the conflict is not there, and it causes some discomfort."

When Mr. Bush visited a Washington mosque in 2001, Mr. Awad was among the Muslim leaders he met. But Dana M. Perino, a White House spokeswoman, said Mr. Awad had not been invited to any recent iftars, annual dinners to break the fast during the holy month of Ramadan. She offered no explanation.

This year, when Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales met with the leaders of half a dozen Muslim and Arab-American organizations in his office, no representative from CAIR was invited.

When Karen P. Hughes, the close adviser to Mr. Bush and under secretary of state for public diplomacy and public affairs, started interacting with the group, she was criticized as dealing with "Wahhabis," shorthand for Saudi-inspired religious extremists, a State Department spokesman said.

CAIR has raised some suspicion by accepting large donations from individuals or foundations closely identified with Arab governments. It has an annual operating budget of around \$3 million, and the group said it solicited major donations for special projects, like \$500,000 from Prince Alwaleed bin Talal of Saudi Arabia to help distribute the Koran and other books about Islam in the United States, some of which generated controversy.

The donations are a source of contention within CAIR itself. Several branch directors said they had avoided foreign financing and had criticized the national office for it.

Officials at other Arab-American and Muslim organizations said there was a decided split between how the national office operated and how the branches did. The branch offices, which raise their own money and operate largely as franchises, concentrate on local civil rights problems and hence develop close working relationships with law enforcement.

When the Southern California chapter threw itself a birthday party last November, nearly 2,000 people packed the Anaheim Hilton's ballroom to hear guests of honor praise the organization, including J. Stephen Tidwell, the director of the F.B.I.'s Los Angeles office.

"I am very excited to be here," Mr. Tidwell told a reporter covering the fund-raiser for an Arab-American television news channel, calling CAIR "an important bridge for the F.B.I. into the Muslim, Arab-American community."

The Washington office, the officials at the other Arab-American and Muslim groups said, tends to fight more image battles because its main staff members have backgrounds in public relations. Still, they said, CAIR's contrarian image helps with fund-raising both in the American Muslim community and among Arab governments because both believe that the federal government is biased against them.

Some Muslims, particularly the secular, find CAIR overly influenced by Saudi religious interpretations, criticizing it for stating in news releases, for example, that all Muslim women are required to veil their hair when the matter is openly debated.

But they still support its civil rights work and endorse the idea of anyone working to make American Islam a more integral part of society. One Arab-American advocate compared CAIR to "the tough cousin who curses at anyone who speaks badly about the family."

Some activists and academics view the controversy surrounding the group as typical of why Washington fails so often in the Middle East, while extremism mushrooms.

"How far are we going to keep going in this endless circle: 'You are a terrorist!' 'No, you are a terrorist!?' " said Souleiman Ghali, one of the founders of a moderate San Francisco mosque. "People are paying a price for that."

Graphic

Photo: Basim Elkarra of the Council on American-Islamic Relations with Certificate of Appreciation from Senator Barbara Boxer that she revoked. (Photo by Jim Wilson/The New York Times)(pg. A17)Chart: "Chronology of a Souring Relationship" When Senator Barbara Boxer gave an award to a Muslim advocate and then took it back, relations between Ms. Boxer and the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) became strained. NOV. 11, 2006 Ms. Boxer gives a Certificate of Achievement for "outstanding service" to Basim Elkarra, the executive director of CAIR's Sacramento Valley office. DEC. 18 CAIR issues a news release about Mr. Elkarra's receipt of the award. Joe Kaufman publishes an article called "Senators for Terror" on frontpagemag.com, claiming that both CAIR and Mr. Elkarra are connected to Islamic extremism. DEC. 21 Mr. Elkarra is informed by reporters calling from Washington that the award has been rescinded. DEC. 22 Mr. Kaufman issues a news release that "appreciates" Ms. Boxer's decision to rescind the award. JAN. 5, 2007 CAIR's chairman, Parvez Ahmed, writes on his blog that Ms. Boxer "got caught up in our nation's rising tide of Islamophobia." JAN. 8 Ms. Boxer issues a news release explaining her reasons for rescinding the award. JAN. 23 Representatives of CAIR from California meet with Ms. Boxer in Washington. "They didn't ask one question about our response to the allegations, to our response to the myths and lies about CAIR, which I found strange," said Omar Zaki, a public relations consultant who attended the meetings. JAN. 24 CAIR issues a news release saying all issues resulting from the award controversy have been resolved. Ms. Boxer, however, refuses to restore the award. FEB. 23 A spokeswoman for Ms. Boxer says in an e-mail message to a reporter, "Senator Boxer made the decision a few weeks ago to put this entire incident behind her and to decline any further interviews on the matter." (Sources by Council on American-Islamic Relations

Senator Barbara Boxer

frontpagemag.com

americansagainsthate.org)(pg. A17)

Load-Date: March 14, 2007

Robbie misery in park

Yorkshire Evening Post

September 8, 2006

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Length: 1844 words

Body

I note that the YEP looks forward eagerly to the this weekend's Robbie Williams concerts (YEP, September 5), and Coun John Proctor reports that he is confident that things have so far, and will continue, to run smoothly.

But as a local resident, I oppose the running of this event, and surely I cannot be alone!

The last 10 days have seen our beautiful Roundhay Park physically assaulted and become practically a no-go area as stage and security construction work has been undertaken 24/7.

The erection of a huge walled barrier around a significant part of the park - resembling the Berlin Wall - is a particular eyesore and is preventing usual access and ruining enjoyment for park users.

Leeds City Council warns that we might not get our park back until September 14 - I for one have stayed away from the park recently and will continue to do so in the meantime.

Encampment

We have already endured a week of consistent encampment of a large number of construction lorries and trucks in residential roads surrounding the park, and we have been warned to expect massive disruption to our daily lives this weekend, as local road blocks are enforced for the entire weekend and local traffic networks are affected by the anticipated increase in traffic.

No doubt bringing such a big name as Robbie Williams to Roundhay Park represents a significant coup for the councillors of Leeds, but for local residents, it means nothing but misery this weekend. Robbie go home - we do not want you!

Jonathan Topp, Roundhay, Leeds

Putting style before comfort

During the fine weather, people who work in town have been escaping from their stuffy offices and shops, and finding somewhere to sit in the fresh air.

One of the most popular places is City Square, and I have to say that it's very attractive with the bubbling fountains and steel benches. However, did anyone actually road test the seats before they were installed? I'm average height at 5ft 6in, but when I sit on any of the seats my legs dangle most uncomfortably. Or is that the idea: they are so uncomfortable that you won't linger? I reckon they could do with at least an inch off the height - we aren't all over 6ft tall. It just goes to prove what I've thought for a long time - a lot of planners aren't bothered about comfort or practicality as long as it's stylish.

Robbie misery in park

I also think that anyone who provides running water, whether it be fountain, cascade or whatever, should ensure that there are public loos in the near vicinity.

Anyone hypnotised by the bubbling water in City Square has to negotiate a couple of very busy pedestrian crossings and the full length of the crowded station concourse, and have a 20p piece ready to allow access to the station loos. The alternative is to dash up the road to BHS, (negotiating a pedestrian crossing on the way) run down the stairs to the basement, right across the sales floor and the rear of the restaurant and, if it's busy, queue until a cubicle comes free. The French would have built a couple of automatic loos into their design for City Square, but then they tend to be much more practical when it comes to such matters.

End of term report for the Planners: Could do better

MRM, Leeds

Dramatic improvement in theatre scene

Nobody can deny that our city has come on in leaps and bounds, commercially, industrially structurally and creatively.

In addition, nowhere has there been a more surprising turn-about than our cultural scenario.

There is, of course, still room for improvement. Alas, we do not have a state-of-the-art concert venue, such as we see in other cities, but we do have a refurbished Town Hall and, I am glad to say, a flourishing theatre scene. The West Yorkshire Playhouse is one of the top venues in the country, the newly-refurbished Grand Theatre will soon spring to a fresh lease of life, and the City Varieties music hall is awaiting a well-deserved makeover. Finally, we have the Carriageworks, whose auditorium may need adjustment for some, but whose actual stage is a delightful construction and attracting some first rate productions and events.

This week's Leeds Jewish International Performing Arts Festival, for example, has seen artists not only from London, but also flying in from Canada, Israel, Germany and Latvia, bringing with them a trail of followers.

I remember in my youth the YEP had a very satisfactory section devoted to promoting the city's drama and music departments.

The excellent amateur stage movement in the city was always well supported by your paper with a regular weekly column, written by some fine journalists, like Keith Waterhouse, Angus Turner, Ken Lemmon and Nick Clarke.

Now that we have a re-vamped theatre scene, is it not time that this excellent feature was re-established by the YEP? If not solely to report the amateur stage, then to incorporate the whole re-generated theatrical spectrum that we, as theatregoers, are now enjoying in the city.

JL FISHER. Alwoodley, Leeds

New stadium? Let's get basics right first

Once again we have calls for a Leeds stadium to be provided for entertainments (usually music) this time from C Judson (Letters, September 1).

Could the people who insist that Leeds City council provide this facility please tell us where the money is going to come from? Where is the land that will be used for this project? If any land proposed is council-owned, why should it be used for this purpose rather than another purpose? What is the cost of the whole project? What benefits will accrue to the general population of Leeds, not just the few? Wild guesses at extra employment and other supposed advantages to the local economy should be backed up by facts and should be balanced against the problems caused to near-by residents.

Robbie misery in park

Sheffield is fortunate that they have had a vast area of land where the steelworks once stood. What does C Judson suggest that we pull down to make way for this new temple of entertainment?

If a music stadium was such a good venture then private enterprise would be queuing up to build it. There are no companies with such plans to my knowledge. Why then should LCC be expected to use the council tax to build a stadium for event organisers to make easy money? Make LCC get the basic things right before embarking upon such ventures.

Phillip Marsden, e-mail

Key to invasion plans

The 'Milestone Man' is doing a great public service in restoring the many otherwise neglected way markers around Leeds. However, the report on this (YEP, September 2) perpetuates the myth that removing some of these and other signs etc would have frustrated any German invasion during the Second World War.

One the souvenirs my late father brought back at the end of the war, picked up somewhere in Normandy after D Day, was a German army-issue town and street atlas of almost every town, large or small, in England!

Its title was 'England ohne London' and it had the words 'Nur fur Dienstgebrauch' on the cover, which means for use by service personnel only.

Colour printed, detailed and to scale, such a book would have guided them anywhere in the country, backed up by national road maps which they would certainly have had as well.

I have never seen another like it, not even in a museum and mine sadly was either lost or thrown away like my Bill Haley records years ago!

D S Boyes, Rodley Lane, Bramley

Stop moaning, councillor

Labour Councillor Peter Gruen from Cross Gates and Whinmoor has taken the opportunity once again to bash the council, this time because it has provided new facilities in Menston Park (Letters, September 5).

Yes that's right folks, he's complaining about getting new facilities in his area, something many other areas would be very grateful for.

Now I understand that the council officers may not have communicated their plans brilliantly to either local people or the ward councillors but how about just a little pat on the back for the fact that these new facilities have been provided at all rather than yet another dig at council staff?

At least Councillor Carter and co give recognition for good work where it's due instead of just moaning for the sake of it all the time.

Oh and one last thing Coun Gruen, if the council is bad at communicating things to residents and councillors alike what did he and his Labour colleagues do to improve the situation during their 25 year rule?

A Turnbull, Leeds

No place for smoking

On Saturday September 2 my partner and I attended a charity ball organized held in the Headingley Pavilion in aid of British Heart Foundation.

The organization was excellent as was the venue, but then the bar staff started putting ash trays on the tables. Ourselves and four other members on our table took this up with the management.

Robbie misery in park

We were told that the whole building is non-smoking but the organizers had requested smoking,

Considering that a primary cause of heart disease is smoking this seemed contrary to the idea of supporting the British Heart Foundation.

I would like to point out that the representative from the BHF was amazed to see smoking and said that she had never witnessed it before.

G and M Farsley, e-mail

Fighting terror

I totally disagree with R Robinson (Letters, September 2) that Hamas and Hezbollah are not terrorists.

No matter what Israel or anybody else did, or what crimes were committed in the recent war, Hamas and Hezbollah are still terrorists. We should continue to fight the terrorists and support the coalition forces, notably the US. I will certainly not vote for David Cameron since he has recently apologised to terrorists.

M Stevenson, e-mail

Reunion time

I am arranging a reunion of girls who attended Bewerley Street School, particularly, the ones who left in 1951/2. I would like to reach as many as possible. Some of the names I can recall are Pat Murfin, Beryl Mawson, Audrey Armitage, Jean High, Marlene Hebden, Doreen Smith and Doreen Wilson.

The date is Wednesday October 11 at 10.30am. I would be pleased if anyone recognises themselves or can give me contact details for others.

