

**Date and Time:** Friday, May 3, 2024 4:07:00PM EEST

**Job Number:** 223445413

## Documents (64)

1. [\*Victims or villains?: There have already been 30 suicide bombings by women and girls in Iraq this year - almost four times as many as in the whole of 2007. The increase has been put down to their ability to evade security checks. But, reports Jonathan Steele , the reasons go much deeper\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

2. [\*News Summary\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

3. [\*News Summary\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

4. [\*INSIDE THE TIMES\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

5. [\*Letters to the Editor Children's happiness lost among the targets and tick-boxes\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

6. [Profiles: Mohammed Hamid and his followers](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

7. [Profiles: Mohammed Hamid and his followers](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

8. [LETTERS TO THE EDITOR](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

9. [Inside The Times: July 25, 2008](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

10. [Guardian Weekly: Weekly review: Quiet war gets louder: Euan Ferguson returns to Sri Lanka to find conflict between Tamil rebels and government forces intensifying and the island in a state of fear](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

11. [\*An African Journey\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

12. [\*LETTERS TO THE EDITOR\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

13. [\*Weird & wonderful\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

14. [\*Speaking of consensus\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

15. [\*The 1990s: The Illusion of Peace\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

16. [THE NEWS IN REVIEW 2007 \(Part 1 of 2\) From the rise of Shilpa Shetty to the fall of the Brown bounce, it was to be a tumultuous 12 months. Scottish politics may have witnessed momentous change, but it was the story of one missing girl that commanded the news agenda.](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

17. [Jihad, 1948](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

18. [Ones to watch in 2008](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

19. [An Interview With President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

20. [Weekend: A WEEK IN THE WAR IN TEXAS : Every week one Texan soldier dies in Iraq and 10 are wounded. Gary Younge reports on how war is affecting Bush's home state.](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

21. [\*Her Dream, Branded as a Threat\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

22. [\*WHERE ALAA AL ASWANY IS WRITING FROM\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

23. [\*Newsmakers of 2007 From Her Majesty to Facebook via Google , Bebo, the Government, Channel 4 and adland, Ian Burrell takes a close look at the people who drove the year's top 50 media stories THE MEDIA 50\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

24. [\*IDF arrests seven Hamas associates in Nablus\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

25. [\*Gaza crowds mark Hamas anniversary\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

26. [\*Israeli troops kill two Hamas gunmen\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

27. [\*World - Israeli troops raid medical clinic in the West Bank\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

28. [\*Israelis kill 61 in air blitz\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

29. [\*Letter: You say - Terror attacks\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

30. [\*Kuwaiti newspaper criticizes 'barbaric' Mercaz Harav attack\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

31. [A BLOODY DISGRACE](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

32. [UNDER ROBE AND VEIL, CROSSING BOUNDARIES AS POLICEWOMEN](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

33. [UNDER ROBE AND VEIL, CROSSING BOUNDARIES AS POLICEWOMEN](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

34. [Israel fears bid to breach border World News IN BRIEF](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

35. [Israel prepares for Gaza human chain protesters NEWS IN BRIEF](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

36. [\*Mideast solution in 'jeopardy'\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

37. [\*Letters - God save Israel\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

38. [\*Israeli occupation\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

39. [\*Hole in the wall gang stock up\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

40. [\*Cities making news in the global village\*](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

41. [\*Irish women in Gaza refused re-entry to Egypt\*](#)



**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

42. [Bush rallies Gulf against Iran 'terror'](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

43. [cities making news in the global village; the week in images](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

44. [No Headline In Original](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

45. [Bedroht in "Hamastan" Wie lebt es sich in Gaza? Unsere Korrespondentin Inge Günther hat drei palästinensische Familien besucht](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

46. [Keine Arbeit, keine Freiheit, keine Sicherheit Vom Leben im abgeriegelten Gazastreifen](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas  
**Search Type:** Natural Language  
**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

47. [No Headline In Original](#)

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

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

48. [No Headline In Original](#)

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

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

49. [No Headline In Original](#)

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

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

50. [No Headline In Original](#)

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

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

51. [No Headline In Original](#)

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

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

52. [No Headline In Original](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

53. ["Verhandlungen mit Israel schwächen nur Abbas " Die palästinensische Politikerin und Frauenrechtlerin Hanan Ashrawi über Nahost-Friedensgespräche und die Lage der Frauen im Gazastreifen](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

54. [No Headline In Original](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

55. [No Headline In Original](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

56. [No Headline In Original](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

57. [No Headline In Original](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

58. [No Headline In Original](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

59. [No Headline In Original](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

60. [No Headline In Original](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

61. [No Headline In Original](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**  
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

62. [No Headline In Original](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

63. [No Headline In Original](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

**Narrowed by**

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

64. [No Headline In Original](#)

**Client/Matter:** -None-

**Search Terms:** Hamas

**Search Type:** Natural Language

**Narrowed by:**

**Content Type**  
News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2007 to Sep 30, 2008

***Victims or villains?: There have already been 30 suicide bombings by women and girls in Iraq this year - almost four times as many as in the whole of 2007. The increase has been put down to their ability to evade security checks. But, reports Jonathan Steele, the reasons go much deeper***

The Guardian - Final Edition  
September 11, 2008 Thursday

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theguardian

**Section:** GUARDIAN FEATURES PAGES; Pg. 6

**Length:** 2328 words

**Byline:** Jonathan Steele

## Body

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A 15-year-old girl walks up to an Iraqi police checkpoint on her way to the crowded central market in Baquba, a town some 40 miles north of Baghdad. A constable senses something odd and demands she be searched. The girl promptly announces she is wearing a suicide belt, strapped like a lethal corset round her waist.

In police footage that has gone around the world on YouTube, Rania Ibrahim is handcuffed to metal railings while male officers get her to remove her outer garments, then carefully defuse the device. Never mind the fact that the area is not cordoned off, and other policemen wander close to the girl to gawp. It took not only exceptional bravery but a degree of professionalism that many in Baghdad had not credited the Iraqi police with. The officer who disabled the device was given a 5m dinar (about £2,400) bonus.

Horror, relief, amazement - but beyond the emotions aroused, a crucial question remains unresolved a fortnight after Ibrahim and many others escaped death. Was she a victim or a villain? And whatever her motives, why has the number of ***female*** suicide bombers soared during the past year in a nation that, with Egypt, Syria and Lebanon, has long been seen as one of the most developed and secular societies in the Middle East?

Lt Col DA Sims, deputy commanding officer of the Baquba-based US 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment, whose staff also interrogated the girl, has an open mind about Ibrahim's intentions - whether someone strapped the bomb to her against her will and she deliberately behaved oddly at the checkpoint so as to be discovered, or whether she did intend to blow herself up but was pre-empted by police and then tried to lie herself out of trouble.

"The Iraqi police identified her as suspicious and she immediately said, 'Hey, I want to turn myself in.' She realised she was making a mistake," Sims says. He is not sure whether the mistake was to start out on a road leading to a violent early death, or to get caught before fulfilling her mission.

Victims or villains?: There have already been 30 suicide bombings by women and girls in Iraq this year - almost four times as many as in the whole of 2007. The ....

Saja Qaduri, a member of the Diyala provincial council (Baquba is Diyala's capital) and the only woman on its security committee, sat in on some of the police interrogation of Ibrahim. She believes the girl was a committed would-be suicide bomber.

Qaduri says that the girl spoke in a slow, drowsy way during the first moments after the suicide belt had been defused and taken off her, and appeared to have been drugged. But this did not mean she was being made to do something against her will. It could have been done to dull her emotions and reduce the chance of her backing off when the moment came to trigger the belt. "I was at the police station when they first brought her in for questioning. As the pills wore off, she spoke in a very confident way. She strongly believed her death would have taken her to heaven. She was detected because some wires were visible. A policeman spotted it," Qaduri adds.

In spite of her faith that suicide and murder would take her to paradise, Ibrahim showed flashes of teenage confusion. "At the end of every sentence, she kept saying 'I want my mum'", Qaduri says.

If Ibrahim was a genuinely willing suicide bomber, wider and more complex issues of motivation need to be probed. It doesn't remove the victim-or-villain issue.

Diyala, named after one of the rivers that flow through it (the other is the Tigris), is one of the most conservative rural provinces in Iraq. In its most fertile south-eastern region date palms, orange groves and pomegranate trees stretch for mile after mile along a network of irrigation canals. Few roads are paved, donkey carts are common, and villages are isolated. Tribal structures are strong, male dominance is all-pervasive, and women have suffered repression for centuries. By the age of 15 many girls are married - as Ibrahim was. Few can read.

In this restrictive context, "these women are also victims of the situation", says Qaduri. "Even this 15-year-old, you feel sorry for her, very young and uneducated. She has no awareness. She comes from a very poor family. Her husband is on the run as a suspected al-Qaida terrorist. He told her he would meet her in paradise." (He was arrested by Iraqi police in the town of Hit about a week later.)

The view of Iraq as a member of the club of the Middle East's more developed and secular countries is not wrong - as far as it goes. Essentially this applies to the Baghdad area, with its large, well-travelled middle class, many of whose women and men are fluent English speakers from the days when English was the language of instruction in almost every medical and engineering college. (Under Saddam Hussein, and even more so as a result of the chaos unleashed by the US occupation, hundreds of thousands have fled abroad, totalling between a third and a half of the country's best-educated professionals.)

But among the substantial population in the countryside, as well as a swelling generation of rural migrants who are pulled or pushed into urban slums by the prospect of better pay, country traditions still hold sway in the lives of women: tribal values and patriarchal culture remain extremely strong.

In villages and small towns, women are considered little more than chattels who may not go out of the home unless accompanied by their husbands or a male relative. Three wars in a quarter of a century have left Iraq with more than a million young or middle-aged widows. They are not permitted to live alone, nor do most want to. The death of a husband is not just a cause of grief, bereavement and loneliness. It collapses a woman's sense of worth, within her extended family as well as in the wider community. Her protection is gone, plus her source of financial support. Unless the woman remarries - a rarity, given the shortage of men - a nephew or a male cousin will be required to move into the house to provide protection, unless one or more of her sons is already in his late teens.

The result can be corrosive levels of depression that haunt women who have seen fathers, brothers, and husbands killed - so, while Ibrahim is the first female suicide bomber to be thwarted in Diyala, many others have gone out into the street wearing a deadly hidden belt. Throughout Iraq some 43 women have carried out suicide bombings since 2003, mostly in the past two years. In 2007 eight women blew themselves up. This year the number is already 30, of whom 15 were in Diyala.

Victims or villains?: There have already been 30 suicide bombings by women and girls in Iraq this year - almost four times as many as in the whole of 2007. The ....

On a single day in July, four women exploded their belts in Baghdad and the northern city of Kirkuk, killing at least 44 people. The Iraqi police and US military sources blame al-Qaida for almost all the attacks. Though the movement was brought to Iraq by foreign Arabs, all but one of the woman bombers were Iraqi. Most were between the ages of 15 and 35.

Iraq is not the first Arab country to produce a woman suicide bomber. The first recorded case took place in Lebanon in 1985, where a young pro-Syrian militant targeted an Israeli army unit. In the Israeli-occupied Palestinian territories, bombings by women have also become more frequent, with 10 attacks since 2002.

Women suicide bombers in Iraq are still far outnumbered by their male counterparts but simple logistics offer one explanation for the upward trend: it is a fair bet that men are pushing women into doing this "man's job" because they usually have a better chance of passing checkpoints wearing their long black cloaks, and male police feel inhibited about touching them. The Diyala police force has recruited 200 women to work at checkpoints and 20 women will graduate from the local police college next month.

Part of the answer to why the chaos launched by the US occupation has impinged so sharply on Diyala, turning a rural backwater into a destructive and self-destructive cauldron of violence, lies in the province's combination of rural conservatism and unusual ethnic makeup. This combination has made it (including its women) vulnerable to political exploitation, not least by al-Qaida, a group that wasn't active in Iraq until the US invasion in 2003.

Most of Iraq's 18 provinces have one dominant group, whether it be Kurds in the three northern provinces, Arab Shias in Basra and the south-east, or Arab Sunnis in Anbar and Saddam's province of Salaheddin. Only Baghdad, the metropolitan area encompassing Nineveh and the city of Mosul, and Diyala have a more even mix.

The balance in Diyala is particularly precarious, with roughly one-third Kurd, one-third Arab Shia and one-third Arab Sunni. The Kurds mainly live in the distant north-east so the main struggle for influence, once al-Qaida arrived to try to exploit sectarianism, has been between Arab Sunnis and Shias. It centres on Baquba and the crucial south-western corner of the province that connects Baghdad to the north.

Some Sunnis in the area were close to Saddam and his Ba'ath party; graffiti supporting him could often be seen on walls in the rural parts of Diyala. Other non-Baathist nationalist groups sprang up to confront the Americans in the early months of the occupation. Before the Iraqi army was reconstituted, the US responded with air strikes, ground offensives and mass round-ups of villagers, which, as in Afghanistan, tended to create a pool of people seeking revenge or redress.

Al-Qaida came into this mix in 2004, stirring up anti-Shia suspicions by claiming the Shia were all agents of Iran and no longer true Muslims anyway, an ideology known as takfir. Since the government in Baghdad was Shia-led, it was easy to convince the ignorant that Iraq was under occupation by Iran as well as the US.

US military officials say investigations of the family circumstances of the women suicide bombers who succeeded put them into three rough categories: women whose husbands, fathers or brothers, were killed by US or Iraqi forces; women who accepted the takfiri line that all Shia are enemies and must be killed; and women who were married at a young age to an al-Qaida man and sometimes were passed on from him to others in a pattern that is untypical of normal Iraqi life, and leaves women feeling worthless, violated and desperate.

"We're finding a disillusioned woman," says Sims. "Al-Qaida has led her to believe (in its ideology), or she may have resentment against the Iraqi government or coalition forces." He hopes Ibrahim's case will influence other women. "I would hope there are women who were either tempted, or coerced, or persuaded but have now realised that the value of women's rights and the role of women in society will be greater by not blowing themselves up".

Qaduri is a Shia. Her husband was a member of prime minister Nouri al-Maliki's party. He was kidnapped two years ago at a bogus police checkpoint on his way from university to collect her from her job at the council offices. No ransom demand was ever made and she has not heard from him since. She assumes the crime was committed by



Victims or villains?: There have already been 30 suicide bombings by women and girls in Iraq this year - almost four times as many as in the whole of 2007. The ....

al-Qaida and speaks energetically about the group's negative influence, pointing out that none of the women bombers were Shia.

She acknowledges that Sunnis have also suffered from al-Qaida. Nationalist insurgent groups (she names one called Hamas in Iraq, and another called the 1920 Revolutionary Brigades) were active in Diyala before al-Qaida but they then started to work with it, she says.

"When al-Qaida began to control Baquba and said, 'We've freed the area', the other groups said, 'You came to our country. We should be in charge.' They started to create the 'Awakening Movement' of Sunnis against al-Qaida but al-Qaida assassinated many of them," she adds. Al-Qaida went on to proclaim Qatun, a town in Diyala west of Baquba, the first capital of the Islamic State of Iraq, a move that alienated many other Sunnis.

By then al-Qaida had infiltrated Diyala's isolated rural areas, getting tribes and subtribes to join them. Women were soon brought into the net. "Typically, a young woman's father or brother may be working with al-Qaida and they force the girl to marry an al-Qaida leader. She may not have met the man before. In some cases there is a formal marriage. We have found certificates from their Islamic State of Iraq with husbands' names that are Sudanese, Saudi, Afghan, Pakistani, Yemeni, and Egyptian," Qaduri says.

Ibrahim's husband is Iraqi and "has some clear al-Qaida attachments", says Sims.

In other cases girls have been handed to an al-Qaida man, and then to another when the first one left the area or was killed. Arrested al-Qaida leaders have given information that led to raids on houses in Diyala where women were found who, Iraqi police believe, were being prepared for suicide bombing. In one house they came across a pregnant 15-year-old who said she had been married a dozen times and had no idea who the father of her child was. "These girls are very depressed and ready to end their lives," Qaduri says.

The same is true of young women whose husbands, fathers, or brothers have been killed by US or Iraqi forces, a category that she and other officials say is larger than that of the al-Qaida converts or those forced into marriage with

al-Qaida members.

Can the phenomenon be stopped? Last year the Americans started a re-education programme in the prisons where they hold Iraqis. Helped by the Iraqi Islamic party, which represents moderate Sunni Islamists and fiercely opposes al-Qaida, the programme aims to expose takfir as heresy unsupported by the Qu'ran. Adult Sunni prisoners attend the classes.

Dealing with young women who are vulnerable to al-Qaida recruiting in remote parts of Diyala is a harder task. Qaduri says the priority has to be to restore peace and security to Iraq. Ideally, she would have women's shelters and rehabilitation programmes for young women. But this is not realistic now. In the meantime, the 20 or so young women whom police identified as potential bombers remain at home in the enclosed and sad environment that has led others like them to blow themselves up. Qaduri sums up the dilemma: "We don't have proof, so they are still living there"

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## News Summary

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## **Body**

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### INTERNATIONAL

#### TALIBAN POSE NEW THREAT

Near Southern Afghan City

Hundreds of Taliban fighters have swarmed into a strategically important district just outside Kandahar, the biggest city in southern Afghanistan, apparently in a push for control just days after 400 Taliban members escaped in a spectacular breakout from the Kandahar prison, officials said. It was unclear whether any of the fighters were among the prison escapees. Afghan military reinforcements arrived in Kandahar and have deployed in Kandahar Province, said a NATO spokesman. PAGE A6

#### PROGRESS SEEN IN ISRAEL'S TALKS

Israel appeared to be making diplomatic progress on three fronts: a possible prisoner exchange with Hezbollah; a second round of indirect talks with Syrian representatives in Turkey; and a possible truce with Hamas in Gaza. Some Israelis, meanwhile, have suggested that the current flurry of diplomatic activity is intended to distract attention from the political and legal troubles of Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, who the police say is suspected of receiving illicit funds. PAGE A11

#### LAWYERS' ROLE IN INTERROGATIONS

Senior Pentagon lawyers played a more active role than previously known in developing the aggressive interrogation techniques approved for use in 2002 at the military prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, according to officials familiar with a Senate investigation. Documents show that the lawyers gathered information about techniques used to train American pilots to withstand captivity. PAGE A8

#### ROLE FOR CAMBODIA VICTIMS IN TRIAL

An office worker and a security guard are two of hundreds of Cambodians who have applied to the court to be recognized officially as victims of the Khmer Rouge and to bring parallel civil cases against them. In a controversial experiment by the unusual hybrid tribunal administered jointly by the United Nations and the Cambodian government, the victims will have a chance to seek mostly symbolic reparations: a monument, perhaps, or a museum or trauma center. PAGE A6

## News Summary

## RICE'S SURPRISE VISIT TO LEBANON

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice made a surprise visit to Lebanon, the first by a senior American official since an agreement last month that handed decisive new powers to Hezbollah. Ms. Rice met with government leaders from both the government majority and the Hezbollah-led opposition, signaling her support for a compromise that appears to have stabilized the country even as it delivered another setback to American allies in the region. PAGE A11

Imprisoned Woman Found in Italy A7

Arrest of Militia Leader in Brazil A11

Fast Food Charity in India A9

## NATIONAL

## A QUIET SENATOR

Moves to the Fore

Senator Jack Reed of Rhode Island is an introverted former Army Ranger who has quietly become one of the Democratic Party's leading voices on military affairs and an expert on housing policy. Now Mr. Reed, best known for his repeated efforts last year to set a deadline for the withdrawal of American military forces from Iraq, is being chattered about as a potential running mate for Senator Barack Obama, the presumptive Democratic nominee. PAGE A13

## GAY COUPLES MARRY IN CALIFORNIA

At 5:01 p.m., same-sex couples across California began the state's court-approved experiment with same-sex marriage, and many more are expected in the coming weeks. All 58 counties will begin issuing marriage licenses to same-sex couples on Tuesday. But some places in the state have called off all weddings performed by county clerks. PAGE A15

## A NEW LIST OF PLANETS

The Geneva Observatory just unveiled a list of 45 new planets, some of them slightly bigger than Earth and others twice as massive as Neptune. The planets orbit Sun-like stars in our galaxy, and orbit their stars in 50 days or less, which is a closer orbit than Mercury and puts them within frying distance of any living creatures. PAGE A24

## CRITICISM FOR PROSTITUTION MAVEN

A Web Site called TheEroticReview.com has quietly come to dominate the country's prostitution scene, helping it migrate from the street corner to the Internet. The site's founder, David Elms, is in jail awaiting trial in a case unrelated to the site, and many in the industry are not at all upset. Some of Mr. Elms's critics have said that he abused his influence over the industry, while others say he would demand sex or money to promote certain women or agencies. PAGE A12

## STILL ON THE FLOODPLAIN

In 1993, the tiny town of Chelsea, Iowa (population 297) was inundated when floodwaters ravaged communities across the Midwest. The City Council voted to move much of the town, with help from federal aid -- but only few homeowners took the buyouts. As Chelsea sits under six feet of water once again, the town's residents are second-guessing everything but also staunchly defending its right to exist exactly where it wants to. PAGE A12

## COURT TO HEAR MUSLIMS' CHALLENGE

## News Summary

The Supreme Court agreed to hear a case which would determine whether government officials can be sued for damages by the Muslim men who were rounded up in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. The case is an appeal by the Bush administration on behalf of then-attorney general John D. Ashcroft, and Robert S. Mueller III, the director of F.B.I. PAGE A16

## BUSINESS

## DESPITE IRISH VOTE,

## The Euro Remains Strong

When France and the Netherlands rejected a proposed European Constitution three years ago, it rattled the euro and left many questioning whether the currency could survive without a more unified Europe. But in the first day of trading since Ireland voted down a plan to further integrate into the European Union, the euro actually rose against the dollar. That has helped foster the belief that the European monetary union can prosper even without an accompanying political union. PAGE C1

## HONDA DEBUTS CLEAN-BURNING CAR

The first FCX Clarity -- the world's first hydrogen-powered fuel cell vehicle intended for mass production -- rolled off the assembly line at Honda, the company that makes it. The company is only planning a small initial run of the clean-burning vehicles, but said it planned more when hydrogen filling stations become more common. "Basically, we can mass-produce these now," a company executive said. "We are waiting for the infrastructure to catch up." PAGE C1

## FINALLY, IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Mechanical engineers have long toiled in the shadows of Silicon Valley, but no longer. The demand for skilled workers in data centers has helped their salaries climb more than 20 percent in the past two years -- bumping them into the six-figure range, and there is more demand than people to fill it. "We're building the railroads of the future, and we can't keep up," an executive at a company that owns data center sites said. PAGE C1

## F.C.C. CHIEF SUPPORTS MERGER

Kevin J. Martin, the head of the Federal Communications Commission, said he would circulate a plan this week to approve the merger between Sirius Satellite Radio and XM Satellite Radio, the nation's two satellite radio companies. Mr. Martin said the deal met the requirement of being "in the public interest," but the deal needs the backing of at least two other commissioners for approval. PAGE C6

## 'SOUL TRAIN' KEEPS PLUGGING ALONG

"Soul Train," the 1970s television staple famous for Afros, tight bellbottoms and the inspired moves of the dancers in the "Soul Train" line, was never actually canceled, and continues to live on in reruns. Now a production company, MadVision Entertainment, has purchased the show from its creator (and longtime host) Don Cornelius, and says it has big plans for the music program and its archives. They also might update the show for modern viewers. PAGE C3

## Anheuser-Busch Sizes up a Suitor C1

## McClatchy Announces Layoffs C10

## NEW YORK REPORT

## RESIDENTS IMAGINE LIFE

## Without Community Centers

## News Summary

The community center at Parkside Houses, a public housing complex in the Bronx, could be one of the casualties in the New York Public Housing Authority's decision to shutter hundreds of its community centers and programs due to a budget crunch. And though many of the tenants and their supporters sympathize with the agency's budget woes, they wonder if it has done all it could to tighten its finances before cutting popular and important programs. PAGE B1

## SCIENCE TIMES

## A REVOLUTION IN RICE

## That Could Help Feed the Hungry

Norman T. Uphoff, a professor of government and international agriculture at Cornell, has started a revolution in the way rice is cultivated. His counterintuitive approach focuses not on the amount of rice plants, but the quality of the individual plants. He says the less-is-more ethic could help solve the global food crisis. PAGE F1

## THE ARIA OF ALGORINO

It's a bizarre sort of convergence: Al Gore's "An Inconvenient Truth," which was a book and then an award-winning documentary, is now set to become an opera. (No, really.) La Scalain Milan, has commissioned the Italian composer Giorgio Battistelli to write it. John Tierney, for his part, has tried to imagine what an exchange between Mr. Gore and Mr. Battistelli over suggestions to the script might sound like. PAGE F1

## A CLINGY MENACE MOVES WEST

The quagga mussel is a tiny bivalve about the size of a fingernail with a penchant for clinging to hard surfaces. It also has a formidable sex drive, which means that once it is introduced into an ecosystem, it can wreak a lot of environmental and economic havoc (the mussels have already carpeted much of the Great Lakes). The mussel is making its way west and has been found in the Colorado River, which augurs serious trouble for hydroelectric and water supply plants along the river. "It's going to be devastating," an ecologist said. PAGE F3

## THE ASTRONAUT'S NEW CLOTHES

NASA said the extravehicular activity suit -- rocket scientist-speak for spacesuit -- will get a major overhaul. Astronauts who have spacewalked have said they have spent a lot of energy "fighting the suit," and so the new suits will be lighter than the 350-pound behemoths they currently wear and will be designed both for weightless conditions in space and walking on the moon. PAGE F4

## ARTS

## THE FRENCH CONSIDER

## The Audacity of Hope

Rising young black authors, poets and rappers in France say a new black consciousness is emerging there, lately hastened by, of all things, the presumptive Democratic nominee for president of the United States. An article in Le Monde a few days ago described how Barack Obama is "stirring up high hopes" in the country. "Obama tells us everything is possible," says Youssoupha, a rapper in France, pictured above. PAGE E1

## BETWEEN THE WALLS

Derek Chollet and James Goldgeier's new book, "America Between the Wars: From 11/9 to 9/11," uses the fall of the Berlin Wall on Nov. 9, 1989, and the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, as bookends for a period during which, they argue, "the ideas and dynamics that characterize the current era took shape." And while the subject matter has been addressed by many scholars of foreign policy, Michiko Kakutani writes, the authors have written a highly informed book that lucidly maps the forces reshaping the post-cold-war world. PAGE E1

## News Summary

Alastair Macaulay: Sampler of Ballet Across America E5

## SPORTS

## THE LAKERS SURVIVE.

Now Comes the Hard Part.