I can be contacted on 01904 760277

Barbara Hughes (formerly Waddington), 7 Longcroft, Wiggington, York YO32 2DE

Swamped

NOW the flood gates are open and we are getting swamped with almost a million foreign migrants and now births will swell the population up to five million with in ten years. We are getting less water each year and no new reservoirs are being built, this country is going to be in real trouble, when is the government going to take notice.

J TAYLOR, Belle Isle, Leeds.

Write to: The Editor, Readers' Letters, Yorkshire Evening Post, Wellington Street, Leeds LS1 1RF.

E-Mail: eped@ypn.co.uk Fax: 0113 238 8536 Phone 0113 238 8152 (lines open 24 hours)

The law of the letter...

Please keep letters to a maximum of 300 words. Letters cannot be published without the YEP receiving a name and postal address.

Please also include a daytime phone number if possible.

We reserve the right to edit any letter for legal or other reasons.

Webwatch

Today's question

Robbie misery in park

Should the Three Rs be brought back into the classroom?

Yesterday's votes

Should **women** in their early 30s be allowed to freeze their eggs?

Yes 43% No 57%

www.leedstoday.net

Load-Date: September 8, 2006

End of Document

'Diversify... energy supply'

The Philadelphia Inquirer
January 24, 2007 Wednesday

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The Philadelphia Inquirer
Found on Philly.com

Section: NATIONAL; Pg. A12

Length: 909 words

Body

Excerpts from the prepared text of President Bush's address last night:

I want to discuss three economic reforms that deserve to be priorities for this Congress.

First, we must balance the federal budget. We can do so without raising taxes. What we need to do is impose spending discipline in Washington, D.C... .

Next, there is the matter of earmarks. These special-interest items are often slipped into bills at the last hour - when not even C-SPAN is watching. In 2005 alone, the number of earmarks grew to over 13,000 and totaled nearly \$18 billion... . The time has come to end this practice... .

Finally, to keep this economy strong we must take on the challenge of entitlements. Social Security and Medicare and Medicaid are commitments of conscience - and so it is our duty to keep them permanently sound.

Tonight, I propose two new initiatives to help more Americans afford their own insurance. First, I propose a standard tax deduction for health insurance that will be like the standard tax deduction for dependents. Families with health insurance will pay no income or payroll taxes on \$15,000 of their income. Single Americans with health insurance will pay no income or payroll taxes on \$7,500 of their income. With this reform, more than 100 million men, women and children who are now covered by employer-provided insurance will benefit from lower tax bills.

At the same time, this reform will level the playing field for those who do not get health insurance through their job. For Americans who now purchase health insurance on their own, my proposal would mean a substantial tax savings - \$4,500 for a family of four making \$60,000 a year. And for the millions of other Americans who have no health insurance at all, this deduction would help put a basic private health insurance plan within their reach... .

My second proposal is to help the states that are coming up with innovative ways to cover the uninsured. States that make basic private health insurance available to all their citizens should receive federal funds to help them provide this coverage to the poor and the sick.

We should establish a legal and orderly path for foreign workers to enter our country to work on a temporary basis. As a result, they won't have to try to sneak in - and that will leave border agents free to chase down drug

'Diversify... energy supply'

smugglers, and criminals and terrorists. We will enforce our immigration laws at the work site, and give employers the tools to verify the legal status of their workers.

It is in our vital interest to diversify America's energy supply - and the way forward is through technology. We must continue changing the way America generates electric power - by even greater use of clean coal technology... solar and wind energy... and clean, safe nuclear power. We need to press on with battery research for plug-in and hybrid vehicles, and expand the use of clean diesel vehicles and biodiesel fuel. We must continue investing in new methods of producing ethanol... .

Let us build on the work we have done and reduce gasoline usage in the United States by 20 percent in the next 10 years - thereby cutting our total imports by the equivalent of three-quarters of all the oil we now import from the Middle East.

To reach this goal, we must increase the supply of alternative fuels, by setting a mandatory fuels standard to require 35 billion gallons of renewable and alternative fuels in 2017... . At the same time, we need to reform and modernize fuel economy standards for cars... and conserve up to 81/2 billion more gallons of gasoline by 2017... .

The evil that inspired and rejoiced in 9/11 is still at work in the world. And so long as that is the case, America is still a nation at war... .

Al-Qaeda and its followers are Sunni extremists, possessed by hatred and commanded by a harsh and narrow ideology... . In recent times, it has also become clear that we face an escalating danger from Shia extremists who are just as hostile to America, and are also determined to dominate the Middle East. Many are known to take direction from the regime in Iran, which is funding and arming terrorists like Hezbollah... .

In the sixth year since our nation was attacked, I wish I could report to you that the dangers have ended. They have not. And so it remains the policy of this government to use every lawful and proper tool of intelligence, diplomacy, law enforcement, and military action to do our duty, to find these enemies, and to protect the American people.

Our country is pursuing a new strategy in Iraq - and I ask you to give it a chance to work. And I ask you to support our troops in the field - and those on their way.

The war on terror we fight today is a generational struggle that will continue long after you and I have turned our duties over to others... . Both parties and both branches should work in close consultation. And this is why I propose to establish a special advisory council on the war on terror, made up of leaders in Congress from both political parties... .

Tonight I ask the Congress to authorize an increase in the size of our active Army and Marine Corps by 92,000 in the next five years. A second task we can take on together is to design and establish a volunteer Civilian Reserve Corps... . It would ease the burden on the armed forces by allowing us to hire civilians with critical skills to serve on missions abroad when America needs them.

Read a complete transcript of Bush's speech via <http://go.philly.com/sotu>

Load-Date: January 24, 2007

PC Farooq shows our Islamic blind spot

The Evening Standard (London)

November 8, 2006 Wednesday

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London Evening Standard

Section: A MERGE; Pg. 12

Length: 840 words

Byline: NICK COHEN

Body

THE case of PC Amjad Farooq shows how, despite all the fuss since 9/11, we don't have a yardstick against which to judge radical Islam. Farooq was a firearms officer trained to protect Tony Blair and visiting dignitaries from would-be assassins. After six weeks with the Diplomatic Protection Group, Special Branch revoked his counter-terrorism clearance.

Its vetters found that he sent his children to a mosque that the police suspected "radical" Islamist groups had infiltrated.

Farooq is suing the Met and denies any links with extremist groups.

We'll have to see what happens at his industrial tribunal hearing, but my guess is that it will do little to clear up the muddled thinking that surrounds extreme groups or support for them.

Most people are clear about the nature of the white far Right. BNP members are banned from the prison service and the police regulations state that an officer cannot undertake "any activity which is likely to interfere with the impartial discharge of his or her duties". As having a racist hatred of black or Asian Londoners clearly would affect how an officer behaved, supporting neofascist politics and membership of the police are incompatible.

What about religion, though? The Met made a dangerous concession during the war between Israel and Hezbollah when it agreed with a Muslim officer's request to be moved from guarding the Israeli embassy in Kensington. Public servants can't be allowed to pick and choose which duties they perform, otherwise we would have Labour-supporting firemen refusing to put out a blaze at a Conservative club.

If the mosque where Farooq's children were sent to study the Koran really was a centre of extremism its

PC Farooq shows our Islamic blind spot

worshippers would believe in the subjugation of women, the death penalty for homosexuals and Muslims who abandon their religion, Adolf Hitler's conspiracy theories about the Jews and the replacement of democracy with tyranny. In short, they would be parroting a large part of the agenda of white fascists.

Yet it is the height of bad taste to point this out in polite society. The BBC's Spooks reflects the blindness of what we used to call the establishment by refusing to acknowledge that radical Islam really exists.

Whenever the Corporation's version of MI5 runs into what looks like an Islamist terror group, it turns out to be a front organisation for scheming Jews or born-again Christians.

Farooq's lawyer, Lawrence Davies, was no better when he said that his client's case proved that "any Muslim or Muslim-looking person or sympathiser best take cover". He may be defending an innocent man, but Davies should have stuck to saying his client was a law-abiding citizen with no sympathy for extremism.

The best way to keep the peace is to do what many still can't do: admit the Islamist far Right exists and isolate it. If you pretend that sensible measures against it are an attack on all Muslims, you will only give aid and comfort to those least deserving of it.

The off-key sound of celebrity SAY what you like about Andrew Lloyd Webber, but at least he once demanded that his performers could learn their lines and hit the right notes.

No longer, it seems. Lloyd Webber tried to cast Simon Shepherd as the male lead in The Sound of Music on the basis that Peak Practice had made him a celebrity who could pull in the punters. Now Shepherd has withdrawn from the production just over a week before it opens.

I shouldn't be too sniffy.

Everyone from politicians to charity organisers uses celebs to attract the public. Still, if you are going to use one in a musical it is probably a good idea to check that he can - er - sing.

I'M ALWAYS hit by the VAT dodge in plumbers' merchants and antique shops.

I see, say, a bathroom suite or pretty but rather useless table, and after frantic calculations with my wife I tell the salesman that if we don't go out for the next month, scrimp on the Christmas presents and cut meat from our diet, we can just about afford it. Our warm glow of consumer satisfaction dissipates seconds later when he hits us with a bill with 17.5 per cent VAT added.

While I'm in confessional mode, I should add that as well as not understanding the tax system, I'm useless at handling builders and can never stay within a budget. With Jack Lemley gone, I'm the obvious candidate to oversee the building of the Olympic stadium.

Mayor or oil baron?

LONDONERS are so used to complaining about Ken Livingstone ignoring his mayoral duties and going off to ingratiate himself with foreign leaders that we don't see how bad he looks to outsiders.

The inhabitants of poverty-stricken Venezuela, for instance, are furious that their leader Hugo Chavez made a sweetheart deal with his chum to provide cut-price oil for London. Opposition leaders are pointing out that Chavez is giving cheap oil to a rich city while securing little in return for his own poor.

If you are a Venezuelan watching your country's prime asset being frittered away, our supposedly "Leftwing" Mayor resembles no one so much as the rapacious CEO of a multinational oil conglomerate.

Graphic

PC Farooq shows our Islamic blind spot

SO LONG: SIMON SHEPHERD WITH SOUND OF MUSIC CO-STAR CONNIE FISHER

Load-Date: November 8, 2006

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The night the children of Qana died

The International Herald Tribune

July 31, 2006 Monday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 1

Length: 898 words

Byline: Sabrina Tavernise

Dateline: QANA, Lebanon

Body

It was pitch black when the missiles came to this small mountain village. The children were asleep. Suddenly, a roof and a second floor were punched in on top of them. Dirt was forced into mouths.

Bodies were broken.

The bombing continued through the night, and it was not until Sunday morning that neighbors and emergency workers were able to reach those buried inside.

Digging under the rubble, they pulled out 28 bodies. Twenty of them were children. The youngest was 10 months.

Late Sunday night, they were still digging.

Tallies of the dead varied. Residents said that as many as 60 people had been inside the house. Some news agencies reported that 56 had been killed, and that 34 of them were children.

The Israeli airstrike at Qana was the single most lethal attack in the course of this sudden war. The survivors will remember it as the day their children died. For the village, it is a fresh pain in an old wound and a reminder of just how much of the burden of wars with Israel that they bear.

In 1996, Israelis attacked a United Nations camp in the village after refugees took shelter there. More than 100 were killed, many of them children.

The Israeli government apologized for that attack, as it did for this one. But it said that residents had been warned to leave.

But leaving southern Lebanon is now a dangerous and pricey business. The two extended families staying in the house the Shaloubs and the Hashims had discussed leaving several times over the past two weeks. But they were poor most family members worked in tobacco or construction and the family was big and weak, with a 95-year-old, two relatives who used wheelchairs and dozens of children. A taxi to Beirut, about the equivalent of \$1,000, was impossible.

And then there was the risk of the road. Dozens, including 21 refugees in the back of a pickup truck on July 15, have been killed on roads in Israeli strikes since the war began.

The night the children of Qana died

"We heard on the news they were bombing the Red Cross," said Zaineb Shalhoub, a 22-year-old who survived the bombing and was lying quietly in a hospital bed in Tyre. "There was just no way to go."

So they had moved to the house on the edge of a high ridge. It was dug into the earth and they thought it would be safer.

But the house's most valuable asset was its water. The town, mostly abandoned, had not had power or running water in many days and a neighbor had rigged a system to pump it. The Shalhoub and Hashims ran a pipe from that house to theirs, providing water.

Flowers placed on bodies

Rescuers clambered over rubble throughout the day, using their hands to pull the bodies of men, women and children from the buildings, Reuters reported.

"Why have they attacked 1- and 2-year-old children and defenseless women? What have they done wrong?" asked Mohamed Samai, whose relatives were among the dead.

The bodies were wrapped tightly in plastic sheets and taped closed. They were assembled under an awning in the town and flowers were placed on them.