The Los Angeles Lakers staved off elimination by defeating the Boston Celtics in Game 5 of the N.B.A. Finals, but now they have to do what no team has ever done: come back from a 3-1 series deficit to win a title. The quick turnaround before Game 6 -- only one off-day to adjust to make a 3,000-mile trip and a three-hour time difference -- is likely to make that challenge even harder. PAGE D2

## A BREAKTHROUGH, FINALLY

Charlie Zink has staked his baseball career on his ability to throw a knuckleball, a rare and maddening skill. He'd gotten so good that he became arrogant, and developed a casual work ethic that eventually led to tendonitis in his right shoulder -- effectively costing him the next two seasons. Now the 28-year-old pitcher with the unorthodox grip is poised to make his major league debut with the Boston Red Sox. PAGE D4

## OBITUARIES

## WALTER NETSCH, 88

An architect who sculptured sleek, functional structures and placed them in windswept ridges, he designed the ethereal chapel at the United States Air Force Academy, which in 2004 was designated a National Historic Landmark. PAGE B7

## EDITORIAL

## THE GENOCIDE CONTINUES

Despite the dispatch of United Nations peacekeepers to Darfur and the issuing of international arrest warrants for leaders of the genocide, the killing goes on. And it will continue until the Security Council shows the will to stop it. PAGE A20

## BETTER SYSTEM FOR YOUNG OFFENDERS

Mayor Michael Bloomberg has set a welcome national example by opening a juvenile court that cuts down on unnecessary detentions and improves the treatment of children who end up in police custody. PAGE A20

## R.I.P. TO THE S.U.V.

It's hard to convince most Americans that there is a silver lining to \$4-a-gallon gasoline. But General Motors provided a nugget of good news when it announced that it would shutter much of its production of pickups and sport utility vehicles. It's hardly the solution to global warming, but it's a start. PAGE A20

## OP-ED

## DAVID BROOKS

In a period that has brought us instant messaging, wireless distractions and attention deficit disorder, Tiger Woods has become the exemplar of mental discipline. PAGE A21

## BOB HERBERT

Two young men embody the true meaning of friendship at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center. PAGE A21

## News Summary

## LEADER OF THE PACK

How can Barack Obama win over those elusive blue-collar voters in November? He can ditch the Nicorette and start smoking again. An op-ed by Tony Horwitz. PAGE A21

<http://www.nytimes.com>

## Graphic

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### **Body**

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#### INTERNATIONAL

##### ALBANIANS LOOK FOR ANSWERS

###### Behind a Deadly Explosion

The description seems to suggest an accident that was waiting to happen, and it was: a factory in which inexperienced villagers pried apart artillery shells using metal rods and their bare hands exploded last month, killing 26 people. Albanians are now asking how the country could have allowed such a hazardous situation to exist. PAGE A5

##### PUTIN SAYS NO NEW MRS. PUTIN

He has no doubt heard the whispers before, the rumors about his wandering eye. But when President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia was asked about a newspaper article that said he was about to leave his wife for a 24-year-old gymnast less than half his age, he said there was no truth to it, despite his great affection for all Russian women. And Italian. PAGE A5

##### TOUGHER TERRORISM LAWS SOUGHT

European Union justice ministers agreed to toughen laws to punish those who promote violence and recruit people for terrorist attacks across the 27-nation bloc, including through use of the Internet. Countries that already have strong antiterrorism laws, like Spain and Britain, will not need to make significant changes. But countries with more lenient rules, like Sweden and Denmark, may need to adopt new and tougher legislation. PAGE A8

##### IN MEXICO, A GOVERNMENT STYMIED

For eight days, leftist lawmakers in Mexico have paralyzed business in both houses of Congress with a sit-in to stop President Felipe Calderon's bill to revamp the oil monopoly and allow it greater freedoms. The efforts, led by a populist leader who has refused to concede his defeat in the 2006 presidential election, come with a political price and have rattled the nation. PAGE A7

##### Arrests of Tibetan Protesters A9

##### Premier Urges British-U.S. Efforts A5



## News Summary

Carter Meets Hamas Leader A6

## NATIONAL

## PLAN TO EXPAND DNA SAMPLING

## Faces Problem of Backlogs

The Bush administration moved forward with a program to greatly expand the collection of DNA samples from people in federal custody, proposing regulations that would essentially mirror the practice of collecting fingerprints. But it was unclear how federal laboratories, already backlogged with previous samples, would be able to handle the additional work. PAGE A11

## THE WINDY CITY SHAKES

Chicago is known for many things, including cold weather, deep-dish pizza and a long-suffering baseball team and its fans. But earthquakes generally are not among them, and so the one that shook the city -- along with some 120,000 square miles from northern Michigan south to Memphis, and from Kansas City, Mo., east to Nashville -- was definitely the talk of the town. PAGE A10

## GEARING UP FOR TOSSUPS

Senator John McCain's political advisers say his potential appeal to independents could make him competitive in up to two dozen tossup states, twice as many as Republicans seriously contested in the 2004 presidential race. So the campaign, after securing the nomination on a shoestring budget, is gearing up for a more extensive effort. PAGE A12

## MCCAIN'S INCOME LOWEST IN RACE

Mr. McCain's income tax returns for the past two years showed that he had taxable income of about \$474,100 but revealed little of the sizable wealth of his wife, who files a separate return. The campaign said it would not release Mrs. McCain's return in "the interest of protecting the privacy" of their children. PAGE A12

## SECT'S CHILDREN TO STAY IN CUSTODY

After hearing two days of testimony, Judge Barbara Walther, above, ordered that all 416 children seized in the raid of a polygamist religious sect be held in protective custody by Texas officials pending further investigation into whether they were abused, or at risk of abuse in their community. She also ordered maternal and paternal testing on all the children. PAGE A11

## On Religion A15

## Fourth Graders Debate Campaign A10

## NEW YORK REPORT

## POPE CALLS HUMAN RIGHTS

## Essential for Security

Pope Benedict XVI arrived in New York and addressed the United Nations, saying that the promotion of human rights is central to the world's security. "Indeed, the victims of hardship and despair, whose human dignity is violated with impunity, become easy prey to the call to violence, and they can then become violators of peace," he said. PAGE B1

## A VISIT TO A CHANGED ENCLAVE

## News Summary

The German-born pope visited Yorkville, home to a German enclave that existed around St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church on East 87th Street from the late 1800s through the mid-20th century. But things are not the same in Yorkville anymore, and other former German areas of the city have likewise changed. PAGE B1

## THE NAKED LAPELS

The Democratic debate Wednesday night had four people on stage, tallying among them eight lapels, and nary an American flag pin on any of them. But only one person had to answer for it. Of course if the debate were in North Korea, no one would have dared go pinless. Jim Dwyer, About New York. PAGE B1

## BUSINESS

## CITIGROUP WRITE-OFFS LEAD

## To Record \$5.1 Billion Loss

Vikram S. Pandit may have passed his first test with Citigroup investors: cleaning up the financial carnage with the announcement of a company-record \$5.1 billion loss after writing off billions of dollars of troubled debts. Now comes the hard part, including proving that earnings can grow at a time when Citi will face billions of dollars of consumer loan losses. PAGE C1

## HELLO? HELLO? CAN YOU HEAR ME?

Airlines in the United States have shunned the use of cellphones in flight (train commuters can only dream) but some European and Mideast carriers are preparing to offer the service as early as this summer. Air France already has a test program. But technological hurdles exist -- and oh, those roaming charges. PAGE C1

## A RIFT OVER DRUG PROMOTIONS

The Food and Drug Administration has been considering a proposal to let drug makers use reprints of journal articles in promoting drugs for uses the F.D.A. itself has not approved. But a report indicating that Merck used ghostwriters to produce medical journal articles in support of its subsequently discredited drug Vioxx has galvanized opponents to the proposal. PAGE C3

## PUTTING A VALUE ON COLLEGE

The decisions aren't easy in the best of times. But in these tumultuous financial times, they are even more difficult as parents and high school seniors weigh the options: Should they choose the most affordable college? Or should they pick the one with more prestige, even if it's a financial stretch, even if it means going deep into debt? PAGE C1

## S. KOREA TO RESUME BEEF IMPORTS

South Korea agreed to resume beef imports from the United States that were halted in 2003 by concerns over mad cow disease. The decision removed a major dispute and shows how eager South Korea's new president, Lee Myung-bak, is to mend ties with Washington. PAGE B3

## Move Toward Ban on Plastics C2

## Fannie Mae Scandal Settlement C6

## ARTS

## DRESSING UP THE BOWERY

Loud guitars blared. A capacity crowd filled every nook and cranny, and tattered rock 'n' roll posters looked down from the dark walls. It might have been any big night at CBGB, but no, this was a party and concert for an upscale

## News Summary

boutique in the space where CBGB once stood. "The whole purpose of coming here was to retain part of the history," said the owner. And, he did not say, to help sell \$500 shirts and \$2,000 jackets. PAGE B1

## SMALL, AS ABSTRACT CONCEPT

In abstract painting, big has been viewed as better at least since Jackson Pollock, Roberta Smith writes, with small abstractions mostly shunted off to the wings. But, she adds, "In a time of glut and waste on every front, compression and economy have an undeniable appeal." And a number of small works by artists young and less-so are on display in New York now. PAGE B1

## HONORING AN IDEAL

The goal was noble: two friends and performance artists would wear white wedding dresses and hitchhike from Italy to the Middle East to send a message of peace. After three weeks on the road, one was dead, killed by a driver who offered her a ride. On Saturday, family, friends and supporters will honor her memory and her quixotic quest. PAGE B1

## Playwrights Saving the World B7

## 'Monet's Palate' B14

## OBITUARIES

## ROBERT T. HARTMANN, 91

A speechwriter, he wrote President Gerald R. Ford's 1974 address to the nation after the resignation of President Richard M. Nixon, proclaiming, "My fellow Americans, our long national nightmare is over." Mr. Ford at first suggested that the phrase "national nightmare" be struck, thinking it a bit harsh. Mr. Hartmann told him, "Junk all the rest of the speech if you want to, but not that." PAGE A17

## DANNY FEDERICI, 58

A keyboardist, he played in Bruce Springsteen's E Street Band since it began and was Mr. Springsteen's collaborator since they jammed together in Jersey Shore clubs in the 1960's. PAGE A17

## MARTIN BALIN, 62

A Vietnam War protester, he was one of six whose plot to set fire to six buildings in Manhattan in 1970 was derailed at the last moment by undercover police officers. The arrests made front-page news in a turbulent time when factions of the antiwar movement like the Weather Underground, a splinter group of the Students for a Democratic Society, were increasingly veering toward violence. PAGE A17

## SPORTS

## TRAINER SAID TO SUPPLY STEROIDS

## Denies Canseco's Allegations

In Jose Canseco's new book, he says that he introduced Alex Rodriguez to a trainer named "Max," who Canseco alleges provided Rodriguez with steroids. The real name of the trainer, Joseph Dion, was made public Friday, and Dion denied that he provided steroids to Rodriguez. The revelation comes four days before Canseco is scheduled to meet with federal authorities for questioning in the investigation of Roger Clemens. PAGE D1

## THE TOPSY-TURVY N.B.A. PLAYOFFS

Boston, the best team in the N.B.A.'s Eastern Conference, was its worst a year ago, and it sits atop the seeding in the N.B.A. playoffs. The Western Conference teams that have been so dominant recently could be eliminated in the

## News Summary

first round. The logjam of talented teams in the West and a top-heavy East means that any number of teams could become champion. PAGE D2

N.B.A. Approves Sonics' Relocation D2

THIS WEEKEND

ARTS & LEISURE

In the summer of 2003, Robert Downey Jr. drove to a Burger King , tossed all his drugs into the ocean, and dug into his burger. Five years on, a Burger King Kids Meal comes with a Robert Downey Jr. action figure, part of the marketing push for "Iron Man," the coming superhero movie in which Mr. Downey plays Tony Stark, an unfocused but brilliant man with a penchant for fast living who straightens up once he almost loses his life. PAGE 1

The actor Morgan Freeman is known for movie roles in which he plays stoic men who offer sage advice -- "the word dignified is pasted to my behind," he quips -- but in the Broadway play, "The Country Girl," he takes on a character who is rudderless and in need of direction. The play marks Mr. Freeman's return to the stage after decades of film work. PAGE 1

EDUCATION LIFE

Barring a last-minute rescue, soon after next Saturday's commencement the 156-year-old Antioch College will be emptied of students, faculty and staff, lose its accreditation and cease operations for at least a few years. Amid the hostile factions, last-ditch negotiations and debates about the school's values, a cadre of students and faculty members have stuck it out on a near-bankrupt campus. PAGE 18

BOOK REVIEW

Dermot Bolger's novel "The Journey Home" was released in Britain in 1990, but it is only now appearing on the shelves of American bookstores. "It is one of the few Bolger novels -- he has written more than half a dozen, as well as poetry and many plays -- in print in the United States, and that's a crying shame," says Terrence Rafferty. PAGE 1

TRAVEL

Ian Fisher says Rome's sights are best enjoyed at night. "Rome at night is, in short, a city lit like a theater, and, especially in the warmer months, should be enjoyed like one." PAGE 8

EDITORIAL

NOW HE'S READY TO DEAL

President Bush's latest compromise for ending North Korea's nuclear program is agitating critics -- outside his administration and in. It is an imperfect solution. But imperfect may be all one can expect, after Mr. Bush wasted so much time refusing to consider any compromise at all. PAGE A18

TOO MUCH DISCRETION

New Yorkers can be forgiven for feeling as if they have been transported back to the bad old days of Tammany Hall. It should not take federal indictments to show City Council members that the current system is in need of a serious overhaul. PAGE A18

THE UNFINISHED REFORM OF 9/11

Congress embraced nearly every call for reform from the 9/11 commission. Guess which one it didn't? It has overlooked the call to consolidate Congress's multiple intelligence oversight committees and subcommittees -- which ends up leaving no one with real oversight power. PAGE A18

## News Summary

OP-ED

BOB HERBERT

The Democrats are doing what they're good at -- figuring out ways to lose the White House. PAGE A19

GAIL COLLINS

President Bush held a press conference in the Rose Garden this week to give us a global warming progress report. We're supposedly on the road toward reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 18 percent by 2012. But goals that involve reducing the rate at which something is growing are never quite so simple. PAGE A19

CHARLES M. BLOW

Mr. Blow, graphics director for The Times from 1996 to 2004 and art director of National Geographic magazine from 2006 to 2008, starts today as a graphics columnist for the Op-Ed page. PAGE A19

<http://www.nytimes.com>

## Graphic

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PHOTOS

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## INSIDE THE TIMES

The New York Times

April 12, 2008 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Metropolitan Desk; Pg. 2

**Length:** 2462 words

### **Body**

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International

EIGHT PALESTINIANS KILLED IN GAZA,

Including Two Youths

At least five Palestinians were killed by tank and gun fire in Gaza, and three militants from **Hamas** were killed in Israeli airstrikes. The violence came as the United Nations said most of the roadblocks removed by Israel in the West Bank had little effect on the ability of Palestinians to move around. PAGE A9

TOUGHER CRACKDOWN IN ZIMBABWE

A day before southern Africa's leaders hold an emergency session on Zimbabwe's disputed election, the government of the beleaguered nation appeared to tighten its control, banning political rallies, continuing its crackdown on the opposition and arresting the lawyer of its chief rival, Morgan Tsvangirai. Mr. Tsvangirai's group, the Movement for Democratic Change, claims to have won last month's election outright, but his opponent, President Robert Mugabe, has demanded a recount of the vote -- though no official results have yet been released. PAGE A6

A NEW TONE FOR BERLUSCONI

Silvio Berlusconi, the former prime minister of Italy, is seeking to become the nation's leader for a third time. But Mr. Berlusconi, who once said his leadership would usher in "a new Italian miracle," has softened his tone. "We can't promise and can't achieve miracles," he said. And voters, too, worry that Italy's problems may be too big for any candidate to fix. PAGE A6

SYRIAN AUTHOR BREAKS TABOO

Khaled Khalifa is the bearish, gregarious author of "In Praise of Hatred," a novel that recalls a bloody struggle in the 1980s between militant Islamists and the Syrian military that remains a taboo subject in the country. Though the book was banned in Syria, it went on to international acclaim and was a finalist for the International Prize for Arabic Fiction, and is now being translated into English and other languages. PAGE A7

A TRICKY NEW BEGINNING IN NEPAL

## INSIDE THE TIMES

After a decade of guerilla warfare, Nepal is trying to wrestle with some sticky issues in writing its new constitution. How will the document give women and those of lower castes a voice in the new government? Should the unpopular monarchy be abolished and the nation be made a republic? And should those accused of war crimes be prosecuted? PAGE A8

## NATIONAL

## CHARGES FILED IN BEATING

Taped for Internet Display

Six teenage girls and two males accused as accomplices were charged as adults in an assault case that, if nothing else, one might think would discourage the videotaping of possible crimes to put on the Internet. As one critic said, it's hard to see YouTube from jail. PAGE A11

THE MADAM'S WOMEN

The defendant, the so-called D.C. Madam, is accused of running a sex-for-hire business. Her trial has been expected to embarrass certain male clients, but so far it has focused on the women who provided the service. Like an otherwise exemplary naval officer who admitted, "I needed the money -- yes, I did." PAGE A13

## A FROZEN CLAIM

Pinkberry says it didn't do anything wrong. But in a preliminary settlement of a class-action lawsuit that claimed the company misrepresented its frozen product as "frozen yogurt" and made bogus health claims, it's paying \$750,000 to the Los Angeles Regional Food Bank and an organization called Para Los Ninos. PAGE A11

## A SPEEDY TRIAL LAMENT

Reflecting Pentagon frustration, a military prosecutor urged a judge to schedule a trial in one of the most closely watched of the Guantanamo detainee cases. The judge did not set a date for the trial, but has set a date for a continuation of contentious pretrial arguments. Each side has blamed the other for delays. PAGE A13

An 'F' in Politics 101 A14

Inquiry Into Reporter's Sources A16

## NEW YORK REPORT

## PRESERVATION STRUGGLE LEADS

To First Amendment Claim

A Manhattan woman is under investigation by the city's Department of Investigations, ostensibly for having misrepresented the views of the borough president in a public hearing about preservation matter. But the real purpose, some say, is to stifle dissent on development issues, and the woman has taken the case to court. PAGE B1

## CAR JUMPS CURB, INJURING 6

A Nissan Altima jumped the curb onto the sidewalk at a Manhattan intersection, and didn't stop until it hit a fire hydrant and a coffee cart and pinned a man against the railing on the steps of the State Supreme Court -- familiar to many from the opening credits of "Law & Order." Six people were injured, including the driver. PAGE B9

Business

AS WALL STREET STRUGGLES,

## INSIDE THE TIMES

## Charities Change Tacks

For nonprofits that depend on the largess of Wall Street, the sluggish economy and looming layoffs -- and especially the collapse of Bear Stearns, where 1,000 senior managing directors gave away 4 percent of their annual compensation to charity -- augurs some tough fund-raising times ahead. The rule of thumb in charity -- 90 percent of the donations come from 10 percent of the donors -- means the very wealthy will be besieged with more requests. PAGE C1

## STILL TRAVELING, JUST MORE CHEAPLY

The dollar may be weak, airlines may be canceling flights, and gas prices may remain stubbornly high, but Americans aren't traveling any less. Airplanes are still full of passengers, and hotels actually saw a small increase in the number of rooms sold. People are instead opting to take trips where the dollar goes further, and business travel has stayed the same as companies have trimmed their budgets of most of the fat. PAGE C1

## IS PELLICANO HELPING HIS CASE?

Anthony Pellicano, the private detective on trial on charges of racketeering, acted as his own lawyer, and called a single witness to the stand. And just as it has been for most of the trial, Mr. Pellicano's questions to his witness did little to bolster his case or refute the government's charges against him. PAGE C3

## HOME-BUYING WITH FRIENDS

As the housing crisis drags on, lenders have tightened rules on mortgages, meaning second-home purchases are harder to complete. Some buyers are considering purchasing those homes with friends or relatives, but doing so comes with serious caveats. Your Money, Hillary Chura. PAGE C6

## An Interview With B. Smith C2

## Defending the Boss's Pay C5

## Culture

## GUESSING COURIC'S NEXT MOVE

Though it is still only a rumor, the speculation that Katie Couric will soon leave her post as the anchor of the "CBS Evening News" has some longtime news executives wondering about Ms. Couric's next step. They think that it's unlikely that CBS will allow her to void her contract and head to a rival in network news, so Ms. Couric's most likely destination is a cable outlet like MSNBC or CNN. PAGE B13

## A VIRTUOSO IN HIS SANDBOX

"The Itsy Bitsy Spider," according to Bobby McFerrin, is only half a song without the "choreography." So Mr. McFerrin invited the audience at a performance at Carnegie Hall to perform the hand gestures that accompany the song. Allan Kozinn writes that Mr. McFerrin is a serious musician with serious ambitions. "But he also has a comedian's mischievousness, which is difficult for him to suppress, and there's no reason he should," he says. PAGE B1

## OFF OFF BROADWAY, ON THE BOOKS

It's hard to get a sense of the economics of the Off Off Broadway scene -- a production is considered Off Off Broadway if it is playing in a venue with 99 or fewer seats -- because the scene's scale seems to change minute by minute. While a recently released survey of Off Off Broadway companies isn't exhaustive, it did yield some interesting tidbits: an average theater company's yearly budget is \$18,000 and the company will produce two or fewer shows a year; actors are paid very little; and the biggest business expense is rent. PAGE B9

## Sports



## INSIDE THE TIMES

## AFTER PLAYING CINDERELLA,

## The Spotlight Lingers

Until recently, Jason Richards was a little-known point guard for Davidson College. But that was before his small college's improbable run through the N.C.A.A. tournament, which ended when Richards barely missed a shot at the buzzer that would have beaten Kansas, the eventual national champion. His performance put him on the radar of professional scouts, and he now counts N.B.A. star LeBron James as a fan. PAGE D8

## AT AUGUSTA, SETTING A BRISK PACE

The early players at Augusta National were on a roll as the second round of the Masters got under way. "Any time you can make a birdie in a major championship, it's like a thrill," said Trevor Immelman of South Africa. "To shoot two 68s in the first two days is probably beyond my expectations." Steve Flesch and Brandt Snedeker also jumped out to fast starts, and were right on his heels. PAGE D1

## HAWKS COULD EKE INTO PLAYOFFS

The Atlanta Hawks had gone longer than any team in the N.B.A. without appearing in the playoffs -- nine consecutive seasons. But this year, the Hawks may stumble into the postseason despite having a losing record, thanks to a weakened Eastern conference and the development of some of its youngest players. PAGE D4

## Obituaries

## ROBERT W. GREENE, 78

A reporter and editor at Newsday, he led investigative teams that won two Pulitzer Prizes and who brought together reporters from newspapers around the country in 1976 to uncover corruption in Arizona after a journalist there was murdered. PAGE A17

## BURT GLINN, 82

A photojournalist, commercial photographer and former president of the Magnum photo agency, Mr. Glinn took his best-known photograph of the Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev, showing the back of Khrushchev's head as he gazes up at the Lincoln Memorial. PAGE A17

## Editorials

## TIME FOR THE COLOMBIAN PACT

A trade agreement with Colombia would produce clear benefits for American businesses and their workers. It would also strengthen the institutional bonds tying Colombia to the United States, one of the nation's few allies in an important region that has become increasingly hostile to American interests. It is time for Congress to ratify the deal. PAGE A18

## HOW TO VENT ABOUT ALBANY

Any New Yorker who is not furious at the mention of their state capital, Albany, has not been paying attention. The place needs a thorough cleaning, a giant broom to sweep out the rascals, starting with the State Legislature. Here is how to change Albany: find and support somebody daring and thick-skinned enough to run against the local legislator. PAGE A18

## SEEKING REDEMPTION AFTER PRISON

The compassion and bipartisanship that President Bush promised in the 2000 election campaign made a long-awaited appearance this week, as he signed a law to help prisoners re-enter society. The Second Chance Act is a

## INSIDE THE TIMES

welcome relief from the simplistic lock-'em-up posture of recent decades that has the United States leading the world in incarceration. It is an important start, but more still needs to be done. PAGE A18

Op-Ed

BOB HERBERT

The war in Iraq is devouring resources and sapping the energy needed to deal with myriad problems here at home, from the economy to health care to the infrastructure and beyond. PAGE A19

GAIL COLLINS

Age and the Senate race in New Jersey, where 84 is the new 64. PAGE A19

This Weekend

ARTS & LEISURE

Some are part of the city's rich dance history; some are juniors making their ways through the ranks and repertoires of New York companies; some are regular visitors from abroad. Alastair Macaulay, who moved to New York from London just 12 months ago, highlights a year's worth of the city's best dancers. PAGE 1

To most people, film criticism is two guys shifting in their seats, rolling their eyes, pointing fingers and interrupting, and every now and then agreeing. One of the critics responsible for this, Roger Ebert, has announced his departure from the airwaves. Mr. Ebert is not simply the best-known movie reviewer in America, A. O. Scott writes, but the virtual embodiment of the profession. PAGE 1

It was a taste of the rock 'n' roll life that made Portishead, the 1990s group known for its otherworldly sound, disappear for a decade. So it's no wonder the new objective of the band, which has rematerialized with a new album and a European tour, is to be "the opposite of rock 'n' roll." PAGE 1

THE MAGAZINE

Chris Matthews is one of the most recognizable political personalities on the air. But his whip-tongued, name-dropping, self-promoting bombast is radically at odds with the wry, antipolitical style fashioned by Jon Stewart and Stephen Colbert and preferred by younger viewers. Could this be his last election in the spotlight? PAGE 42

The premise of the work is simple: get to know your potential customers before you make a product for them. But when those customers live in, say, a mud hut in Zambia, the challenges are considerable. Why a corporate "user anthropologist" working for Nokia, the Finnish cellphone company, is spending so much of his time in the shantytowns of the world. PAGE 34

TRAVEL

Quaint, grandfatherly Munich, long considered about as cool as polka music on an eight-track cassette, is Germany's hot spot of the moment. "Because it's so conservative, you can do what you want," says one British-born resident. "You don't have to be cool and hip in a certain way." PAGE 1

The Bear. The Mitre. The White Hart. The Kings Arms. The Wheatsheaf. Turf Tavern. The Rose and Crown. The Eagle and Child. And let's not forget the Lamb and Flag, where Graham Greene liked to drink. Oxford's pubs date back to the 1200's, and many of them echo the Middle Ages. The best are still filled not only with the scent of yeast and hops, but also with banter and wit. PAGE 3

BOOK REVIEW

## INSIDE THE TIMES

Proponents on whichever side of church-state issues seem to claim as provenance the beliefs of the nation's founders, and vehement they can certainly be in their assertions. But in "Founding Faith," Steven Waldman concludes that the faith was neither Christianity nor secularism. PAGE 1

"Ain't Nothing but a Man" is a children's book recounting the search for what's behind the legend of John Henry, noted steel drivin' man. Not since "All the President's Men," Lawrence Downes writes in his review, "has the tedium of a paper chase been made to seem so cool." PAGE 18

## T: STYLE MAGAZINE

She won her Yankee bona fides for "The Devil Wears Prada." Since then, she has been playing on both sides of the pond, most recently as Queen Victoria. Emily Blunt on wearing a corset, filming nude scenes with Tom Hanks and why all British actors want to conquer America. PAGE 76

Marc Jacobs has had more than his fair share of headlines lately. But what everyone seems to neglect is his work at Louis Vuitton and for his own label, which is consistently ahead of the curve. This season, he explored a new kind of sexiness with purposely disheveled, lingerie-inspired looks. His choice of model? The French actress Elodie Bouchez, of course. PAGE 70

<http://www.nytimes.com>

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**Letters to the Editor; Children's happiness lost among the targets and tick-boxes**

The Independent (London)

March 12, 2008 Wednesday

First Edition

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**The  INDEPENDENT**

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## **Body**

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Sir: I am pleased to read that the Association of Teachers and Lecturers is concerned about children's happiness (report, 11 March). So many Government targets and tests culminating in examinations at 16 put pressure on pupils, reducing the opportunities for teachers' creativity. The national curriculum regards education as a means of turning out people fit for employment rather than developing children's potential.