A woman in red-patterned pajamas lay crumpled and lifeless in the broken masonry. A leg poked out from the shattered concrete nearby. A medic carried a dead child in his arms from rubble. Other children lay dead in the street.

A medic checked the pulse of a man covered in blood and raised his eyelids, desperately looking for signs of life before giving up. Rescue workers draped sheets over bodies, the rigid arm of one corpse pointing to the sky.

"This is not only Israel's fault, this is the fault of America and the Arab states that backed Israel's attack," Samai said. "If the Israelis want to attack. let them fight the resistance face-to-face." He finished speaking and collapsed.

The strike was less than a kilometer from the mass grave of more than 100 Lebanese killed in Qana in 1996 by Israel's shelling of a UN base. They, too, had been sheltering from bombardment.

For Fatima Balhas, the Israeli airstrike on her village revived painful memories of the 1996 campaign.

She lost five children and her husband in 1996.

"I am today reliving the Qana massacre," she said.

"This enemy does not know either mercy or human rights or democracy this enemy, which is supported by America," said Balhas, who has never fully recovered from her wounds.

Her family members are buried in a mass grave with the other victims of 1996 not far from the building destroyed by the latest airstrike. Rescue workers pulled the bodies of men, women and children from the rubble.

The 1996 victims had been seeking shelter in a UN peacekeepers' base in the village, which nestles in rolling hills dotted with olive trees in southern Lebanon and identifies itself as the place where Jesus turned water into wine.

The Israeli gunners who hit the compound said they had been targeting Hezbollah.

"The first massacre was committed under the UN flag," said Abdel Majid Saleh, a member of Parliament, as he viewed the devastation. "This massacre was committed in the shadow of olive trees. The land on which Jesus set foot has been turned into a symbol for martyrdom."

The international outcry over the 1996 attack on Qana helped force Israel to end its 17-day-long campaign.

The night the children of Qana died

"Ten years on, it appears that the Zionist Dracula's thirst has yet to be quenched," said the speaker of Lebanon's Parliament, Nabih Berri.

Essam Touni, the deputy governor of Qana, said: "There can be no peace in this way and no reconciliation with this enemy."

Load-Date: July 31, 2006

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When a Society Fails Its Women

The Forward

September 29, 2006

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Section: Forward Forum; Pg. A11

Length: 950 words

Body

Sexual harassment is just one example of Israeli leaders' failing ethics.

Sexual harassment has been a favorite topic of late at dinner tables across Israel. How deep in a woman's mouth and for how long should the tongue, in this case allegedly belonging to Justice Minister Haim Ramon, be in order to consider it a sexual offense? How many of the eight women making allegations against President Moshe Katsav were actually raped, kissed forcefully, undressed or touched without consent, and how many, if any, are really just maliciously framing him?

Questions about gender inequality have also been raised by less sensational news. This month the head of the Israeli military, Dan Halutz, proposed abolishing the brigadier general-ranked post of adviser to the chief of staff on women's affair in the army. Is all this Halutz, Katsav and Ramon, not to mention all the other stories we'll never hear about a backlash against us women putting men too much on the defensive?

Did we exaggerate in our plea for equality? Are we now being put back into place, being downgraded from business to economy, the class we were deservedly ticketed to in the first place?

It is sad and frustrating to still have to answer to women who themselves claim to be feminists. Have you gone too far? they ask me. After all, they say, he is the president, or the minister, or the general, and she is just a female assistant, or a girl soldier, or a woman.

I feel we are back to square one. The legislation I initiated in the Knesset a decade ago has not been complimented by deeper and wider changes in society. There is still no constitutional guarantee of full gender equality. Efforts to advance women's rights still tread through muddy back alleys, only rarely parading out on the highway.

When it comes to gender inequality in Israel, semantics do matter. There is no mention of equality per se in any of the quasiconstitutional Basic Laws. The closest we have come are Supreme Court decisions suggesting that the Basic Laws offer protections to women on the basis of gender equality but the term itself is not specified. The law of the land, the judges ruled, offers the right to personal dignity and protection against discrimination, but nowhere does it clearly and unequivocally define gender equality and the rights and protections that come with it.

The rights and protections afforded by the Basic Laws are simply not good enough, given the obstacles to the legal and social advancement of women. For all the progress that has been made, the same old hypocritical notions are still used to fight gender equality.

When a Society Fails Its Women

The ultra-Orthodox assert that women have superior homemaking skills, and are best employed away from the corrupting influences of the work force, preferably at home. And they continue to claim that women more or less ask for it when they are harassed. Meanwhile, the military chiefs question the justice in blaming high-ranking heroes, effectively arguing for granting them immunity in recognition of their contribution to the country's security.

The rabbi and the general have always been Israel's role models, and it is they who have set the rules of morality and ethics. So should

it come as any surprise that so many questions are being raised about Israel's moral standards and values?

Sexual harassment is only one manifestation of the failing ethics of those leading the country. Women are the weaker sex, easier to abuse, and the legislation currently on the books is insufficient to empower them. Much the same can be said for other segments of Israeli society.

The large number of criminal accusations against public figures besides Katsav and Ramon, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert is being investigated for his real estate dealings, and there are countless others facing charges of one sort or another reflects the distorted sense of priorities they and their peers all share. Cases of corruption come and go; the public anger they generate is inevitably diluted by the slow pace at which the legal system delivers justice. All the while, the country stays wrapped in a near-permanent bulletproof vest, preparing for the next war even as we recover from the last one.

And throughout, we Israelis insist that we are the victims. When we harass and when we rape, when we mislead and when we deceive, when we kill and bombard or when we get killed it is always explainable and excusable, without a meddling inquiry committee and without too many regrets.

For years, we have believed Israel to be a country whose vast military power is

tempered by moral strength, supported by social solidarity and guided by well-balanced leadership. The recent war with Hezbollah shattered, at great cost, what was left of this belief.

However, to my perhaps overly optimistic eyes, the war may have finally taught us for the better the limits of power. Just as a president and a Cabinet minister cannot resort to coercive persuasion when the charms they allegedly exercise fail to convince, so too the government and the military cannot continuously insist that where power has already failed more power will win.

The war in Lebanon and the total failure to physically and mentally prepare civilians for nonstop Katyusha attacks, the crooked agenda regarding the peace process with the Palestinians, the economic disaster inflicted on the poor in part by a lack of foresight, and yes, the spectacle of women harassed by top officials being blamed as partners to a conspiracy as we observe Yom Kippur, we ought to repent by admitting to ourselves that Israeli society needs a total change of agenda.

Load-Date: October 8, 2006

FOCUS: British forces worldwide; The last few years have been the busiest for the British armed forces in 40 years - bringing claims that the army is vastly over-stretched and many battalions are under strength. As more and more British servicemen and women pay the ultimate price for their country, we look at where our troops are deployed across the world, how many there are and when we can expect our troops to return home. Although the British Army is currently working and training in 80 different countries, we look at the main areas where this is happening and why

Birmingham Post

September 7, 2006, Thursday

First Edition

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Section: FEATURES; Pg. 8

Length: 875 words

Body

Falklands

After the 1982 conflict, the UK established a garrison on the islands, occupying the two largest, the East and West Falkland. The role of the British forces today is to provide military aid to civil authorities and to defend against attack.

Number of servicemen - approximately 1,170

Status - non-operational

Belize

Used as a training and support unit by the British Army, Belize remains occupied after the withdrawal of the main forces in 1994.

Number of servicemen - unknown

Status - non-operational

Afghanistan

British troops entered Afghanistan as part of a US-led invasion and are now working under NATO in efforts to rebuild the infrastructure, support and implement Afghan authorities and help build up local forces. British forces are set to increase in order to try and stabilise the area. The bulk of the troops are based in Helmand but around 1,000 are stationed in Kabul as part of NATO's International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). The former Taliban regime

FOCUS: British forces worldwide The last few years have been the busiest for the British armed forces in 40 years - bringing claims that the army is vastly over....

is slowly re-emerging as a force in the country making operations particularly dangerous. The number of British servicemen killed since the invasion is currently 36.

Number of servicemen - 4,500 but number expected to peak at 5,700

Status - operational

Bosnia

British forces first entered Bosnia with the UN to deliver humanitarian aid during the Balkan conflict where it is estimated that 250,000 people died. British forces, as part of Nato, are tasked with the duty of implementing and supporting the peace agreement and maintaining stability.

Number of servicemen - Between 700-1,000

Status - operational

Cyprus Sovereign Base Area

1960 saw Cyprus become an independent republic but two sovereign base areas remain at Akrotiri and Dhekelia. The British army work to protect these areas and their associated sites. The bases are used for a variety of humanitarian and military operations and provide the UK with a permanent base at a strategic point in the East Mediterranean, recently utilised during the Lebanon crisis.

Number of servicemen - 2,750

Status - non-operational

Iraq and the Gulf

The US led the invasion of Iraq to topple Saddam Hussein's regime amidst fears of weapons of mass destruction and the ethnic cleansing of the Kurds. However, despite Saddam's capture, conflict in the area wages on. Britain continues to play a key role in Iraq in what is known as Operation TELIC. Most of the troops are based in Basra and the aim is to help rebuild Iraq, support, train and implement Iraqi forces and sustain peace in the area. So far more than 100 British personnel have been killed in the conflict. It is expected that they will be in the country for at least another two years.

Number of servicemen - 7,200

Status - operational

Gibraltar

Gibraltar is a colony formally ceded to Britain in 1713 after it was captured from Spain in 1704. Spain have tried to make claims to Gibraltar but in 1967 a large majority of residents voted to remain a British colony. The Royal Gibraltar Regiment reside here and once a year the TA and regular soldiers are invited to train for a couple of weeks.

Number of servicemen - 550

Status - non-operational

Northern Ireland

The civil rights Troubles in Northern Ireland led to the deployment of thousands of troops in the late 1960s. Although the Troubles are now all but over, the British Army still has a substantial presence in the region. It is

FOCUS: British forces worldwide The last few years have been the busiest for the British armed forces in 40 years - bringing claims that the army is vastly over....

expected they will withdraw fully once successful power sharing between the Loyalist and Nationalist factions commences. In all more than 1,000 British servicemen and women were killed during the Troubles.

Number of servicemen - 11,000

Status - non-operational

Germany

The number of troops in Germany has significantly reduced since the end of the Cold War in the early 1990s although a large number of troops are provided by the UK for the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC) which has its headquarters in Rheindalen, making up 60 per cent of the total manpower. Germany still remains an important base for Army training.

Number of troops - 22,500

Status - non-operational

Diego Garcia

Part of the South Pacific Chagos group, the island was leased to the US in the 1970s as a strategic airbase. Controversy surrounds this as the indigenous people, who considered themselves British citizens, were ousted out of their homeland and moved to Mauritius. However, a recent High Court ruling could see the islanders return to their homeland. The island has since been a military base occupied by a small regiment of British soldiers.

Number of servicemen - 40

Status - non-operational

Ascension Island

Ascension Island is a British Overseas Territory where originally a small British garrison was placed in order to deny it to the French. During the Falklands war the island served as an important supply base. The RAF and US Airforce currently occupy the island. Number of servicemen - 40

Status - non-operational

UN Missions

(Cyprus, Liberia, Sierra Leone, D R Congo, Georgia, Lebanon, Ethiopia and Eritrea)

British troops are involved in a wide range of UN missions alongside service personnel from across the globe. The most recent deployment is likely to be in Lebanon alongside a predominantly French force following the recent conflict between Israel and Hezbollah.

Number of servicemen - 300

Status - operational

Load-Date: September 7, 2006

Women have a long way to go

The Sunday Times (London)

August 20, 2006

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Section: FEATURES; News; Pg. 18

Length: 61 words

Body

ABUSE: You published a photograph of a man at the London demonstration with a T-shirt marked *Hezbollah*.

The vast majority of people here reject the indiscriminate killing of civilians by *Hezbollah*. We British are rightly proud of our belief in free speech, which many in the Arab world so admire. We should not tolerate those who abuse this.

Barney Smith Hawally, Kuwait

Load-Date: August 20, 2006

Mideast intrigue tangles Liberals

The Toronto Star

August 23, 2006 Wednesday

Copyright 2006 Toronto Star Newspapers, Ltd.

Section: NEWS; Pg. A06

Length: 891 words

Byline: Linda Diebel, Toronto Star

Dateline: VANCOUVER

Body

It was the last thing the Liberals needed.

While the federal caucus came to Vancouver this week for policy discussion and renewal, interim leader Bill Graham found himself on the defensive once again yesterday, this time trying to fend off criticism that the latest controversy over another of his MPs shows there is no party discipline.

"We don't have an iron-clad discipline around our members. Nobody's got them loaded up on a bus and thrown away the key," Graham told reporters, referring to a recent Conservative caucus meeting.