Are children being treated as numbers to enable the nation to compete with developing nations such as India and China, rather than treating them as human beings?

Mike Pictor

Cheltenham, Gloucestershire

Sir: I have recently registered as a childminder and have been reading lots of the government material about young children. This literature is full of words such as "achieve", and laced with jargon, but very short on ideas of love, contentment or happiness. I searched the Sure Start introduction to the "Birth to Three Matters" Framework and the words "happy" and "enjoyment" do not appear once.

Children are now so many boxes to be ticked. There are no boxes for happiness. What doesn't get measured doesn't happen. It's no surprise that children are unhappy. The powers that be don't care if they're happy, only if they've gained certain skills by a certain age.

You don't read a book to enjoy it any more, you read it to achieve early reading skills. The whole of pre-school and school is now like this, and - surprise, surprise - it's not a very enjoyable way to be brought up.

Susan Taylor

Leeds

## Letters to the Editor Children's happiness lost among the targets and tick-boxes

Sir: One of the main elements causing the pressure on children in our schools is the persistent emphasis on competition. So what has the Government done? It has produced a "Children's Plan, dedicated to making England the best place in the world for our children to grow up". Says it all, doesn't it?

Graham Griffiths

Bury, Lancashire

## Coal power imperils climate strategy

Sir: If John Hutton is signalling he will allow a set of new and entirely unabated coal plants to be built, the UK's climate strategy will be up in smoke ("Back to black", 10 March).

Building new coal plants now without carbon capture from the outset will do nothing to curb coal plants being built in China. It will do nothing to help the dramatic scale-up of renewables to meet a target announced just a month ago. It will not boost energy efficiency nor will it bring carbon capture technology a day closer.

Above all, it will threaten to push us beyond dangerous climate tipping points, putting the poorest and most vulnerable around the world at risk and threatening our long-term economic wellbeing. Gordon Brown must step in and say no to unabated new coal plants and yes to a clean, green energy future.

Daleep Mukarji, Director, Christian Aid; Tony Juniper,

Chief Executive, Friends of the Earth; John Sauven, Executive Director, Greenpeace; Russell Marsh, Head of Policy, Green Alliance; Fay Mansell, Chair, National Federation of Women's Institutes; Phil Bloomer, Director of Campaigns & Policy, Oxfam; Ian Leggett, Director, People & Planet; Graham Wynne, Chief Executive, RSPB; Ashok Sinha, Director, Stop Climate Chaos Coalition; Matthew Frost, Chief Executive, Tearfund; Benedict Southworth, Director, World Development Movement; Keith Allott, Head of Climate Change, WWF-UK; London EC2

Sir: Once again, the Government has fuelled expectations of a "green budget"; but whether or not any rise in the rate of Vehicle Excise Duty (VED) is deferred, it looks set to be no more than a tax-hiking ruse disguised as greenery. A leaked Treasury memo has detailed how the zero-carbon VED cut will disappear as soon as eligible vehicles become available. This kind of cynical exploitation of environmental concerns in order to justify stealth taxes is becoming a serious obstacle to public acceptance of green taxation.

John Hutton's backing, reported in this paper, for the proposed Kingsnorth coal power plant, couched in the language of "clean coal", and "carbon capture and storage ready", is yet another ruse. This is not "clean coal". It will emit 10 million tonnes of carbon pollution into our atmosphere every year. There is no obligation upon the developer to make the plant CCS ready to any stipulated standard or by any designated date, nor is it yet known if the taxpayer or the developer will have to pay for the retrofitting.

This decision abdicates Britain's responsibility as an international leader on climate change, it makes a mockery of our national carbon pollution reduction targets and it will give away the UK's economic advantage on CCS to other countries, as we procrastinate for years around the Government's CCS pilot project competition, which has upset both industry and environmentalists by its lack of ambition.

We need a new political vision if we are successfully to challenge the climate crisis whilst still enhancing our economy and ensuring Britain's future energy security. Unabated coal is yesterday's technology. We must instead embrace change and choose 21st-century solutions to a 21st-century problem.

Peter Ainsworth MP

Shadow Secretary of State for the Environment, House of Commons

Sir: The Government is quite right to support the building of the first of a new generation of supercritical coal-fired power stations at Kingsnorth in Kent.

## Letters to the Editor Children's happiness lost among the targets and tick-boxes

It is not worried by "fluctuations in the supply" that your editorial so misleadingly refers to, but the massive 22GW electricity capacity shortage that is predicted for 2016 - about 30 per cent of present UK capacity. Of this shortage, 11GW comes from old and less efficient coal-fired power stations that must close because of their emissions by 2016.

The Government is replacing old and dirty coal power stations with new ones that produce 20 per cent less CO<sub>2</sub>. Furthermore, these new plants will be carbon-capture ready.

Rather than mothballing this technology as you suggest, and pretending that we can get by without fossil fuels, we should recognise that they will continue to play a part in a diverse energy supply for a very long time (250 years in the case of coal), and we should encourage the development of carbon capture technology, which includes replacing old power stations with ones that can actually use it.

Carbon capture and storage is not unproven - 1 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> are buried in the Norwegian Sleipner gas field every year and similar amounts are used to recover oil in Canada. Your newspaper could help the environment more by bringing lost opportunities for carbon storage to the public attention, such as BP's Decarbonised Fuel-1 project, rather than by doom-and-gloom headlines.

Dr Manus Hayne

Department of Physics Lancaster University

Palestinian sadness at killing of students

Sir: As a Brit based in the West Bank city of Hebron and working as a human rights observer, I can say that the recent murder of the Mercaz Harav yeshiva students in Jerusalem has been greeted with sadness by Palestinians here.

Such acts are illegal under international law and any loss of life in this conflict is tragic. Most Palestinians do not want to see the cycle of violence and bloodshed continue.

But for many Palestinians, the condemnation of the yeshiva killings by the international community, compared with what they view as international silence over the blockade and the deaths of 100-plus Palestinians in Gaza including some 25 children, reflects that their lives are worth less than those of Israelis.

Donald Macintyre ("Tearful eulogies for the victims, anger at the weakness of Israel's leaders", 8 March) rightly points to Mercaz Harav as being the spiritual backbone of the Jewish settlements in the occupied West Bank.

In Hebron, where 20 per cent of the city is under Israeli control, some 40,000 Palestinians have every aspect of their daily lives controlled by the presence of 400-500 Israeli settlers and around 2,000 Israeli soldiers. Restrictions on movement, a policy of separation and discrimination by the Israeli Defence Force and settler violence has led to the destruction of the city's commercial centre. Hundreds of shops have closed and many hundreds of families have been forced to leave their homes.

Settlements, which are illegal under international law, remain at the core of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and a major barrier to a peace agreement and the existence of a viable future Palestinian state.

Sultana Begum

Hebron, West Bank

Sir: M A Baig complains that the western media is ignoring the Israeli reprisal in Gaza and over-reporting the slaughter in Jerusalem (Letters, 8 March).

It is important to remember that the Israeli army fought in Gaza against armed combatants. They were hiding among civilians. The Geneva Convention states: "The presence of a protected person may not be used to render

Letters to the Editor Children's happiness lost among the targets and tick-boxes

certain points or areas immune from military operations." Which means that when the Hamas combatants fire their weapons and hide among civilians they are not immune from attack. And if civilians get hurt, the responsibility lies with those who hide among civilians and endanger their lives.

On the other hand, in Jerusalem, the heavily armed "militant" entered a high school library and started shooting, killing eight and wounding many others. It is unfortunate that Baig is unable or unwilling to see the difference.

Dr Jacob Amir

Jerusalem

Where to draw the line on Europe

Sir: The obstacle in the way of a statement of the powers of the EU as clear as Simon Carr would like (10 March) lies not in Brussels but in the national capitals. The division of powers between the EU and the member states has to be agreed unanimously by all 27 of them, and clarity and simplicity will come only when each national government resists the temptation to insist on small changes that it thinks would be popular back home.

We are still waiting for that day. The Lisbon Treaty is undoubtedly an improvement on its predecessors. But there is still work to be done.

Richard Laming

Director, Federal Union London SE1

Sir: The Lib Dems were quite right to call for a referendum on the EU. There are more than enough grounds. Both the Constitution and the Lisbon Treaty are a cop-out which besmirch the European project. Red lines are simply an excuse to opt out of things out of pure self-interest.

The Lib Dems put their pro-Europeanism on the line to give the electorate a voice. The other parties haven't the guts to put anything on the line.

Stephen Jackson

Bexhill on Sea, East Sussex

Sir: I was surprised to read Lembit Opik (My Week in Media, 10 March) admit that he voted with Nick Clegg "because he is an expert on Europe and I didn't want to read the 200 pages of the EU Treaty myself." It would be interesting to know how many MPs could be bothered to read the document before voting on it on our behalf.

Charles Hopkins

Norwich

Managing to save English heathland

Sir: Tim Williams mistakenly suggests that we are converting his local heathland into a bare wasteland (Letter: "Misguided attempts to manage nature", 7 March). In fact, this is an excellent example of how our agri-environment schemes are being used to transform a vulnerable habitat for the benefit of both people and wildlife. Many of England's lowland heaths are under severe pressure, including the heathlands of Dorset, which support rare species such as marsh gentian, sand lizards, smooth snake, Dartford warbler, wood lark and nightjar.

The positive management of degraded heathland can involve the loss of some areas of pine, birch and rhododendron thickets. However, this is a price worth paying for the enhancement of a globally rare and fragile habitat that provides valuable green space for local people and tourism appeal.

Sir Martin Doughty

Letters to the Editor Children's happiness lost among the targets and tick-boxes

Chair, Natural England London SE1

**Briefly...**

Political debt

Sir: Now that New Labour has appointed a hedge fund manager as its new general secretary, can we expect its privatisation soon, or has that already happened? I also see that they owe millions of pounds to my bank, the Co-op bank. I am today writing to my bank suggesting we put them into administration and make them financially as well as politically bankrupt.

Hugh Kerr

Edinburgh

Addicts are equal

Sir: "Celebrity drug-takers need help, not jail," said the headline on Deborah Orr's column on 8 March. I yearned to add: "So do ordinary drug-takers." The unfairness of ordinary people who get caught up in addiction being regularly jailed, while no celebrity ever goes to prison, is another example of today's totally unjust society.

Diana Robinson

Leeds

War on plastic

Sir: I was impressed by the efforts of Catherine Eade ("Plastic? No thanks", 8 March) to reduce the plastic she buys. However, I'm not sure why she didn't mention buying milk from a milkman who delivers in reusable glass bottles. I also get my organic fruit and vegetables from the milkman in cardboard boxes. This service is underused and is great for reducing consumption of plastics. Long live the milk delivery service with its glass bottles.

Alexandra Murrell

London SE17

Road congestion

Sir: Ruth Kelly has stated that some motorways will be "broadened" by allowing motorists to use the hard shoulder. The effect of the broadening will be to make motorways more dangerous. Ambulances and police cars will not be able to reach the scene of an accident when the hard shoulders are blocked by halted vehicles.

George Huxley

Church Enstone, Oxfordshire

Welsh stars

Sir: How can Andy McSmith write a double-page spread on the sporting and cultural renaissance in Wales (11 March) and fail to mention Doctor Who? Not only is Doctor Who filmed and produced in Cardiff, it also owes its successful resurrection to writer and executive producer Russell T Davies, who happens to be, er, Welsh.

Martyn P Jackson

Cramlington, Northumberland

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Letters to the Editor Children's happiness lost among the targets and tick-boxes

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## *Profiles: Mohammed Hamid and his followers*

Guardian.com

February 26, 2008

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theguardian

**Length:** 2255 words

**Highlight:** Paths to radicalism of the five men convicted today of involvement with jihadist training camps in Britain

### **Body**

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Mohammed Hamid attracted a disparate group of Muslim radicals to his Friday evening meetings at Almack Road in Hackney. Among them were a student, a builder and an ex-bus-driver. Of the six men charged, three were converts from Christianity and four had been born overseas.

Mohammed Hamid, 50, from Hackney, east LondonA preacher and reformed drug addict, the man who described himself as "Osama bin London" was the main organiser of training camps and paintball fights.

A father of six, Hamid was born into an Indian Muslim family in Tanzania. He arrived in the UK as a child.

Initially the family lived in Heckmondwike and Batley, in Yorkshire, Hamid moving in with an older brother in London at the age of 12. He first got into trouble for shoplifting fishfingers and a tin of sweetcorn.

By the age of 19 he was in borstal; jail terms for robbery followed. Hamid separated from his first wife, Linda, in his early 30s and looked after their two children.

Shortly afterwards he met a woman who introduced him to drugs. "I became very addicted to [crack]," he admitted in court. "I could not keep my life together. I had to [send] my daughter and my son away from the house.

"There was not even a spoon left in the house because I sold everything to keep my habit, my addiction. I just had one blanket and that was it. I was living like a squatter, like a tramp."

A chance trip to a mosque with his brother saved him, he maintained. He decided to leave the country for India.

There he met his second wife, an observant Muslim, and she eventually moved into his council house in Almack Road, Clapton.

The couple went on to have four children. Hamid became ever more devout, adopting traditional Islamic dress and growing a beard.

He opened the Islamic bookshop Al-Koran in Chatsworth Road, Clapton. At the same time, around 1996, he was a volunteer youth worker and managed a Sunday football team.

## Profiles: Mohammed Hamid and his followers

He began attending rallies at Speaker's Corner in Hyde Park, central London, after becoming increasingly radicalised in the wake of the 9/11 attacks. He also raised money for refugees from the war in Afghanistan.

Hamid travelled to Karachi in January 2002 and stayed in Pakistan for three months. He had shipped out seven 12-metre (40ft) containers of hospital equipment, which he took across Pakistan in a convoy. He visited refugee camps over the Afghan border near the town of Chaman.

He first met the 21/7 bombers, among other young radicals, during rallies at Speaker's Corner in 2003.

He also became embroiled in the crisis at Finsbury Park mosque in North London, where the radical cleric Abu Hamza held open-air prayer meetings after being evicted by the mosque trustees.

Hamid helped negotiate an end to the standoff in October 2004, his involvement putting him in contact with Hamza's righthand man, Atilla Ahmet.

In court Hamid wore traditional Muslim garb, a white cap and long robe. He was recorded telling recruits he wanted to see "six or seven" atrocities before the 2012 Olympics and hailing the September 11 hijackers as the "magnificent 15".

In his testimony, however, the preacher insisted: "I have never, ever taught anyone to do any terrorist activities." He explained that he was a keen camper, who often went backpacking in Europe and had taken his tent to Glastonbury and Reading music festivals.

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Brian Miller, the chairman of the Bexley League, said: "He was a nutter, very volatile and took it far too seriously. Once I had to referee the managers - not the game."

The married father-of-four abandoned football, however, after embracing radical Islam in 1998.

Calling himself Abu Abdullah, Ahmet was at the centre of the rows with the trustees at Finsbury Park mosque. After Hamza's arrest in 2004, he became more outspoken.

He was accused of being an al-Qaida official after he gave a controversial interview to the American news channel CNN in February 2006.

## Profiles: Mohammed Hamid and his followers

During a second interview with CNN in August, he said 9/11 was "a deserved punch on the nose" for the US and described the former prime minister Tony Blair as "fair game" for a terrorist attack.

Ahmet relished the news that Hamas had killed Jews in Israel and that insurgents had killed coalition soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan.

His hatred of "kuffars" ? a derogatory term for non-Muslims - was matched only by his contempt for munafiqs, the Arabic word for hypocrite, which he used to describe any moderate Muslim who did not back his extremist agenda.

Atila boasted he would happily go to prison for 50 years if he got the chance to publicise his hate-filled views in the media.

After a few hours of questioning at Paddington Green police station, however, he started having claustrophobia-induced panic attacks.

Other defendants spoke of Atila "cracking up" in Belmarsh and said his guilty pleas were a desperate attempt to get out of jail early.

Friendless on the inside, Atila was said to have become paranoid, accusing fellow defendants of being MI5 spies, and sacking his legal team.

He pleaded guilty to three counts of soliciting to murder after the crown dropped five other counts.

Kibley da Costa, 24, of West Norwood, south-east London

A Jamaican-born, onetime bus driver, he was presented by his lawyers as being "radical but not extreme". He supposedly had one of the worst attendance records at Hamid's Friday evening meetings.

Brought up in a Christian family in the "ghetto" in Kingston, Da Costa moved to the UK in 1995.

He felt marked by an accident that occurred when he was a bus driver: a drunken pedestrian fell under the wheels of his vehicle and the man died of his injuries.

In 2003, after converting to Islam, he began calling himself Abdul Khaliq, although his family would not use the name. "Mummy has not adapted to Abdul Khaliq," he told the court.

Da Costa explained that he had children by two women, whom he referred to as his "wives".

About the bus accident, he said: "A drunken guy fell under my bus and the bus wheel ran over his leg. Because of the alcohol in his system he died a couple of days later in hospital.

"They were trying to sort out counselling for me because I was blaming myself for it, even though it was proved it wasn't my fault."

He had started a wholesale clothing company when he was arrested with the others in September last year.

Da Costa denied any extremist beliefs and said he thought 21/7 was "stupid, innit".

He had worked with youth groups in south London, volunteering to talk to black Muslim youngsters in an attempt to steer them away from street gangs such as the Muslim Boys.

Da Costa portrayed himself as a joker, yelling at surveillance officers he saw spying on the group in the New Forest to "come and have a cup of tea with us".

Searches found DVDs of al-Qaida "executions" in Da Costa's possession, including that of the British captive Ken Bigley. Another disc showed very young children mimicking a beheading. He also had an "al-Qaida manual".

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Da Costa was found guilty of providing training for the purposes of terrorism, attending a place used for terrorist training and possessing a record likely to be useful to a terrorist.

Mohammad al-Figari, 44, of Tottenham, north London

A convicted drug smuggler and convert to Islam, his real name was Roger Michael Figari. Born in Trinidad, he was brought up by "very religious" grandmothers - one Catholic, one Hindu.

He moved to London in 1989, studied law and economics at Kilburn Polytechnic and worked for the Inland Revenue and the Department of Social Services.

He claimed he had drifted into crime after becoming a chauffeur under contract to the BBC.

"I tried to lead a decent, honest life but, being a chauffeur, you tend to compromise certain beliefs that I had at the time," he told the court.

"Some of the clients I had in the back of the car - their lifestyles weren't all that above board. There were certain things you had to do for them which compromised things."

He supplied clients with drugs and "**female** partners" and obtained a criminal record for theft and assault. By 1997, he had fallen in with a smuggling gang importing cocaine from Jamaica using drug mules who swallowed packets of the drug.

Figari said he converted to Islam 10 days before his arrest for smuggling, having been interested in the black American organisation the Nation of Islam. He was eventually convicted and sentenced to eight years.

While a prisoner in Wandsworth he came across one of the extremist documents that formed one of the terror charges against him.

A pamphlet called How Can I Train Myself for Jihad? still bore the stamp of HMP Wandsworth's library when it was produced in the trial.

Figari had met Hamid shortly before being sent to prison and the preacher continued to send him Islamic literature.

After his release on Christmas Eve 2002, Figari became a loyal follower. He first came to the authorities' attention when he joined Hamid on the same camping trip to Baysbrown Farm that the 21/7 bombers attended.

By the time of his arrest in 2006, al-Figari had obtained employment supervising deliveries of pharmaceuticals at a London hospital - despite his drugs conviction.

Al-Figari admitted having a conversation with Hamid during which the two men were recorded discussing "leopard crawling" and other training exercises.

Under police surveillance, al-Figari was heard using the military terms clips, belt and magazines.

He maintained that the clips and belts were weight training equipment and the magazines were the kind you read.

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Kader Ahmed, 20, of Plaistow, East London

The youngest of the defendants in the glass-screened dock, Ahmed was only 17 when he met Hamid at Speaker's Corner in Hyde Park. The preacher became a father figure to him.

## Profiles: Mohammed Hamid and his followers

A Somalia-born immigrant, Ahmed moved to London to escape the civil war. He was taken out of his east London secondary school at the age of 14 and educated at home by his Muslim mother.

He lived in the same council flat in Plaistow, east London, since coming to Britain. He was given the nickname Mohammed Plaistow by other defendants to differentiate him from the dozens of other Mohammeds who passed through Hamid's doors.

His parents were pleased when he became more devout in 2004 after meeting Hamid.

Ahmed said the 21/7 bombers Ramzi Mohammed, Hussain Osman and Muktar Said Ibrahim were among the Muslims who frequented Speaker's Corner to hear Hamid and other preachers talk.

Ahmed insisted the camping trips were innocent jaunts 'like scouts or cadets'. The Baysbrown Farm visit in August 2004 was the first time he had been outside London.

He went on another minibus trip with Hamid and others to Scotland during Christmas 2004, visiting Inverness and Loch Ness.

Ahmed said the purpose of the trip, which took place when the group were not under security service surveillance, was not to undergo terrorist training but to try to find the Loch Ness monster.

Ahmed sneeringly called Dawood - the undercover officer who infiltrated the group - James Bond and claimed the officer had fabricated evidence.

The military-style training he was filmed doing was in preparation for paintballing, he claimed, adding that: "If other people were doing it, English people, you wouldn't say it was wrong."

The youth had become estranged from his father and by the time of the raids, according to Hamid, Ahmed had become "like a son" to him.

Anti-terror police believed the teenager had, in effect, become Hamid's righthand man in the group.

Ahmed's solicitor, Hugh Mullan, said his client considered the training to be harmless fun. "Any lad that age would jump at the chance, particularly given his background, to do all those exciting things he did," Mullan said.

"Kader Ahmed never said one thing to indicate he has fanatical views."

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**Load-Date:** February 26, 2008

## *Profiles: Mohammed Hamid and his followers*

Guardian.com

February 26, 2008

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theguardian

**Length:** 2247 words

**Highlight:** Paths to radicalism of the five men convicted today of involvement with jihadist training camps in Britain

### **Body**

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Mohammed Hamid attracted a disparate group of Muslim radicals to his Friday evening meetings at Almack Road in Hackney. Among them were a student, a builder and an ex-bus-driver. Of the six men charged, three were converts from Christianity and four had been born overseas.

Mohammed Hamid, 50, from Hackney, east London

A preacher and reformed drug addict, the man who described himself as "Osama bin London" was the main organiser of training camps and paintball fights.

A father of six, Hamid was born into an Indian Muslim family in Tanzania. He arrived in the UK as a child.

Initially the family lived in Heckmondwike and Batley, in Yorkshire. Hamid moved in with an older brother in London at the age of 12. He first got into trouble for shoplifting fishfingers and a tin of sweetcorn.

By the age of 19 he was in borstal; jail terms for robbery followed. Hamid separated from his first wife, Linda, in his early 30s and looked after their two children.

Shortly afterwards he met a woman who introduced him to drugs. "I became very addicted to [crack]," he admitted in court. "I could not keep my life together. I had to [send] my daughter and my son away from the house.

"There was not even a spoon left in the house because I sold everything to keep my habit, my addiction. I just had one blanket and that was it. I was living like a squatter, like a tramp."

A chance trip to a mosque with his brother saved him, he maintained. He decided to leave the country for India.

There he met his second wife, an observant Muslim, and she eventually moved into his council house in Almack Road, Clapton.

The couple went on to have four children. Hamid became ever more devout, adopting traditional Islamic dress and growing a beard.

He opened the Islamic bookshop al-Koran in Chatsworth Road, Clapton. At the same time, around 1996, he was a volunteer youth worker and managed a Sunday football team.

## Profiles: Mohammed Hamid and his followers

He began attending rallies at Speaker's Corner in Hyde Park, central London, after becoming increasingly radicalised in the wake of the 9/11 attacks. He also raised money for refugees from the war in Afghanistan.

Hamid travelled to Karachi in January 2002 and stayed in Pakistan for three months. He had shipped out seven 12-metre (40ft) containers of hospital equipment, which he took across Pakistan in a convoy. He visited refugee camps over the Afghan border near the town of Chaman.

He first met the 21/7 bombers among other young radicals during rallies at Speaker's Corner in 2003.

He also became embroiled in the crisis at Finsbury Park mosque in North London, where the radical cleric Abu Hamza held open-air prayer meetings after being evicted by the mosque trustees.

Hamid helped negotiate an end to the standoff in October 2004, his involvement putting him in contact with Hamza's righthand man, Atilla Ahmet.

In court Hamid wore traditional Muslim garb, a white cap and long robe. He was recorded telling recruits he wanted to see "six or seven" atrocities before the 2012 Olympics and hailing the September 11 hijackers as the "magnificent 15".

In his testimony, however, the preacher insisted: "I have never, ever taught anyone to do any terrorist activities."

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**Load-Date:** February 26, 2008

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Australian (Australia)

January 1, 2008 Tuesday

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**Section:** FEATURES; Pg. 13

**Length:** 2534 words

### **Body**

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#### MOST TALKED ABOUT -- PAKISTAN'S TURMOIL

----- Dynasties are the antithesis of democratic process -----

BENAZIR Bhutto a democrat? This is a woman who believed in the dynastic approach to politics -- an approach that is the very antithesis of the democratic process and one that will ensure continuing corruption and nepotism in Pakistan. Witness the appointment of both her 19-year-old son and her husband as co-leaders of her political party following her death ("Bhutto torch passes to son", 31/12).

Michael Gamble

Belmont, Vic

BENAZIR Bhutto spoke of her commitment to democracy, yet she bequeathed the leadership of her party to her son and her spouse, as if political power was her personal property to dispose of. I'm sure that even George W. Bush and Hillary Clinton would agree that there is nothing democratic about passing on a personal fiefdom in this way.

Marion Diamond

Sandgate, Qld

THE "appointment" of Bilawal Bhutto to chair the Pakistan People's Party hardly fills those of us who support democracy in Pakistan with any great confidence. Surely if Pakistan is to develop a truly democratic system of government, the existing political parties and their ruling dynasties must be reformed to allow a far greater level of participation by the rank and file.

Ian De Landelles

Hawker, ACT

JOHN F. Kennedy was assassinated 45 years ago and argument still rages as to who pulled the trigger, how many bullets were fired and from which direction. One suspects that similar argument concerning the death of Benazir Bhutto will fill our print and electronic media for a long time to come. However, what difference does it make? The

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

fact is her enemies wanted her dead and she knew it well before she made the fateful decision to return to Pakistan to sacrifice herself and hundreds of innocent followers.

Doug Osmond

Robina, Qld

POLITICIANS and the media in the West loudly bemoan the blow to democracy when something like the assassination of a pro-Western figure such as Benazir Bhutto occurs. But where's the support for democracy when, say, Hamas wins a fair and free election and is denied effective power?

Gordon Drennan

Burton, SA

CON Vaitsas and others (Letters, 29-30/12) claim Benazir Bhutto did little to aid democracy or to advance the cause of women in Pakistan. When viewed from the armchair safety of a Western liberal democracy, I suppose that is a reasonable, if very limited, perspective.

However, from the perspective of an Islamic country largely then ruled by feudal chiefs, controlled by a military dictatorship that, under Zia-ul-Haq, was intent on imposing Sharia law to create an Islamic state, where nepotism and corruption are skills necessary for survival, and where leadership, expression of opinion and dissent are often punished by death, her democratic election alone was a remarkable and courageous achievement. When simply speaking in public carried, for her and her supporters, the risk of assassination, it's not hard to imagine that pressing for women's equality, or any other rights those of us fortunate enough to live in liberal societies regard as basic, might meet vigorous opposition.

Benazir Bhutto may not have been perfect but Pakistan is one large step closer to being a failed state and Islamic women and humanity generally are much the poorer as a result of her murder.