The latest furor over the summer's hot-button issue of the Mideast war came after Toronto MP Borys Wrzesnewskyj, associate foreign affairs critic, said he doesn't understand why the government can't "communicate" with Hezbollah, even though it is on the list of terrorist organizations. On a trip to Lebanon organized by the National Council on Canada-Arab Relations, Wrzesnewskyj (Etobicoke-Centre) also accused Israel of "state terrorism."

Liberal leadership candidates quickly denounced his comments, using the controversy to take digs at each other and shift the focus of the meeting from policy issue.

Leadership candidates Carolyn Bennett (St. Paul's) and Scott Brison (Kings-Hants) called for Wrzesnewskyj's resignation as party critic.

"The Liberal party is the only party with a proven capacity to form a government. Our standard is higher and that requires a discipline, both in opposition and in government," said Brison. "Clearly, Borys has failed that test."

Added Brison: "The last thing we need on this issue are misguided, uniformed and increasingly dangerous comments."

Bennett attacked Wrzesnewskyj for his reported comments on Israel, saying "our support for Israel and for her right to self-defence is a constant."

She called on leadership candidate Gerard Kennedy, a former Ontario Liberal minister who is supported by Wrzesnewskyj, to disassociate himself from the Liberal critic.

Mideast intrigue tangles Liberals

While Kennedy said he didn't support the remarks, he said he would reserve further judgment until he'd had a chance to speak to Wrzesnewskyj.

Without a leader, and in the middle of a leadership race, it's been a difficult few months for the Liberals.

Earlier this month, Graham grappled with the decision by Mississauga-Streetsville MP Wajid Khan's decision to become a special adviser to Prime Minister Stephen Harper on South Asia and the Mideast. He promised Graham he would not cross the floor and sit as a Conservative in Harper's minority government. After outraged calls for him to leave caucus, Khan announced he would not attend caucus meetings for the foreseeable future.

Yesterday, instead of focusing on a forum in which 10 leadership candidates discussed women's issues, Graham insisted to reporters that both Khan and Wrzesnewskyj had been elected by their constituents and were entitled to express their opinions. But he didn't rule out disciplinary action against Wrzesnewskyj.

"I have yet to have an opportunity to talk to him ... and any decision will be made only after we have the opportunity to talk," said Graham. "Nothing is decided and nothing is excluded."

Liberals were seething over remarks by Conservative MP Jason Kenney, Harper's parliamentary secretary, who scolded Wrzesnewskyj.

Kenney called comments made by three opposition MPs during their visit to Lebanon this week "very disturbing." He also claimed the MPs had tried "to backpedal and duck and dodge" after their remarks in Lebanon were reported.

Last night, Toronto MP Joe Volpe, who's also running for the leadership, said it must be made clear that the "Liberal party's position is not Mr. Wrzesnewskyj's."

"If and when we choose a leader, then we can have that discussion," Volpe (Eglinton-Lawrence), said of the leadership convention planned for the end of November in Montreal.

He lashed out at Kenney, saying "he never misses an opportunity to be outrageous.

"He brings in the worst elements of partisan politics anywhere. It's certainly not very helpful and productive."

Bob Rae, the former Ontario NDP premier and Liberal leadership candidate, said it's normal for various opinions to be expressed in any party.

"But I do worry as a potential leader about the amount of freelancing that's going on," he told reporters, adding "there's has to be some discipline and some cohesiveness."

Meanwhile, about 300 people cheered the candidates who promised to try and raise the number of women in federal politics beyond the current 21 per cent and find ways for women to better participate in politics.

"None of us has been doing enough," said Toronto lawyer Martha Hall Findlay. The candidates identified a litany of areas where women don't share equal treatment, from Hall Findlay's remark that business is "a male-dominated environment" to Kennedy's assertion that political life is "a male system, there's no question."

While each candidate offered commitments, Toronto MP Ken Dryden (York Centre) stressed that change must be taken seriously because such similar discussions, equally passionate, have been going on for years "and, yet, not much of anything has changed."

During a discussion of poverty issues, many of which are seen as women's issues, Michael Ignatieff (Etobicoke-Lakeshore) proposed a working income tax benefit to help the working poor get off welfare roles in Canada.

"This is the missing piece," he said, to loud applause.

Graphic

Tannis Toohey Toronto Star Interim Liberal Leader Bill Graham holds a media scrum during the party's national caucus meeting in Vancouver yesterday. Tannis Toohey Toronto Star Liberal leadership hopefuls Carolyn Bennett, left, Stephane Dion and Scott Brison discuss women's issues during the National Women's Caucus Leadership debate in Vancouver yesterday. Tannis Toohey Toronto Star Liberal leadership hopefuls Carolyn Bennett, left, Stephane Dion and Scott Brison discuss women's issues during the National Women's Caucus Leadership debate in Vancouver yesterday.

Load-Date: August 23, 2006

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The grim word on 'moderates'

The Sunday Mail (Australia)

April 15, 2007 Sunday

State - Main Country Edition

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Section: FEATURES; Pg. 52

Length: 960 words

Byline: Andrew Bolt

Body

yournews@thesundaymail.com.au

Sheik Taj Din al-Hilali isn't the only hate-preacher in our mosques. Strange choices were made to show us Islamic values are universal values

MAYBE this time, I thought. Maybe this first Australian Islamic Conference would show us the moderate Muslim leaders we've searched for.

We need them. Look at the latest doings of the hate-preachers.

Australia's Sheik Taj Din al-Hilali gave an interview in Iran demanding Muslims stand "in the trenches" with its hostage-taking regime. He is being investigated for allegedly giving \$12,000 to a Lebanese propagandist linked to terrorists.

Meanwhile, the head of the Lebanese Muslim Association that pays him to preach at Australia's biggest mosque, has had to seek police protection for suggesting this fool had best shut up.

The Federation of Islamic Councils that made Hilali mufti refuses to sack him, though he's vilified Jews, praised suicide bombers as "heroes", called the September 11 terrorist attacks "God's work against oppressors", excused convicted pack rapist Bilal Skaf and said raped women should be "jailed for life".

The Howard Government sidelined its Muslim Community Reference Group after finding a third of the 14 "moderates" it hand-picked supported the Iranian-backed Hezbollah extremist group, notorious for its terrorist wing.

So we desperately need to hear from those moderate Muslim leaders we keep telling each other must surely exist.

Was it so dumb to think Mercy Mission would provide them -- Muslim leaders who would demonstrate that they "benefit the communities in which they live"?

You may have dared to hope, given this new group's leaders include the highly educated Tawfique Chowdhury, a Bangladeshi-born and Australian-raised IT project manager, and Adel Salman, who so impressed his employers at Cadbury Schweppes he was selected for the prestigious Asialink leaders program.

The grim word on 'moderates'

Salman organised Mercy Mission's first Australian Islamic Conference at Melbourne University over the Easter weekend.

The conference had a noble aim: to "present a true picture of 'Islam in action' to the wider community" and convince Australians that "Islamic values are universal values".

So who did Mercy Mission choose to give us this "true picture" of a moderate Islam?

Of the six international speakers it advertised, let me introduce you to two.

Bilal Philips, a Jamaican-born Canadian was a communist and worker for the Black Panther terrorist group before converting to Islam and becoming a preacher.

His message was uncompromising: "Western culture led by the United States is an enemy of Islam." Which makes him an odd choice to reassure us that "Islamic values are universal values".

The choice of Philips is even odder given the US named him as an "unindicted co-conspirator" over the 1993 bombing of New York's World Trade Centre. Our security agencies judged him such a threat he was banned from coming here.

Philips insists he rejects terrorism and considers al-Qaida a "deviate" group. But his website and interviews show why some might not take him at his word.

He admits he was hired by the Saudi air force during the first Gulf War to preach to American soldiers stationed in Saudi Arabia and convert them to Islam.

He says he succeeded, and "registered the names and addresses of over 3000 male and female US soldiers".

"My role was confined to encouraging them to train Muslim-American volunteers and go to Bosnia to help the mujahidin and take part in the war (against Serbia)," he boasted.

But Clement Rodney Hampton-El, an al-Qaida-trained American bombmaker serving a 35-year sentence for the World Trade Centre bombings, claimed Philips gave him the names of soldiers about to leave the military and who might help the Bosnian jihadists.

To repeat: Philips denies any links to al-Qaida, and swears he is opposed to terrorism, although he does say Muslims are entitled to defend their faith by force.

But given his support for jihadists, his past contacts with jailed terrorists and the allegations against him, why on earth did Mercy Mission choose him to preach here?

Also high on Mercy Mission's guest list was another convert, British journalist Yvonne Ridley.

Ridley didn't just marry a colonel in Yasser Arafat's Palestinian Liberation Organisation but has been busy defending other terror groups like it.

Soon after the September 11 terrorist attacks, Ridley accused Islamic sheiks of going soft.

"Muslims have lost confidence since September 11," she complained. "Something as simple as suicide bombers being martyrs is being denied by prominent sheiks."

At a Belfast meeting of Islamic students she insisted there were no innocent Israeli victims in suicide bombings. Not even children.

She even hailed as a "martyr" the Chechen terrorist Shamil Basayev, who planned the attack on the Beslan school in which 333 hostages -- 186 of them children -- were killed.

The grim word on 'moderates'

And when relatives of al-Qaida's then-leader in Iraq, the head-hacker Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, denounced his bomb attacks on three hotels in Jordan leaving 61 dead, including members of a wedding party, she was livid.

"There is something rather repugnant about some of those who rush to renounce acts of terrorism," she sneered.

What, in Ridley's incantations of hatred and her defence of child-killers and wedding bombers, makes her the kind of Muslim who would "benefit the communities in which they live"?

What does it say about Mercy Mission that Ridley and Philips were hired as speakers to tell us "Islamic values are universal values" and we have nothing to fear?

Is this really the best our Muslim leaders can offer?

I beg of them: prove it isn't. Until you do I shall take you at your grim word.

Join Andrew to discuss this on blogs.news.com.au/heraldsun/andrewbolt

Load-Date: April 14, 2007

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In search of Corporate Iran and a Coca-Cola

The Age (Melbourne, Australia)

March 2, 2007 Friday

First Edition

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Section: BUSINESS; Pg. 5

Length: 873 words

Byline: Eric Ellis - Eric Ellis is South-East Asia correspondent for Fortune magazine

Body

There's plenty of chic and wealth in Tehran - just don't ask too many questions, writes Eric Ellis.

CORPORATE Iran - now there's a term you don't see that often.

Corporate America we know well. And, of course, Corporate Australia, which Canberra recently banned from Iran.

But Corporate Iran? Google yields just 100 results and most are copies of an article in a US business magazine lamenting the 2005 rise of the "anti-capitalist, anti-West" President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

Corporate Iran does exist - and as with most things in this complex and often charming country, a grasping mullah hovers close to its spigot.

And ayatollahs. Take the "Shah of Pistachios" Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, Iran's once and perhaps future president and widely regarded by grumpy Iranians as their richest man. The family's writ runs to airlines, caviar, oil, mining, cars, property and agriculture.

There's supposedly billions stashed in Swiss, Singaporean and Luxembourgeois banks - with an emphasis on the bourgeois - property in France, Canada and booming Dubai and beach resorts in India and Thailand. The former president's clan denies it, but Iranians struggling on \$2000 a year and seeing their leaders squander Iran's oil wealth in Hezbollah adventurism snort that Rafsanjani doth protest too much.

One intrepid local hack pried a little too far into Rafsanjani Inc and is in jail. A blameless businessman I met is convinced he did three years inside in the '90s because he refused to yield when Rafsanjani's lieutenants fancied his profitable commercial farms. That or because he is Bahai, regarded as heretical by Iran's Shia mullahs.

But he was lucky. Tehran's small coterie of investigative journalists and corruption activists are still reeling from a spate of unsolved murders in 2000.

I repair to lunch at Nayebeh, in fashionable north Tehran. Elegant ladies-who-lunch in Jackie O sunglasses pick at grilled Alborz trout and salad, their table chatter gliding between French, English and Farsi.

The clientele is as urbane as any eatery in Paris' VIIe - smart Tehran tilts heavily to France - and the only hint we're in George Bush's Axis of Evil is the hijab Iranian women must wear - lest they risk attacks from Islamist militias, the feared basijis.

In search of Corporate Iran and a Coca-Cola

The pressing demands of mosque and mode merge in expensive Hermes scarves, exposing sexy blonde-tipped fringes. Ring-heavy hands cradle Marlboro Lights and Kents.

The Nayeb set's preferred tipple is probably Krug, but Khomeini and his Islamist heirs are teetotal revolutionaries, so less chic are making do with Coca-Cola.