Richard Sallie

Nedlands, WA

UNLIKE your more politically correct respondents (Letters, 31/12), I read Graham Egan's letter more as dripping with irony than religious vilification. Where Egan was weak was in not recognising that political assassination is not confined to Muslim Pakistan but has also been part of Hindu India -- the Gandhi family -- not forgetting the greatest republic and democracy of them all, the Christian US and the Kennedy family.

C. Lendon

O'Connor, ACT

MOHAMMAD Hammoud asks on what grounds The Australian can justify publishing Graham Egan's "insulting opinion" about Muslims in relation to the death of Benazir Bhutto. I suggest that it goes to the heart of free speech, which is championed in Western society but denied in many Islamic countries.

Randal Williams

Burnside, SA

WHILE I do not support his regime, it should be remembered by those who argue that Pakistan's President Pervez Musharraf did not do enough to protect Benazir Bhutto and was therefore in some way responsible for her assassination, that he himself has been the target of at least three assassination attempts in recent times, one involving an attack on his military convoy in the same general area where Benazir Bhutto met her death. To accuse the nation's leader of direct involvement in her assassination is outrageous.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Gary Sheehan

Subiaco, WA

PERVEZ Musharraf seems to have as many medals on his chest as the late Idi Amin of Uganda.

Judith McPherson

Toowoomba, Qld

----- Demands for an apology from Hicks are ironic -----

THERE is some irony in the demands for David Hicks to apologise for his support of the Taliban ('`Hicks family row on kids' TV deal'', 31/12). The CIA and various US administrations nurtured, financed and armed the Taliban and foreign jihadis in Afghanistan for at least 15 years, yet this is conveniently forgotten. Hicks's contribution to the Taliban in comparison was infinitesimal and, in any case, he was jailed for six years' hard time for whatever he may or may not have done.

Neil Cheshire

Encounter Bay, SA

SO the same people who, in government, made it perfectly clear that you can't apologise for something you haven't personally done, now want David Hicks to apologise to the families of fallen Australian soldiers in Afghanistan. If the federal Opposition justice spokesman Christopher Pyne seriously believes that Hicks is in any sort of position to apologise on behalf of al-Qa'ida or the Taliban, then I for one am glad that these clowns are no longer running Australia's commitment to the war on terror.

Dave Liberts

Morphett Vale, SA

THE defence of David Hicks by Natasha Stott Despoja (Cut&Paste, 31/12) becomes even more staggering after the assassination of Benazir Bhutto. Whatever the former Pakistani prime minister's faults, she was the first ***female*** leader of a Muslim country and represented at least some form of democracy to the people of Pakistan. It is likely that she was killed by people who held the same ideology and received the same training as Hicks. The irony of Stott Despoja's comments only days after Bhutto's death illustrate the irrelevancy of the ``Australian Democrats''.

Simon Inglis

Cannington, WA

IF, as reported, even David Hicks's former wife is already employing a celebrity agent to strike lucrative media deals, can the day be far off that splinters of the true cross on which Hicks was crucified are offered beautifully framed in an expensive limited edition?

Andrew Wyminga

Bicheno, Tas

THOMAS Watson (Letters, 31/12), you are not listening. There are no David Hicks supporters other than the obvious and reasonable exception of family and friends. Those who rallied to Hicks's side did so not out of support for the individual but because an injustice had been done and because the then government failed to fulfil its obligation to right that wrong.

If and when Hicks gets to tell his side of the story, then and only then will the issue be about him. At that time, I'll be more than happy to agree with those who demonise him, if that's where the facts point. And should an apology be

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

due, then I will certainly support calls for it. But until then, I will ignore every feeble attempt to sidetrack this from the real issue, which is the right of every individual to decent treatment and a fair trial.

Stephen Morgan

Runcorn, Qld

----- Cricketers should stay home -----

HOW can Cricket Australia believe that a game is more important than the safety of those involved? I have never understood its attitude to Australia touring countries in political turmoil such as Zimbabwe. Now, with the extremely volatile situation in Pakistan, the issue is even clearer. We should not tour Pakistan under any circumstances, and more power to Andrew Symonds for stating his unwillingness to go.

Pip Denton

Guildford, NSW

----- When diplomacy fails -----

WITH all due respect to Michael Costello ("Review and rescind costly defence errors", Opinion, 28/12), whose writings I usually admire, his notion of the task of national security as providing some sort of Australian-controlled moat is too simplistic. He forgets that the much touted (by the Defence of Australia gang) sea-air gap contains a lot of land. He also ignores the reality that one of Australia's outstanding strategic interests is the defence of our overseas trade (and therefore our national and personal wealth) so that our frontiers -- to some degree -- lie close to such places as Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and China.

Costello is dismissive of the military leadership when it comes to advising on equipment purchases. This is a little like the householder telling the plumber how to do his job rather than what he wants done. Worse, in his dismissal of the new Abrams tanks as an optional extra, try telling that to the digger confined to his hole in the ground for a lack of firepower and protection.

It is disappointing that Costello should be continuing the fight launched by his former colleagues in Foreign Affairs to exclude the military from strategic policy-making. This is a whole-of-government task in which the military must have a say because they will have to do the dirty work when diplomacy fails.

Michael O'Connor

East Doncaster, Vic

----- Another case of me-tooism -----

BEFORE Labor rewrites history on the next generation of submarines for Australia ("Defence to reach new depths", Inquirer, 29-30/12), the record should be made clear.

As defence minister, in my 2006 address to the Submarine Institute of Australia, I announced that there would be a replacement for the Collins Class submarines, with introduction planned for 2025. The necessary funding for the early scoping for the submarines would be included in the 2008-18 Defence Capability Plan.

To suggest that Joel Fitzgibbon has discovered and announced the next generation of submarines is another example of Labor's me-tooism, albeit delayed. Should Labor win the seven elections that will occur between now and when the next generation of submarines go in the water, let us hope that the construction of these is better managed than the construction of the Collins.

Brendan Nelson

Federal Opposition Leader

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

----- Woeful water planning -----

KEN Matthews has got it right ("Water boss gives the states a spray", 31/12). State governments have struggled with water planning for the past 30 years as both sides play the simple game of wedge politics. The deficiencies of successive state governments unfortunately don't become evident until the wheels fall off and the public become much more informed as a result.

The reality is that water planning should extend beyond electoral cycles. Instead, promises of new storage facilities, desalination plants or waste-water recycling schemes are thrown around to differentiate political parties. For this chronic inertia by state governments on water management to increase to glacial speed, members of the public will need to be more discerning when next they vote.

Murray Smith

CEO, Coleambally Irrigation

Co-Operative Ltd

----- Whither our universities? -----

DO we need better micromanagement or a revolution to improve the performance of Australia's universities ("Universities compete with world's best", Editorial 28/12)? Given that the prime function of a university is to provide the education and research underpinning our social and economic development, an answer cannot be given without critically examining the effectiveness and efficiency of the universities and other institutions providing tertiary education and/or research services to our society. The following questions might help us decide whether to tinker with the current system or begin to implement more massive structural changes.

\* Are our tertiary education/research institutes sufficiently responsive to the needs of the communities they service?

\* Can efficiencies be obtained by integrating a community's tertiary education and research needs within a single institution such as a university?

\* Would the public funds allocated to research-only institutions such as CSIRO be more effectively spent by universities and in particular improve the capacity of the latter to service society?

I suspect that while our present system has served us well, new challenges, such as the effects of climate change and globalisation, demand a fresh look at the organisation and funding of teaching and research institutions. Their effective and efficient operation is vital if we are to maintain our position in an increasingly competitive world.

Geoff Stocker

Malanda, Qld

----- FIRST BYTE -----

[letters@theaustralian.com.au](mailto:letters@theaustralian.com.au)

WHAT a refreshing change it would be if The Australian's Australian of the Year for 2007 was not a sportsman, a politician ("PM a worthy contender", 31/12) or indeed anyone who is paid to do the work for which they are recognised. Surely we can honour someone who makes a voluntary contribution of great worth?

D.L. Thomas

Torrens Park, SA

The Australian of the Year for 2007 should be Bernie Banton. He paid the ultimate sacrifice in his advocacy for fellow asbestos victims.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Robert Pallister

Punchbowl, NSW

Another year has passed and still no sign of Osama bin Laden. Doubts about any real desire for his capture would now exceed those of his continuing survival. Is this some kind of sick joke?

Max Vallis

Wembley, WA

Please, Des Hoad (First Byte, 31/12), could you enlarge that nursing home to include Tony Greig, Ian Chapell and Bill Lawry? Perhaps we cricket lovers could then de-activate the mute button on our TV sets while watching the coverage.

Richard Moss

Chisholm, ACT

The question that needs answering is how come so many twits want to write about Bob Dylan ('`Betraying Bob: he was there, but now he's gone", 31/12)? The various poses and moments in his career are interesting, like the shades of rust on a long-deserted tractor are interesting. That is, the tractor don't mean nuthin'.

Keith Russell

Mayfield West, NSW

Rowing from Auckland to Sydney puts a new meaning to the term ``steerage class" ('`Aussies row to trans-Tasman glory", 31/12).

David Crommelin

Strathfield, NSW

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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## *Inside The Times: July 25, 2008*

The New York Times

July 25, 2008 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Metropolitan Desk; Pg. 2

**Length:** 2794 words

### **Body**

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International

AFTER KARADZIC'S CAPTURE,

Pain Endures in Bosnia

The West celebrated the capture this week of Radovan Karadzic, the wartime leader of the Bosnian Serbs accused of masterminding the worst massacre since World War II. But in Srebrenica, Bosnia, where the massacre took place, locals said they had little faith in a legal process undertaken by the United Nations tribunal in the Hague 13 years after the hunt for Mr. Karadzic began. PAGE A6

35 DEAD IN SOUTHERN AFGHANISTAN

Fierce fighting broke out in southern Afghanistan when scores of Taliban insurgents attacked an Afghan Army convoy on the main highway south of the capital. Afghan officials said that the Taliban were beaten back by soldiers and police officers, that 35 insurgents were killed, including several foreign fighters, and that five were captured. PAGE A12

8 DIE IN IRAQ BOMBING

A huge explosion on one of the main thoroughfares in Baquba, Iraq, killed a pro-American Sunni militia leader, a police captain, a local politician and five other people. The blast was at first believed to be a car bomb, but evidence later discovered suggested that a **female** suicide bomber might have been responsible. It would be at least the 16th time that **women** have donned bombs and exploded themselves in Diyala Province since last year. PAGE A2

MOSLEY WINS SUIT AGAINST TABLOID

A judge in London ruled that a British tabloid newspaper breached the privacy of Max Mosley, the overseer of grand prix motor racing, when it published a story in March claiming he had participated in a sadomasochistic "orgy" with a Nazi theme. Mr. Mosley was awarded damages equivalent to about \$120,000, as well as legal costs in his suit against the newspaper, The News of the World. PAGE A6

NEW MUSEUM TO OPEN IN GAZA

Inside The Times: July 25, 2008

The first museum of archaeology in Gaza will open this summer, showing how this increasingly poor and isolated coastal strip, ruled by the Islamists of Hamas, was once a thriving multicultural crossroad. While the display might be pretty standard stuff shown most anywhere else -- arrowheads, Roman anchors, Bronze Age vases and Byzantine columns -- life is now so gray in Gaza that the museum, with its glimpses of a rich, outward-looking history, seems somehow dazzling. PAGE A8

#### AN AEROBIC TREND IN CHINA

Mostly considered the domain of strippers in the United States, pole dancing is China's newest, and most controversial, fitness activity. Pole dancing -- but with clothes kept on -- is nudging its way into the mainstream Chinese exercise market, with increasing numbers of gyms and dance schools offering classes. PAGE A13

#### NATIONAL

##### COMMITTEE ON SHRINERS CHARITIES

###### Finds Internal Ethics Violations

The findings of an investigative committee established by the joint boards of the Shriners of North America fraternal organization and the Shriners Hospitals for Children offer a glimpse into the inner workings of what is the nation's wealthiest charity. They also suggest that questionable financial dealings identified at local Shrine temples may also plague the national organization. The committee found that the chairman of the Shriners Hospitals board of trustees and another board member violated the organizations' conflict-of-interest policy as well as their ethics code. PAGE A14

##### WHY THE NORTHERN LIGHTS DANCE

Researchers working on a NASA mission to understand the interplay of magnetic fields and charged particles blown outward from the sun have identified the trigger for the colorful electrical storms in the polar regions. They hope this is a step in developing reliable forecasts of geomagnetic storms that can disrupt satellites in orbit and electric power grids on the ground. PAGE A14

##### DETAILS ON STATUS OF C.I.A. METHODS

When Central Intelligence Agency interrogators used waterboarding and other harsh techniques on Qaeda suspects, agency rules required records of each method used, its duration and the names of everyone present, according to heavily redacted government documents obtained by the American Civil Liberties Union. PAGE A19

##### MCCAIN'S VERY LONG WEEK

While Senator Barack Obama met one-on-one with Israeli and Palestinian leaders, Senator John McCain was in a Pennsylvania supermarket awkwardly shopping with a mother and her son. Mr. McCain's plans to steal the spotlight from his Democratic rival by visiting an oil drilling platform were then upended by Hurricane Dolly. For the presumptive Republican nominee, there's always next week. PAGE A18

##### ONLINE GIVING SYSTEM GOES GREEN

GlobalGiving, the online system through which donors can give money to support international charitable projects, is going green. The group will introduce a new Web site, GlobalGiving Green, listing 25 projects that it has determined entail minimal greenhouse gas emissions. PAGE A15

##### OHIO THIEF IS SENTENCED

The man who masterminded what is believed to be one of the largest thefts in Ohio history, Roger L. Dillon, was sentenced to eight years in prison. Mr. Dillon, 23, said he carried out the theft of more than \$8 million from the vault of the armored car company where he worked because he felt frustrated by a difficult upbringing. PAGE A16