Coca-Cola? Marlboro? Hang on, isn't Corporate America - and now Corporate Australia - banned from doing business in Iran? Yes, but Washington bent the rules in 1999 for "foodstuffs", thus opening a door for Pepsi and Coke.

Operating through Irish subsidiaries in Drogheda, Coke has been selling here since 1999 and Pepsi since 2001, after being kicked out in 1979. They have already grabbed about half of Iran's \$2 billion beverage market and are taking aim at the sector leader Zamzam.

The theocrats want Iranians to shun "Great Satan" brands, which they say send profits to "Zionist Israel to be converted into bullets piercing the chests of Lebanese and Palestinian children". Hardliners such as Mehdi Minai of the mosque-linked Public Demands Council, love denouncing Pepsi. He says Pepsi stands for "Pay Each Penny to Save Israel".

Big Beverage dismisses such blather as, well, blather.

Australian products are not much evident in Iran, but the region has been happily boycotting US beverages for years. A 1960s saying echoing round the region has it that "Coke is for Jews; Pepsi is for Arabs".

Coke has endured persistent claims that its logo insults the Koran. The whispering campaign got to the point that Atlanta posted a page called "Middle East Rumours" on its website to counter the claims.

One entry denies, with a letter from an Egyptian grand mufti, a widely held belief that Coke's curve swirl says "No Muhammad, no Mecca" in reverse.

The best thing going for Coke and Pepsi here is not their Americanness but probably because Zamzam is run by a bonyad. These are the religious charities Khomeini used to quasi-nationalise Iran's economy after 1979. Conceived to help Iran's needy, bonyads are no model of modern management. Many have become goldmines for the powerful, which in Iran means the pious, or those close to them.

Zamzam's 17 plants are controlled by the Foundation of the Dispossessed, answering to the Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

The cranky Minai is lobbying Khamenei to issue a fatwa on Coke and Pepsi out of Iran, and this is where Corporate Iran can be a trap for young players. A clerical ruling that could appear to be religious in intent might be about something quite different.

Bonyads control trillions of rials of assets, such as the international hotels that operated under the Hyatt, Hilton, Sheraton and Intercontinental banners in the 1970s.

The old Hyatt is called the Azadi (Freedom), and Mamma Mia muzak fills the lobby as junketing officials from Bahrain herd to the coffee shop - to drink Coca-Cola with their eggs. In Corporate Iran, it's hard to avoid Corporate America.

Eric Ellis is South-East Asia correspondent for Fortune magazine

Graphic

In search of Corporate Iran and a Coca-Cola

PHOTO: Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani: doth he protest too much? PICTURE: REUTERS

Load-Date: July 3, 2007

End of Document

Where the Boys Are, at Least for Now, the Girls Pounce

The New York Times

November 2, 2006 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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Section: Section A; Column 3; Foreign Desk; Pg. 4; BEIRUT JOURNAL

Length: 840 words

Byline: By KATHERINE ZOEPF

Dateline: BEIRUT, Lebanon, Nov. 1

Body

This is a city of nightclubs, but the nightlife is something else these days, and not just because of the feverish edge sharpened by the war last summer.

By 8 p.m., women in their 20s and early 30s are prowling in packs of five and six, casting meaningful glances at any and all passing men. In the bars the women dance for hours -- often on top of the bar -- and legs, midriffs, bare shoulders and barely covered bosoms are offered for public admiration.

Samir Khalaf, a professor of sociology at the American University of Beirut, said the scene astonished his American colleagues. "They are just shocked," he said. " 'This is Lebanon, the Middle East?' they say. They can't stop talking about all the belly buttons, about all these highly eroticized bodies. You see it everywhere here, this combination of consumerism and postmodernism and female competition."

For a few weeks twice a year, after Ramadan and before Christmas, thousands of Lebanon's young men return from jobs abroad -- and run smack into one of the world's most aggressive cultures of female display. Young women of means have spent weeks primping and planning how to sift through as many men as possible in the short time available. The austere month of Ramadan ended a week ago.

The country's high rate of unemployment pushes the young men to seek work elsewhere, sometimes in Western countries like France and Canada, but mainly in the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and the other oil states on the Persian Gulf. The women, inhibited by family pressures, are generally left behind.

"The demographic reality is truly alarming," Professor Khalaf said. "There are no jobs for university graduates, and with the boys leaving, the sex ratios are simply out of control. It is now almost five to one: five young girls for every young man. When men my sons' age come back to Lebanon, they can't keep the girls from leaping at them."

For the men, who return with deep pockets and high spirits, the holiday welcome is gratifying.

"In Doha it is completely impossible, because you can't talk to women in the gulf," said Wisam Hamdan, 35, back from Qatar, where he manages hairdressing salons. "But Lebanese girls are very friendly. I am hoping to meet lots of girls, and then I will pick one."

Where the Boys Are, at Least for Now, the Girls Pounce

The other night Roula Hallak, 27, was wandering the bars of Gemmayzeh, an eastern Beirut neighborhood, with a troupe of six meticulously dressed and made-up girlfriends.

"I'm not looking, but she is, and so is she," Ms. Hallak said, poking two of them, who giggled and declined to give their names. "It's so hard to meet the perfect guy this way, but there are so many out in Beirut at this time of year. You go out and you look and you're always hoping."

According to Professor Khalaf, Lebanese Christians have been migrating for economic reasons since Ottoman times. But as the nation's economic crisis has deepened, the exodus has come to include young men from all religious groups and across the socio-economic spectrum, as well as a tiny but growing number of young women.

Over the last two decades, the Persian Gulf has become the economic pole, and its pull has only grown stronger since the monthlong war this summer between Israel and the Hezbollah militia in Lebanon. With the political situation here still so uncertain, investment and work opportunities are growing even scarcer, and the gender imbalance worsens.

For young women here, dressing fashionably is a competitive game; stare-down contests between young women in restaurants and malls are common, particularly, say the girls, when one of the women is accompanied by an attractive Lebanese man.

Kareen Yazbek, a Beirut psychologist, says that the lack of available men is a constant theme in her discussions with young women recovering from depression and drug addiction.

"Throughout my practice, the main issue that comes up with many young women is that they can't find anyone to be with or to marry," Ms. Yazbek said. "Among college-age girls it's not such a problem, but after graduation there's a big change as the men start seeking work outside of Lebanon."

"The social pressures on young women are just huge," Ms. Yazbek continued. "The focus is more and more on being beautiful, on pleasing other people. The competition is intense, conformity is a big thing, and everyone, rich and poor, gets plastic surgery. You can go to parts of Beirut where almost every young woman has the same little nose."

And the big prize, all seem to agree, is the attention of one of the visiting native sons.

"The guys that remain in Lebanon are the stupid ones!" exclaimed Nayiri Kalayjian, 19, who was hitting the bars on Monot Street, in central Beirut, with three girlfriends.

"We're too good for them," she said. "The ones who remain in Lebanon are the ones with closed mentalities, the ones who just want a virgin girl. You start to feel that the men who stay in Lebanon are the ones with no ambition in their work, and so you wonder, why are they still here?"

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Graphic

Photo: At a Halloween party at the C-Lounge in Beirut, women tried to attract scarce visiting men with a "Who's the Sexiest?" contest. (Photo by Kate Brooks/Polaris, for The New York Times)

Load-Date: November 2, 2006

Where the Boys Are, at Least for Now, the Girls Pounce

End of Document

Israeli leader says he's untouchable

The Toronto Star

October 31, 2006 Tuesday

Copyright 2006 Toronto Star Newspapers, Ltd.

Section: NEWS; Pg. A08

Length: 915 words

Byline: Mitch Potter, Toronto Star

Dateline: JERUSALEM

Body

For many Israelis, the ever-blackening cloud of sexual misconduct hanging over the head of President Moshe Katsav should have long since blown him off his perch as Israel's face to the world.

Innocent until proven guilty remains their watchword. But when the accused carries the de facto title of Citizen Number One, a status replete not only with moral responsibility but complete legal immunity, the right thing to do is stand down, temporarily at least, until the storm can be measured in a court of law.

Katsav refused to suspend himself an entire war ago, when the saga first broke after the president and a senior female aide traded simultaneous allegations in early July, she of rape, he of extortion and character assassination.

He refused again while the war with Hezbollah came and went, each missile matched like a bad tabloid dream with salacious media accounts of the mushrooming criminal probe into Katsav's behaviour around women.

The president refused to suspend himself once again two weeks ago, after Israeli police presented a dossier of evidence based on interviews with 10 female complainants with a bombshell bottom-line: recommendations that Katsav be charged with rape, forceful indecent assault, indecent assault without consent and sexual harassment offences.

And to the utter incredulity of his critics, Katsav refused yet again yesterday, delivering a legal submission that argued the Israeli Supreme Court has no authority to compel him to resign.

He has immunity, after all. Constitutional experts in Israel say the case has now entered uncharted territory, as no precedent exists for a president facing such serious allegations. But if Katsav chooses to cling to his largely ceremonial office, another four or five months could pass before the next tumbler falls - a decision by Israeli Attorney General Menachem Mazuz on whether to proceed with an indictment.

Katsav, who has maintained all along he is the victim of conspiracy, issued another statement of innocence yesterday, insisting, "I am totally convinced that I am innocent and all have to respect the law and processes."

Whatever the truth, the pressure to stand aside pending a legal outcome is now approaching a crescendo, as Israelis ponder the impact of the scandal on the office of the presidency itself.

Israeli leader says he's untouchable

"It is baffling, stunning, depressing and distressing. Even for a public that doesn't expect much from its present leaders, this is an all-time low," said Frances Raday, a professor of law at Hebrew University and a leading Israeli advocate of women's rights.

"At a time when all (Katsav) can do is drag the insignia of the presidency through the mud by generating headlines all over the world, he has the responsibility to suspend himself.

"Even if in the end it is decided he is snow white and never dreamt of such a thing, it doesn't matter. The continuing damage to Israel's image is just untold."

Katsav's ability to fulfill the duties of the presidency is now in question as complaints over his presence multiply. In September he absented himself from the swearing in of Israel's new Supreme Court president Dorit Beinisch after one retired high court justice recommended Katsav "be sick that day."

And the day after tomorrow, Katsav is not expected to attend a memorial service in the Knesset when parliament gathers to mark the Hebrew calendar's 11th year since the assassination of former prime minister Yitzhak Rabin.

Beinisch hinted last night that the president's dogged insistence on "business as usual" may soon incur the wrath of the very Supreme Court whose authority he challenges, telling the Israeli daily Haaretz: "The court cannot stand silent in the face of disrespect for the law."

Israel is hardly unaccustomed to sexual imbroglio involving senior public figures. But for those who toil hardest in the struggle against sexual violence, the allegations not only travel far beyond mere imbroglio - they harken to an era of unbridled Israeli machismo many had thought was behind them.

"We are still a very old-fashioned, conservative society in many ways. I think most people understand that it comes in part from life in the military, which sets Israel apart from most countries," said Tal Kramer, executive director of the Association of Rape Crisis Centres in Israel, an umbrella group representing the country's nine sexual assault facilities.

"So many young women go into the army and find themselves taking orders in a hierarchical structure that is ripe for sexual misconduct. We've worked very hard for social change but, as in many countries, sexual violence remains the only crime where society blames the victims and sometimes even the victim blames herself."

The Israeli Knesset transformed that landscape in 1998, approving one of the most sweeping sexual harassment laws anywhere.

Israel's then-defence minister Yitzhak Mordechai was the first high profile figure to run afoul of the new legislation, forced to resign after he was convicted of sexual assault and harassment sparked by the complaints of several women who worked with him in government and during his long army career.

"Regardless of whether he is innocent or guilty, the very sad message Katsav is sending to Israelis is that a man can walk around with his head held high even when the police say there is reason to indict him," said Hebrew University's Raday.

"It is a horrendous message because it gives enormous support to the view that you don't need to believe these women even if the police believe them."

Graphic

MARKUS SCHREIBER ap Israeli President Moshe Katsav, who's refused to stand down despite accusations of rape and indecent assault, says Israel's Supreme Court can't make him resign.

Israeli leader says he's untouchable

Load-Date: October 31, 2006

End of Document

Democrats turf Lieberman

The Toronto Star

August 9, 2006 Wednesday

Copyright 2006 Toronto Star Newspapers, Ltd.

Section: NEWS; Pg. A10

Length: 876 words

Byline: Tim Harper, Toronto Star

Dateline: WASHINGTON

Body

Joe Lieberman, a three-term Democratic senator from Connecticut, was handed a stunning rebuke by his own party members last night, denied a chance to represent the party in coming mid-term elections because of his strident support of George W. Bush's war in Iraq.

Voters turned out in apparent record numbers to hand the party nomination to an upstart anti-war candidate, cable television millionaire Ned Lamont, a man who has never held office beyond local city council.

It was a race marked by bitterness throughout, including on voting night, when 64-year-old Lieberman said he'd run as an independent to retain his Senate post in November.

He became only the fourth incumbent senator to be rejected by his own party in the past quarter-century.

The Connecticut verdict will be heard far beyond the tiny northeastern state.

It will shape the autumn elections, in which Congress is up for grabs, and send a message to Democrats that the party is tilting to the left and no longer has patience for members who back an unpopular war.

It will also likely shape a 2008 campaign where prospective Democratic candidates, including frontrunner Hillary Clinton of New York, may be pushed to take a more strident anti-Bush tone, particularly when it comes to criticism of a war that's claimed almost 2,600 American lives.

"Tonight we voted for a big change," Lamont, 52, told supporters. "Stay the course. It's not a winning strategy in Iraq and it's not a winning strategy for America."

He said U.S. troops were stuck in the midst of a bloody civil war in Iraq and "it was high time we brought them home to a heroes welcome."

As he spoke, supporters chanted "Bring them home, bring them home."

Lieberman insisted he'd lost only the first phase of the campaign.

"I am disappointed," he said. "I am disappointed not just because I lost but because the old politics of partisan polarization won today."

Democrats turf Lieberman

Lieberman told supporters he'd lost to a man who campaigned on "insults, not ideas" and would be willing to go back to the old ways of a polarized Washington, which Americans do not want.

His independent candidacy, he said, will be a campaign of "unity and purpose."

With about 95 per cent of the vote counted, Lamont had 52 per cent to Lieberman's 48 per cent. At the beginning of the year, Lieberman held a 50-point advantage over his unknown opponent.

Voting was limited to Connecticut's estimated 700,000 registered Democrats, a number that swelled in recent days.

The increasingly bitter primary campaign sparked venom from both camps even while voters shucked off mid-summer lethargy and trudged to the polls in a vote watched nationally.

Lieberman yesterday accused his opponent of allowing his Internet-savvy backers to sabotage his website, forcing it to crash on voting day, a charge Lamont and his supporters in the blogosphere vehemently denied.

Lieberman had been derided by opponents as an "enabler" for Bush - a much-celebrated kiss between the two also hurt him - and became a target for an electorate which is in the mood to punish incumbents.

A Washington Post-ABC News poll released yesterday found 53 per cent of respondents said they were inclined to vote incumbents out of office this November and more than half of Democrats - 54 per cent - said they were likely to oppose a candidate who backed Bush's war.

Facing defeat, the Democratic vice-presidential candidate in 2000 had pleaded with party members to send him back to Washington, emphasizing his party bona fides on other issues over a political career that stretched almost two decades.

"I know I've taken some tough stands on the war that not everybody agrees with," he said in the campaign's final hours.

"But I've also taken some tough, controversial stands, based on my beliefs, when it came to the rights of working people, or women's rights, or the rights of gay and lesbian Americans, or to protect the environment."

Lamont, who pulled in the backing of Hollywood stars such as Barbra Streisand and Paul Newman, had appealed to the state's Democrats to set the agenda for this fall's mid-term elections.

"Your vote will determine the national headlines tomorrow: 'Connecticut Democrats show support for War, President Bush' or 'Democrats in Connecticut foreshadow national call for accountability in Iraq,'" Lamont said on his website.

Later, in a national TV interview, he said he believed the U.S. Senate could pass a resolution early in 2007 aimed at bringing American troops home.

He told MSNBC the ongoing war in the Middle East and the recent decision by Bush to deploy more American troops to the Iraqi capital "reminds (us) the invasion of Iraq did nothing for America's security. (It) destabilized the Middle East. Did nothing for Israel's security. And here we are, some 130,000 troops stuck in the middle of a bloody civil war. And what's going on? Iran has been emboldened. Israel is more vulnerable. And Hamas and Hezbollah are launching rockets into Israel."

Lieberman became nationally known even before he was chosen as Al Gore's running mate in the historic 2000 election ultimately decided by the U.S. Supreme Court. He was the first Democrat to lash out at President Bill Clinton for "immoral" behaviour in the Monica Lewinsky scandal. Still, Clinton campaigned for him in recent days.

Graphic

Democrats turf Lieberman

Darren McCollester getty images Democratic senator Joe Lieberman gives his concession speech last night, losing in his re-election campaign to challenger Ned Lamont. He vowed to run as an independent in November.

Load-Date: August 9, 2006

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Israeli Tennis Players Serve Up New Image

The Forward

August 25, 2006

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Section: Fast Forward; Pg. 10

Length: 850 words

Byline: Steven Zeitchik

Body

'The ball tails away from him when it's on the far side of the court," Jonathan Erlich whispers to his doubles partner, Andy Ram, as Ram gets ready to receive serve. Ram nods, lightly slaps his partner's hand lightly and heads up to the net. A minute later, he is flicking a perfect backhand volley into the doubles alley, which catches his opponent flat footed. Ram and Erlich slap hands again, this time more emphatically.

There's little that was remarkable about the practice session at the Legg Mason Tennis Classic in Washington, D.C., last month. The two players were in sync - so much so, in fact, that later in the week they made it all the way to the semifinals.

Except the feared doubles team is a couple of... Israelis?

The Jewish state doesn't exactly have a reputation as a tennis powerhouse. At the world's major tournaments, Israel is a little like Finland: It's there, but you have to look pretty hard.

Case in point: Harel Levy, an Israeli journeyman so far below tennis's glamour ranks that when he pulled off an upset in the first round at the French Open a few years ago, he had to sneak into the hotel room of an eliminated player because he didn't have the money to cover the extra nights.

But as the U.S. Open begins next week, there are signs that this is all about to change.

Ram won Israel's first Wimbledon title in July when he and his Russian partner, Vera Zvonoreva, took the mixed-doubles championship, outmaneuvering Venus Williams and American doubles star Bob Bryan.

A few weeks later, a team of Israeli men beat the Brits at the Davis Cup for the first time. The shocker - in England, no less - was the equivalent of a West London society lady beating a Brooklyn Jew at a cholent cook-off... in Brooklyn. The Brits were so shocked that one tabloid proclaimed the loss as "a new low" in British sports.

The women haven't been slouching, either. Shahar Pe'er, a 19-year-old who takes leave from her army service (she has a desk job) to play tournaments, went all the way to the fourth round at the French Open, where she nearly defeated a surging Martina Hingis. Pe'er is now ranked 25th in the world in singles and also won a doubles title this summer, The Bank of the West in Palo Alto, Calif.

Even Tzipora Obziler - at 33, a tennis geriatric - has caught the good luck, reaching her first final after many failed attempts.

Israeli Tennis Players Serve Up New Image

After years of underachievement, Israel now has a class from which a true star might emerge - an Ilan Lendl, if you will.

"There certainly are a surprising number of people on a competitive level now," said Meir Ribalow, director of the Web site JewsInSports.org.

In 1991, Israel formed a dedicated tennis program at the elite Wingate Institute, where pros such as Ram have sharpened their play.

Ribalow says that group has now ripened: "What you're seeing in Israel are the people who picked it up 10 or 15 years ago coming into form."

The players, though, downplay the idea of an emerging class.

"I wouldn't say it's new," Pe'er told the Forward from the JPMorgan Chase Open in Los Angeles. "Before us there was [Amos] Mansdorf and [Gilad] Bloom," she said, alluding to two Israeli men in the 1980s who never achieved the success these players have.

"And then," she added, "there's Anna."

Ah, Anna. The tennis goddess. No, not Kournikova, but Smashnova, a beacon for young Israelis.

Besides owning the best tennis name in the world (though Israeli prospect Almog Mashiach gives her a run for her money), Smashnova has inspired many younger Israelis to pick up a racket, what with her 12 tour titles and powerful ground strokes and cagey drop shots. Fifteen years after going pro, she still finds life in her game, having won a tournament in Budapest last spring.

But Smashnova doesn't just embody Israeli success; she embodies why the country is suddenly ascendant. A top Russian junior, she came to Israel at 14 after the Iron Curtain fell. Ram and Erlich - who emigrated from Uruguay and Argentina, respectively - followed suit. As global antisemitism has increased and Israel has become more prosperous, one of the unexpected byproducts has been an ingathering of tennis exiles.

All this is happening as sports take a backseat to pressing political matters. The Women's Tennis Association Tour just canceled its first tournament in Israel because of the war against Hezbollah.

And despite the usual jock platitudes, the players are, surprisingly very politically aware. Erlich has dedicated matches to his family in Haifa. Ram has been especially vocal, saying, "The media do not always show the right pictures."

Pe'er, too, admits to sneaking frequent peeks at the news: "I have a cousin who's [serving] in Lebanon, and I spend a lot of time when I'm not on the court watching the TV and reading the Internet."

It would be too easy to say that tennis is helping in these difficult times. But as Erlich and Ram delight Israeli fans in Washington, it's also hard not to enjoy the sounds of Hebrew slang on an international tennis court.

Steven Zeitchik is a reporter for Variety and a helpless tennis junkie who hopes one day to perfect the three-handed backhand.

Graphic

IMAGE

Israeli Tennis Players Serve Up New Image

Load-Date: August 28, 2006

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Britain's dark day in war on terror; Jordan: Tourist shot dead in gunman rampage

Daily Mail (London)

September 5, 2006 Tuesday

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Section: ED 2ND; Pg. 6

Length: 856 words

Body

A BRITISH man died in a hail of bullets when a gunman chanting 'God is Greatest' opened fire on a group of holidaymakers in Jordan yesterday.

Two British women were also seriously injured when the killer blasted off a dozen shots as they toured the popular Roman amphitheatre in the capital Amman.

Witnesses said the man shouted the Islamic chant Allahu Akbar (God is Greatest) as he fired at the group, killing 30-year-old Christopher Stokes, and wounding the women, three other Westerners and their Jordanian tourist police guide.

First he ran toward the tourists, pulling a pistol from his pocket and spraying his bullets directly at them from behind. Then, he turned around, facing them, and continued to shoot.

When he ran out of ammunition, he tried to flee but was overpowered by the policeman and local people.

The attack came as anti-Western sentiment hardens in the kingdom, following Israel's military offensives against Gaza and Lebanon.

Officials said the gunman came from the same region as the former leader of Al Qaeda In Iraq, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, who was killed by the U.S. in June.

He was being interrogated last night.

The attack in the heart of Jordan's capital came despite a heavy clampdown on security in the country, since a string of deadly hotel blasts last November claimed by Al Qaeda In Iraq.

Up to 18 Britons were in the group targeted by the assassin on the steps of the Roman ruins, one of Amman's most visited sights.

One of the injured, Karen Sparke, from the village of Alderbury, near Salisbury, yesterday said she had had a 'very lucky escape'. The other injured Briton has not been named.

Speaking from her hospital bed, Mrs Sparke, 47, said at first she thought the shots were firecrackers. 'We turned around and saw this man pointing a gun at us and I got shot.' She was hit in the back of the shoulder and the bullet came out the front, taking part of her collar bone with it.

Britain 's dark day in war on terror Jordan : Tourist shot dead in gunman rampage

The mother of two, who was travelling with a friend, said: 'I went up the steps a bit further and stood round the corner, and I realised I was bleeding all over. It was all so surreal. There was blood everywhere, people shouting, it was bedlam.' Everyone who had looked after them had been 'marvellous'. She added: 'The locals came and dragged us away to protect us and then they got the ambulance.' Mrs Sparke, a dispatch manager for the spinal unit of Salisbury district hospital, said she was sore from the bullet wound and could not move her arm very well.

'I'm just really tender. I had a very lucky escape. It's not real at the moment,' she said.

Mrs Sparke said the tour party had got to know each other well after travelling in Syria together for several days, and Mr Stokes was a very friendly and chatty person.

Imaginative Traveller, the Suffolkbased tour operator behind the trip to Jordan, said up to 18 of its customers were involved in the incident.

'This has come as a huge shock to us,' a spokesman said. 'We have been running small group tours to the Middle East for 15 years now and we have never experienced anything like this before.' Foreign Secretary Margaret Beckett said she was 'extremely saddened' to hear of the shooting. 'Acts of violence such as this are as senseless as they are callous,' she said.

The attack came after the pro-Western kingdom was hit by triple suicide bombings against luxury hotels last in war on terror November, which killed 60. The attacks were claimed by Al Qaeda.

Interior minister Eid al- Fayez identified the gunman as Nabil Ahmad, 38, a Jordanian in his late thirties and a resident of the industrial town of Zarqa, on the outskirts of the capital. Initial leads suggested he acted on his own.

Government spokesman Nasser Joudeh said the other wounded Westerners were a Dutch national, a New Zealander and an Australian.

Several witnesses said they had seen a young man shooting at the tourists.

'I was walking when I saw someone pull out a pistol from his pocket and start shouting Allahu Akbar and fire repeatedly,' Mohammad Jawad Ali, an Iraqi, said.

Others said the gunman fired at least 12 bullets before he finished his ammunition and was chased in the crowded downtown area where he was arrested.

No group immediately claimed responsibility for the attack. But officials initiallybelieved the shooting was designed to undermine the kingdom's security.

'There is no doubt that this is a terrorist act that targets the security of Jordan because it fights terror,' Mr al-Fayez said.

Israel's offensive in the Gaza Strip and war against Hezbollah in Lebanon, which has killed some 1,400 fellow Arabs, has raised passions in Jordan.

Many Jordanians are angry about what they see as Western indifference towards the plight of Palestinians.

In the past, Jordan has enjoyed the warmest ties with Israel among its Arab neighbours and has had close security co-operation since a peace treaty in 1994.

Last year around 57,000 British tourists visited the country. But the Foreign Office warns there is a high risk of terrorism, with British visitors in danger of being targeted.

It did not change its travel advisory yesterday, beyond past warnings for travellers to take security precautions.

Britain 's dark day in war on terror Jordan : Tourist shot dead in gunman rampage

Graphic

RESPONSE: JORDANIAN SPECIAL FORCES ARRIVE AT THE ROMAN AMPHITHEATRE IN AMMAN AFTER THE LONE GUNMAN OPENED FIRE ON A GROUP OF WESTERN TOURISTS CASUALTY: ONE OF THE WOUNDED **WOMEN**, BELIEVED TO BE A BRITISH TOURIST, IS TAKEN TO HOSPITAL

Load-Date: September 5, 2006

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A team of refugees tries to keep focus; Vantage Point

The International Herald Tribune

August 12, 2006 Saturday

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Section: SPORT; Pg. 16

Length: 849 words

Byline: Harvey Araton

Body

The bus was old, hot, cramped and slow as a herniated snail. A ride that should have taken 3 to 4 hours took a harrowing 13.

An international journey embarked on more than a quarter-century ago, ignited by a young boy's fascination with round objects, mainly a basketball and the globe, took an unscheduled detour last month through a Middle East war zone.

"Only the most optimistic person alive would have called it intimate," that boy, now 57, said in a telephone interview this week from a hastily arranged sanctuary in Amman. He is Paul Coughter, an American, coach of the Lebanese national basketball team and citizen of the world.

Coughter engineered his players' escape from the mountains outside a besieged Beirut, through a convoluted and imperiled passage north, to Syria, then south, to Amman, on the way to the World Championship of Basketball beginning next week in Japan.

"The crisis began five days after we started our training camp," Coughter said. "After two days, we sent the players home to be with their families. Then we realized if we didn't get out, we never would.

"I think we got the last bus in Lebanon. We were in our own mini-world, trying to block out everything, barely anything to eat, stopping at gas stations, places where people would say, 'Ten minutes ago, a bomb landed over there.' They'd say, 'Look at that, it's still smoldering,' and then we're back on the bus, trying to convince ourselves that because one had already landed, it couldn't happen again."

Over 27 years, Coughter has coached on six continents, has stalked professional sidelines from Australia to Saudi Arabia to Taiwan, and has run the national teams in addition to Lebanon's of South Africa, Pakistan and Wales.

Coughter's manager and trainer both stayed behind last month to tend to their families, and his U.S.-born center, Paul Khoury, was marooned in Idaho, unable to renew his Lebanese visa, when Beirut's airport was bombed. His best player, Fadi el-Khatib, wouldn't leave unless they made room on the bus for his wife and young child. They did.

For a team with aspirations normally no more grandiose than winning a game or two at the gathering of the world's basketball powers, there have been scant practices and serious sleep deprivation and incalculable stress.

Even Coughter, a globetrotting bachelor, an avowed adventurer who promises to retire soon and sail the world for the rest of his years on a custom-built yacht, called this latest chapter of A Coach's Life "beyond bizarre."

A team of refugees tries to keep focus Vantage Point

Lucky for him, he has never evaluated his career by the number of championships won, by the size of his paycheck. Ask for personal highlights and he tells of exploring an exotic island in New Zealand, of bunking with a Chinese family in Zimbabwe, of sipping coffee while gazing at the Mediterranean from the balcony of his most current address, the Zouk Hotel, 20 minutes from Beirut.

Coughter was born into a large Roman Catholic family of Irish descent in New York, his father having played basketball in high school and his older brother in university. He remembers launching his first shot from his father's shoulders in a Brooklyn park, learning the game and using it to facilitate the ultimate road trip.

"It's like Larry Bird once said: 'Don't tell anyone, but I'd do this for free,'" Coughter said. "For me, the whole thing is experiential."

How else to describe the itinerary, from Lebanon to Syria to Jordan to Turkey to Slovenia, back to Jordan, on the way to the Philippines this week and then Japan to, as Coughter put it, "carry the Lebanese flag at a time the country needs to be seen"?

When the United States is perceived in the Middle East to be the power behind the Israelis, here is an American at a helm, with an Iraqi assistant, Koussay Hatem, who is married to a Lebanese woman and said in a telephone interview that he "must call home three, four, five times a day to see if everyone is O.K."

In every direction is a political tinderbox that a wise and wandering American, dependent on the kindness and employment of strangers, knows enough to leave alone.

"One of my best friends in Beirut is from a family that is Hezbollah," Coughter said. "We talk about basketball and women."

On the road, the Lebanese players discuss the war, but mostly as it relates to the future beyond Japan. Joseph Vogel, an American who has played professionally in Lebanon long enough to become nationalized, is among them.

"The way it's going right now, who knows if Lebanon will even be open when the world championships are over?" said Vogel, a former player at Colorado State University. "For me, it's a career at stake. For most of these guys, it's a country."

The coach recommends focus on the task at hand, on the journey, always the journey.

Coughter, in fact, will leave Japan the day after the last game to meet the country's junior team, which he also coaches, for the Asian championships. He will take three flights to reach Urumqi, China, near the western Mongolian border. The way things are going in Lebanon, he may not get paid, but don't tell anyone he'd do it for free.

Load-Date: August 13, 2006

Looking back: A diary of events for 2006

The Telegraph-Journal (New Brunswick)

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Body

Here is a brief look at the major news events of Canada and the world in 2006: JANUARY 10 - Iran removes UN seals from its nuclear enrichment facility at Natanz, effectively ending a freeze on the process that can produce fuel for nuclear weapons.

12 - At least 363 Hajj pilgrims are killed and more than 1,000 injured in a stampede during the stoning the devil ritual in Saudi Arabia.

15 - Canadian diplomat Glyn Berry is killed, three Canadian soldiers injured in suicide bombing in Afghanistan.

23 - Stephen Harper's Conservatives win slim minority in Canada's 39th general election, ending 12 years of Liberal rule. Defeated prime minister Paul Martin resigns as Liberal leader.

25 - Frank McKenna resigns as Canada's ambassador to the United States. Hamas wins huge majority in Palestinian parliamentary elections as voters rejected the longtime rule of the Fatah party.

26 - Hudson's Bay, Canada's oldest company, accepts \$1.5-billion friendly takeover offer from U.S.-based Maple Leaf Heritage Investments, headed by Jerry Zucker.

29 - Seventy-two miners are trapped after underground fire at potash mine in Esterhazy, Sask. All are rescued after 30 hours.

30 - Trial of accused serial killer Robert Pickton officially begins in New Westminster, B.C.

FEBRUARY 1 - In final report on the federal sponsorship scandal, Justice John Gomery proposes rules to make government more accountable and transparent. French and German newspapers republish caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad in an effort to defend freedom of expression, re-igniting anger of Muslims who were outraged when a Danish newspaper first printed the cartoons five months earlier.

2 - Sea King helicopter with five crew members aboard crashes in ocean off Denmark; all are rescued.

3 - Red Sea ferry sinks after fire breaks out, killing 1,000 of the 1,400 people aboard.

6 - Stephen Harper is sworn in as the 22nd prime minister of Canada.

Looking back: A diary of events for 2006

14 - Former Ontario premier Mike Harris tells judicial inquiry into the 1995 police shooting of a native protester that he uttered a profane slur at aboriginals at a meeting with police just before the shooting.

17 - At least 1,800 people believed dead in mudslides caused by torrential rains in the Philippines.

22 - Insurgents detonate bombs inside one of Iraq's most famous Shiite shrines in Samarra, destroying its golden dome and triggering reprisal attacks on Sunni mosques.

24 - Rodney MacDonald, 34, becomes Canada's youngest premier when he is sworn in Nova Scotia.

28 - Canadian Brig.-Gen. David Fraser takes command of coalition troops in southern Afghanistan.

MARCH 1 - Marshall Rothstein is confirmed as the newest member of the Supreme Court.

2 - Cpl. Paul Davis, and Master Cpl.

Timothy Wilson are killed when their armoured vehicle runs off the road in Afghanistan. Former Beatle Paul McCartney and his wife Heather stage a seal hunt protest on ice floes in the Gulf of St.

Lawrence.

5 - Underdog Crash, directed by Canadian Paul Haggis, wins best picture honours over Brokeback Mountain at the Academy Awards.

11 - Former Yugoslav leader Slobodan Milosevic, on trial for war crimes, is found dead in a prison cell in the Netherlands.

12 - In his first foreign trip since taking office, Prime Minister Stephen Harper pays surprise visit to Afghanistan.

13 - C.R.A.Z.Y., the movie of a gay youth coming of age in 1960s Quebec, wins 10 awards at the Genie Awards.

16 - Long-awaited first session of Iraq's new parliament lasts about 30 minutes before being indefinitely adjourned because of a deadlock between political parties.

22 - The B.C. ferry Queen of the North goes off course, hits a rock and sinks off the coast of Prince Rupert, B.C. All but two of the 101 people aboard are rescued.

Basque militant group ETA announces permanent ceasefire to end a decades- long campaign of terror aimed at winning independence for the northern Spanish region.

23 - Canadian hostages James Loney and Harmeet Sooden and a Briton, Norman Kember, were freed after being held for four months in Iraq.

28 - Former Liberian president Charles Taylor, facing war crime charges, is captured on the run in Nigeria. Acting Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's Kadima party wins 28 of 120 seats in the Israeli election, more than any other party. Massive protests and a nationwide public transport strike hit France over a new youth employment law.

29 - Pte. Robert Costall, 22, killed in a firefight in Afghanistan.

APRIL 4 - Alberta's Ralph Klein, the country's longest-serving premier, announces plans to step down by the end of the year.

Three Canadian-Venezuelan brothers found dead outside Caracas after being kidnapped by men dressed as police.

5 - Gail Vickery is named Alberta's first **female** chief judge.

Looking back: A diary of events for 2006

7 - At least two suicide attackers wearing women's cloaks blow themselves up in a Shiite mosque in Baghdad, killing at least 85 people and wounding more than 164. London court rules that author Dan Brown did not steal ideas for his massive bestseller The Da Vinci Code from a nonfiction work.

8 - The bodies of eight men with ties to the Bandidos biker gang are found stuffed in four abandoned cars near Shedden in the worst mass killing in recent Ontario history. Other gang members are charged in the killings.

10 - Federal government makes it illegal for anyone in Canada to support or help the Tamil Tigers, fighting for an independent state in Sri Lanka.

11 - Iran announces it has successfully enriched uranium for the first time.

20 - Ontario Provincial Police try and fail to end a 52-day occupation of a southwestern Ontario construction site by aboriginals claiming it is their land.

22 - Cpl. Matthew Dinning, Bombardier Myles Mansell, Lt. William Turner and Cpl. Randy Payne are killed by roadside bomb in Afghanistan. It is the Canada's worst one-day combat loss since the Korean War.

27 - Federal government announces it has reached framework deal to end the longstanding softwood lumber dispute with the United States.

MAY 1 - Federal government calls public inquiry into the Air India tragedy.

2 - In his first federal budget, Finance Minister Jim Flaherty announces GST will be cut by one percentage point on July 1.

3 - U.S. federal jury rejects death penalty for al-Qaida conspirator Zacarias Moussaoui, sends him to prison for life for his role in the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks.

5 - In the first slaying of a Windsor police officer on duty, Const. John Atkinson is killed while approaching two drug suspects at a convenience store in Windsor, Ont.

10 - Federal cabinet approves \$2-billion deal to compensate former students of aboriginal residential schools for physical and sexual abuse.

15 - Iraqi officials formally charge dictator Saddam Hussein with crimes against humanity.

17 - Federal government announces plans to kill the long-gun registry, as well as an immediate one-year amnesty so owners of rifles and shotguns will not have to register them. Capt. Nichola Goddard dies in Afghanistan, the first Canadian woman to be killed in action while serving in a combat role. House of Commons vote 149-145 to extend the deployment of Canadian troops in Afghanistan to February 2009. Former Beatle Paul McCartney and Heather Mills announce they are separating.

19 - Nepal declares itself a secular state, ending its unique status as the world's last Hindu kingdom.

25 - Former Enron chiefs Kenneth Lay and Jeffrey Skilling are convicted of conspiracy to commit securities and wire fraud in one of the biggest business scandals in U.S. history.

27 - Earthquake in Indonesia kills almost 6,000 people.

31 - Bans that prohibit smoking in all enclosed workplaces and public places take effect in Ontario and Quebec
JUNE 2 - Seventeen suspects arrested in Toronto area in biggest terrorism-related raid in Canada.

6 - Chuck Guite, former head of the federal sponsorship program, is found guilty of five counts of fraud totalling \$1.5 million, which he later appealed.

7 - Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the founder of al-Qaida in Iraq, killed in American raid near Baghdad.

Looking back: A diary of events for 2006

8 - Former aboriginal leader David Ahenakew's conviction for promoting hatred against Jews overturned, new trial ordered.

11 - The Drowsy Chaperone, a Canadianborn musical celebration of Broadway's past glories, wins five Tony Awards.

21 - Ed Byrne, natural resources minister in Newfoundland and Labrador, resigns post after audit raises questions about financial irregularities within the provincial legislature.

22 - Prime Minister Stephen Harper offers formal apology and compensation for head tax applied to Chinese immigrants between 1885 and 1923.

29 - **Women** vote for the first time in history in the Kuwait election.

JULY 1 - Canadian and U.S. trade officials work out final wording of the Canada- U.S. softwood lumber agreement reached in April. China opens first Beijing- to-Tibet railway, the highest-altitude railway in the world.

4 - In so-called keepsake scandal, report by Newfoundland and Labrador auditor implicates four politicians of overspending on office budgets by about \$3.4-million.

6 - Prime Minister Stephen Harper meets U.S. President George Bush during his first official visit to the United States. Official recount holds up presidential election result in Mexico, giving conservative candidate Felipe Calderon the victory.

7 -Two Saskatchewan RCMP officers are shot and seriously wounded after responding to a domestic disturbance in the hamlet of Mildred. They later die of their wounds; manhunt leads to the surrender of a suspect.

9 - Cpl. Anthony Boneca, 21, killed in battle in Afghanistan.

11 - Eight bombs hit seven trains on a commuter rail network in Mumbai, India, during evening rush hour, killing more than 200 people and wounding 700.

12 - To retaliate for the **Hezbollah**'s capture of an Israeli soldier, Israel bombs southern Lebanon and sends ground troops over the border for the first time in six years. It starts 34 days of fighting that kills 855 Lebanese and 159 Israelis.

13 - Cormorant search and rescue helicopter crash off the eastern tip of Nova Scotia during a training exercise, killing three men and injuring four others.

17 - Undersea earthquake triggers tsunami on Indonesia's Java island, killing about 700 people.

19 - Canadian government charts seven ships to evacuate Canadians from Lebanon as the war between **Hezbollah** and Israel escalates.

19 - Jenna Lambert, 15, of Kingston, Ont., born with cerebral palsy, becomes the first woman with a disability to swim across Lake Ontario.

22 - Cpl. Francisco Gomez, 44, and Cpl.

Jason Patrick Warren, 29, are killed by suicide bombers in Afghanistan.

25 - Israeli bombs destroy UN observer post on the border in southern Lebanon, killing four peacekeepers, including one Canadian.

AUGUST 1 - After having surgery, Cuban leader Fidel Castro temporarily cedes power to his younger brother.

Looking back: A diary of events for 2006

3 - Four soldiers are killed and 10 injured in Canada's bloodiest day to date in fighting in Afghanistan. The dead are Cpl. Christopher Reid, Sgt. Vaughan Ingram, Cpl. Bryce Keller and Pte. Kevin Dallaire.

5 - Master Cpl. Raymond Arndt is killed in Afghanistan.

9 - Master Cpl. Jeffrey Scott Walsh killed in Afghanistan while on patrol, apparently in an accidental discharge of a firearm by another Canadian.

10 - British authorities arrest 24 men accused of being part of a terrorist plot to blow up aircraft heading to the United States using explosives smuggled in hand luggage. The arrests lead to tough restrictions on bringing liquids onboard flights.

11 - Cpl. Andrew Eykelenboom is killed in Afghanistan.

13 - The 16th International AIDS Conference opens in Toronto, attended by more than 30,000 delegates from 170 countries but not Prime Minister Stephen Harper.

14 - UN-brokered ceasefire ends Israel- Hezbollah combat in Lebanon.

21 - Former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein's trial begins in Baghdad on charges of genocide for a military campaign against Kurds in 1988.

22 - Cpl. David Braun is killed in a suicide bomb attack in Afghanistan. Parti Quebecois Leader Andre Boisclair sworn in as a member of the Quebec legislature.

24 - International Astronomical Union approves new definition of planet, stripping Pluto of its status and placing it in a new category known as dwarf planets.

27 - A Canadian-built commuter plane crashed on take off at Lexington, Ky., airport, killing 49 people, including two Canadians.

Toronto-bred Kiefer Sutherland and his action series "24" walk off with top honours at the Emmy Awards.

27 - Ecuadorian Maria Esther de Capovilla, believed to be the world's oldest person, dies at age 116.

SEPTEMBER 3 - Four Canadian soldiers - Sgt. Shane Stachnik, Warrant Officer Frank Robert Mellish, Pte. William Cushley and Warrant Officer Richard Francis Nolan - are killed at the start of Operation Medusa, an anti-Taliban offensive into the Panjwai region in Afghanistan.

4 - A U.S. warplane mistakenly fires on Canadian soldiers, killing Pte. Mark Anthony Graham.

6 - U.S. President George W. Bush admits for first time the CIA operated clandestine prisons outside the United States.

7 - British Prime Minister Tony Blair promises to resign within a year. U.S. formally hands over control of Iraq's new military to Prime Minister Nuri al- Maliki's government.

9 - Canadian astronaut Steve MacLean and five crewmates lift off on the shuttle Atlantis on a mission to resume construction on the International Space Station.

13 - Kimveer Gill, 25, randomly opens fire at Dawson College in Montreal, killing 18-year-old Anastasia DeSousa and wounding 20 others. He kills himself after being shot by police.

15 - Ford Motor Co. announces plans to close two plants, one of them in Windsor, Ont., cutting 10,000 salaried jobs as part of a restructuring. Canada announces another 200 troops and 15 battle tanks will be sent to Afghanistan, bringing the total Canadian military contingent in Afghanistan to 2,500.

Looking back: A diary of events for 2006

18 - Public inquiry concludes RCMP provided Americans with inaccurate evidence against Maher Arar, a Canadian citizen who was deported from the United States to Syria in 2002, where he was tortured as a terrorist suspect.

Suicide bomber on a bicycle kills Pte.

David Byers, Cpl. Shane Keating, Cpl.

Keith Morley and Cpl. Glen Arnold in Afghanistan.

Liberal Shawn Graham bests Bernard Lord's two-term Conservative government in an election and becomes premier of New Brunswick.

20 - Commons unanimously apologizes to Maher Arar for Canada's involvement in his deportation from the United States to Syria.

21 - Prime Minister Stephen Harper makes his first address to the UN General Assembly in New York, appeals for more help in Afghanistan.

25 - Air India inquiry opens in Ottawa.

26 - Former Enron financial whiz Andrew Fastow receives six-year prison term for his role in the 2001 collapse of the energy giant.

28 - RCMP Commissioner Giuliano Zaccardelli apologizes to Maher Arar and his family for the force's role in his deportation.

29 - Pte. Josh Klukie killed in Afghanistan.

30 - Five people are crushed to death when an overpass in Laval, Que., collapses.

OCTOBER 2 - Five Amish schoolgirls are massacred after gunman enters their one-room schoolhouse in Pennsylvania.

3 - Sgt. Craig Gillam and Corp. Robert Mitchell are killed in Afghanistan.

5 - Premier Rodney MacDonald announces his government will not appeal Nova Scotia Supreme Court decision striking down regulations stopping Sunday shopping.

7 - Trooper Mark Andrew Wilson killed by roadside bomb in Afghanistan.

9 - North Korea conducts its first test of a nuclear weapon.

14 - Sgt. Darcy Tedford and Pte. Blake Williamson are killed in a Taliban ambush.

18 - Outspoken MP Garth Turner is suspended from the Conservative caucus, accused of breaching party confidentiality with entries on his Internet blog. Norwalk virus is blamed for making more than 300 students ill at Mount Allison University in Sackville, N.B., and 60 at St.

Francis Xavier University in Antigonish, N.S.

27 - Quebec Inuit vote overwhelmingly in favour of a massive land claim agreement that gives them ownership of 80 per cent of the small islands in the waters off their northern shore and a share of offshore resource royalties.

30 - Government task force recommends the Canadian Wheat Board give up its monopoly on Canadian wheat and barley sales and compete with other companies on the open market. Cpl.

Michael Seeley of Fredericton is killed by insurgents while on patrol with U. S.

Looking back: A diary of events for 2006

forces in Iraq.

31 - Federal Finance Minister Jim Flaherty announces new tax on income trusts, sparking outrage because the Conservatives had promised during the election campaign they would not tax the trusts.

NOVEMBER 1 - Canadian Brig.-Gen. David Fraser officially hands over control of NATO operations in Afghanistan to the Dutch.

5 - Saddam Hussein is found guilty of crimes against humanity for a campaign against Shia Muslims in 1982 and sentenced to death.

7 - Sandinista leader Daniel Ortega is named winner of the presidential election in Nicaragua. Republicans suffer stinging losses in the U.S. mid-term elections, losing control of both the House of Representatives and the Senate to the Democrats.

8 - U.S. Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld resigns.

15 - Major storm knocks out power and causes flooding in B.C.'s Lower Mainland and boil-water advisory for about two million people in the Vancouver area.

18 - Actors Tom Cruise and Katie Holmes are married in a Scientology ceremony at a 15th-century castle in Bracciano, Italy.

22 - More than 70 people are arrested in raids that Quebec police say deal a major blow to the Montreal mafia.

23 - Prime Minister Stephen Harper introduces legislation to make people charged with gun crimes prove they are not a threat to society in order to be freed on bail. Former KGB agent Alexander Litvinenko dies in London hospital of radiation poisoning.

27 - Motion recognizing the Quebecois as a nation in a united Canada, introduced by Prime Minister Stephen Harper, passes in the Commons by a vote of 222-16. In byelections, Liberals retain Ontario riding while male-prostitute-turned-priest wins for BQ in Quebec.

Rare winter storm dumps up to 50 centimetres of snow on B.C.'s Lower Mainland. Chief Warrant Officer Bobby Girouard and Cpl. Albert Storm killed in Afghanistan.

28 - Auditor General Sheila Fraser says Ron Stewart, former CFL star, made more than \$325,000 in questionable claims and improperly cashed out vacation entitlements when he was ombudsman for federal prison inmates.

30 - After 22 years in prison for murdering his wife, former Saskatchewan cabinet minister Colin Thatcher is granted full parole.

DECEMBER 1 - Pope Benedict XVI ends four-day trip to Turkey that is seen as a landmark to reconciliation of Islam and Christianity.

2 - Liberal delegates choose Quebec MP Stephane Dion as their new federal leader at Montreal convention.

3 - Ed Stelmach is elected Alberta Conservative leader, replacing Premier Ralph Klein.

6 - Iraq Study Group report, a sweeping rejection of current U.S. policy in Iraq, recommends pulling out most U.S. combat troops from the country by 2008.

7 - Giuliano Zaccardelli is forced to resign as RCMP commissioner after misleading parliamentary committee probing Maher Arar case.

12 - In response to the release of a second report into the Maher Arar affair, Public Safety Minister Stockwell Day announces an inquiry into the cases of three men who suffered a fate similar to Arar.

Looking back: A diary of events for 2006

- 13 - Bernard Lord announces resignation as leader of New Brunswick's Progressive Conservative party.
- 15 - Hurricane-force winds knock out power in southern British Columbia, leaving about quarter-million people in the dark.
- 19 - Federal government fires the head of Canadian Wheat Board, Adrian Measner, after he openly disagrees with Conservative policy.
- 20 - Canadian troops launch first major offensive in Operation Baaz T'suka in the Panjwaii district of Afghanistan, in an area believed to be a gathering point for Taliban forces.
- 22 - Olympic champion Myriam Bedard is arrested in Maryland over allegations she abducted her 12-year-old daughter.
- 26 - Alleged Russian spy who used the name Paul William Hampel is deported from Canada to Russia. At least 260 people die after gasoline pipeline explodes in Lagos, Nigeria.
- 28 - Somali troops backed by Ethiopian forces enter Mogadishu, ending six months of domination of the city by an Islamic movement.

Load-Date: January 8, 2007