Inside The Times: July 25, 2008

Citizen Journalist Project a Year Old A18

## BUSINESS

## STREAK OVER AS SHARES PLUNGE

In Dow's Worst Loss in a Month

Investors who had been thinking the worst might be over for bank stocks reached a slightly different conclusion Thursday: take the money and run. Financial shares plunged, snapping a six-session winning streak, as a dash for profits dragged the Dow Jones industrials down 283 points, its worst loss in a month. PAGE C1

## A SPLIT OVER MENTHOLS

Free cigarettes are no longer handed out at Congressional Black Caucus functions. And it has been years since anyone referred to Edolphus Towns, Democrat of Brooklyn, as the "Marlboro Man" for his campaign contributions from the tobacco industry. But the Congressional Black Caucus has not severed its financial ties to big tobacco. And that can complicate matters when the political discussion involves smoking's impact on African-Americans. PAGE C1

## WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU

If you're ignoring the housing bailout bill because you think it only benefits troubled homeowners, you may miss out on a windfall. The bill does offer incentives to overextended borrowers and mortgage lenders. But it also includes a host of handouts to first-time home buyers, longtime homeowners, returning veterans and senior citizens seeking to tap their home equity. PAGE C1

## UBS ACCUSED OF FRAUD

The attorney general of New York accused UBS of consumer and securities fraud, saying the bank misled investors when it sold them auction-rate securities last winter. Even as an executive at UBS called the market "a complete loser," the bank pitched the securities as short-term investments, according to the complaint. PAGE C7

Metro 'GOOD KID' GETS DAY IN COURT,

Again and Again

Yiskar Caceres had been arrested three times on cocaine charges and had pleaded guilty to each one. And that came after four arrests for marijuana. A judge gave Mr. Caceres, 19, yet another chance, but three months later, he was back in jail. Inside the thinking of a repeat offender. PAGE B1

## THEY GET NO RESPECT

At the end of one day, Agent Nathaniel W. O'Bleanis had been shoved, bitten on the arm and suffered a fractured knuckle. He had subdued a man with a headlock and brooked both a racial slur and a threat of being shot in the face. He is not a police officer. He is one of the city's 3,000 traffic agents, who this week achieved a level of respect many say was far too long coming: assaulting a traffic agent is now a felony. PAGE B1

Weekend

## THE DAY A DAREDEVIL

Danced Between the Towers

The feat sounds like something stolen out of the recently revived "Ocean's Eleven" franchise. For almost 45 minutes on the morning of Aug. 7, 1974, a man balanced himself in the sky over Lower Manhattan, tightrope walking on a metal cable strung between the two World Trade Center towers. A.O. Scott writes that the cinematic

Inside The Times: July 25, 2008

bravado of French daredevil Philippe Petit's stunt may be why James Marsh felt compelled to make "Man on Wire," a lovely, touching documentary. PAGE E1

#### TOO APT A NAME

The basic premise of "Pretty Ugly," a group exhibition split between Gavin Brown's Enterprise and the MacCarone Gallery in New York City, is that our ideas of beauty in art are changing. But we have known that for years, Holland Cotter writes. Pretty and ugly have been the poles of contemporary figure painting for ages now. Merged together, they turn into weird. And weirdness is what "Pretty Ugly" is about. PAGE E1

#### AN OLD BAG OF TRICKS FALLS FLAT

If there there is such a thing as reincarnation for movies, "Step Brothers," produced by Judd Apatow and Jimmy Miller, is an argument against the practice, Manohla Dargis writes. The film stars Will Ferrell and John C. Reilly, playing two slackers who become forced brothers and eventually turn friends. In a previous life this movie went by "Talladega Nights: The Ballad of Ricky Bobby," and was a lot funnier. PAGE E18

#### INSPIRED BY VIKINGS AND VOLCANOES

As New York heads into one of the muggiest, most unbearable stretches of summer, the art world is enjoying a blast of Nordic cool. "The New York City Waterfalls" by the Danish-Icelandic artist Olafur Eliasson is drawing crowds to the downtown waterfront, while "Arctic Hysteria," an exhibition of artists from Finland, is at P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center in Queens. A review by Karen Rosenberg. PAGE E2

#### Obituaries

##### EUGENE A. FOSTER, 81

A pathologist, he helped establish genetically the long liaison between Thomas Jefferson, the third president of the United States, and his slave mistress Sally Hemings. A long line of Jefferson historians had concluded that the affair was unthinkable. PAGE B7

##### RICHARD C. WADE, 87

An urban historian, he helped put cities on the map as an academic subject and advised Democratic candidates including Adlai Stevenson, Robert F. Kennedy and George McGovern. At the University of Chicago, his application of social-science techniques to the analysis of cities decisively influenced students like Kenneth T. Jackson and Howard P. Chudacoff. PAGE B7

#### Weekend

##### THE DAY A DAREDEVIL

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## ESCAPES

## DOING CHARLESTON

## On the Cheap

Its 19th-century elegance, palm-fringed seacoast setting and \$400-a-night hotel rooms notwithstanding, Charleston, S. C., can still be a destination for the budget-conscious. Among its pricey bed-and-breakfasts are hidden, affordable gems. And it helps that many of its most captivating attractions are essentially free: Beaches and an outstanding farmers' market are open to all. PAGE F1

## GETTING ALL OF IT THERE AND BACK

People who pack for trips involving air travel must be mindful of the added charges they might incur. But those who pack up every Friday night for the trip to the weekend home and repeat the process on Sunday for the trip back have their own issues. Many have adopted the rule for Noah's Ark: Two of everything. PAGE F1

## WHERE THE AIR IS THIN

Tourists and outdoorsy types are discovering the allure of Leadville, a postcard of a town a lung-searing 10,152 feet high in the Colorado Rockies. Mountain bikers and horseback riders hit the trails; hikers scale the 14,000-foot peaks that dominate the town's skyline; and anglers pull rainbows from high alpine lakes. "It's not just another slick pop-up ski town," said one resident who had relocated from Vail. PAGE F7

## Old Lyme, Pretty and Paintable F3

## SPORTS

Inside The Times: July 25, 2008

**BURYING THE PAST,****Patriots Focus on the Future**

Even after a devastating Super Bowl loss and a bruising off-season, the Patriots do not do public pathos. At the opening of their training camp, they began the new season by channeling the focus that got them through a spying scandal and put them on the verge of a perfect season. "Two words: What's next?" linebacker Tedy Bruschi said. PAGE D3

**IRAQI ATHLETES MAY SKIP OLYMPICS**

The International Olympic Committee said that it was "very unlikely" that Iraqi athletes would compete at the Beijing Games because the Iraqi government refused to reinstate the country's official Olympic committee in time to officially submit most of their names. The deadline to submit the names of competitors in all sports except track and field was Wednesday. PAGE D6

**WORLD CUP DISPUTE GOES TO COURT**

This spring, just seven weeks after becoming a citizen of Qatar, a Brazilian-born midfielder helped his adoptive nation defeat, and ultimately eliminate, Iraq in a World Cup qualifying match. Now his participation in that game continues to roil Iraq's national soccer federation because he was ineligible to play. The Iraqi federation, citing the rules of soccer's world governing body, believes Qatar should have to forfeit the game and Iraq should be allowed to advance in the tournament. PAGE D7

**Editorial****INJURED WARRIORS, EMPTY PROMISES**

The bad news about the Army's treatment of wounded soldiers keeps coming. The generals keep apologizing and insisting things are getting better, but they are not. PAGE A20

**PARTICULARLY BAD TIMING**

With the global economy slowing, prices soaring for oil and food and protectionist passions boiling up everywhere, it is an especially dangerous time to give up on international trade negotiations. PAGE A20

**SOME REALITY, PLEASE**

The Senate needs to interrupt its mud-wrestling over partisan placebos for the gas crisis and debate something real: emergency help for the nation's poorest families who face skyrocketing home heating costs this winter. PAGE A20

**Op-Ed****DAVID BROOKS**

Barack Obama used the word "walls" 16 times in his Berlin speech, and in 11 of those cases, he was talking about walls coming down. He has grown accustomed to putting on this sort of saccharine show, but his words drift far from reality. PAGE A21

**TO FIGHT POVERTY, TEAR DOWN HUD**

The Department of Housing and Urban Development has always tried to curb inequality, but is it just creating poverty elsewhere? In an Op-Ed article, Sudhir Venkatesh argues that we should dismantle the department and design a regional approach to revitalizing cities and suburbs. PAGE A21



Inside The Times: July 25, 2008

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***Guardian Weekly: Weekly review: Quiet war gets louder: Euan Ferguson returns to Sri Lanka to find conflict between Tamil rebels and government forces intensifying and the island in a state of fear***

Guardian Weekly

July 11, 2008 Friday

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## ***The*GuardianWeekly**

**Section:** Pg. 25

**Length:** 2427 words

**Byline:** Euan Ferguson

### **Body**

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Hard not to laugh when you're told about Claymore landmines near a military checkpoint, and learn that the Claymore, shaped like a fat, convex laptop with little legs to bury in the ground, has embossed writing on the business end that says: "Front towards Enemy." Even the arms industry has health and safety disclaimers. One of the most effective counters to their tripwires is Silly String, which lands on, and discloses, them, without detonation. So the deadly weasels of modern warfare come with safety warnings, and they're fought by streamers for kids' parties.

Not much laughter here otherwise. This is a foul place to die, this inner country. Food rots at an awful rate. Vines and creepers twist around any dead animal or abandoned house, pulling them back to an ancient green. Wooden shacks tick at night in the heat; and in the morning, thin, young, scared soldiers, many disastrously untrained, smell of fear as they check bags and trucks, and channel their panic to the innocents. "Their mothers will get 200,000 rupees [\$6,000] when they are killed," explains Pearl Thevanayagan, an exiled Tamil, "so it is, if you like, a good career move to join. At least for the family."

Sri Lanka is one of the kindest countries on earth. Even when I was here after the Boxing Day 2004 tsunami, I was struck by the welcome from those who had nothing, both the majority Sinhalese and the Tamils. And, still, you can head south from Colombo, take a taxi to the beaches and beauty of Galle.

And then you try to go north. Here are the landmines. Here is one of the world's most vicious little wars. Here are not only the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) but their offshoot, the Black Tigers, the suicide squads. Between 1980 and 2000, the Tigers carried out 168 suicide attacks on civilians and military targets, easily exceeding those in the same period by Hizbullah and **Hamas** combined. And now they're going for the softest targets of all, the impoverished working people of Sri Lanka. At the start of 2008 the government vowed to break the Tigers within a year, and there is now fear among travellers, in markets, at any public event.

For all those decades of suicide practice, you'd think they might be getting the hang of it. But in Colombo's Fort Railway Station, a few weeks before my visit, it all went wrong. A **female** bomber was spotted acting oddly by police - too many clothes for the cloying heat - and fled from the turnstile back into the station. By platform three she sat

Guardian Weekly: Weekly review: Quiet war gets louder: Euan Ferguson returns to Sri Lanka to find conflict between Tamil rebels and government forces intensifyi....

down and exploded and took 11 others with her. It is a miserable station, the ground dank with old fruit and poverty, but travel must go on. "I remember the smell, mainly," says Neel, who heard the explosion. "I couldn't get in to do anything, but I remember the smell from just outside." The dead included half a high school baseball team; 92 were injured.

A rank odour hangs over Mount Lavinia, a suburb south of the capital, when I get there just after hearing of a bus bomb. They're still mopping up. Outsiders are not welcomed by the authorities, but the shopkeepers are as friendly as most on this unhappy island. A passenger, Indrani Fernando, saw a suspicious bag left under a seat: "When no one claimed it I told the crew and shouted at people to get off." The bus halted in the middle of a junction and everyone filed off and began walking away, and the police were called. Twenty seconds after the driver had climbed off, the bomb exploded; 10 passersby were injured. Fernando later took a call from the president thanking her for her vigilance. I go to see the bus: no one would have survived.

Just before I arrived in Sri Lanka, another bus had been blown up outside Dambulla, a holy rest stop on the journey to the east. The 18 dead were almost all pilgrims, and included children. In the remote southern town of Buttala, rebels had recently failed to kill most of the passengers on a bus with a bomb; so they gunned down 32 passengers as they fled in flames. Desperate tactics have been adopted by the Tigers, but there are signs that by targeting civilians they are losing whatever sympathies they once had within the majority Sinhalese population.

In January the government ended a six-year official ceasefire that was a flimsy confection, but at least nominally policed by outside observers. The problem with Sri Lanka is the impossibility of access: it is a jungle out there. The government will give very little access north other than to carefully approved agencies, and it only allows them to see what it wants: journalists and aid workers have been targeted by both sides, and have disappeared.

For years there has been skirmishing, and quiet rearming, on both sides, and the gathering of funds, not least from London. An estimated 150,000 Tamils live in Britain, and there has long been fundraising there for the LTTE; the Sri Lankan government estimates \$140m is raised annually in Britain, despite the Tigers being a proscribed organisation.

There was a brief rapport, and even co-operation with the military, after the tsunami. But open war erupted this January. President Mahinda Rajapaksa was elected last year on a tough anti-Tiger ticket, and is winning more public sympathy, at home at least, than he had expected. (The western world still frowns on him, so the arms now come from China.) The UN's Norwegian observers, who'd been urging a political rather than military solution, have left in disgust. So the army, its numbers boosted to more than 150,000, now wages open war in the north. Even though government figures are spun - if you count the number of dead rebels claimed by its press releases, there would hardly be a Sri Lankan alive - and the press based in the capital are spoon-fed, everyone agrees there had been vital ground taken in the north-west, towards Mannar, where artillery battle still rages, and on the north-east coast. More than 1,500 rebels have died this year, according to the government, and although the Tigers dispute the figures they don't do so with much enthusiasm.

The rebels, pinned down in two territories, have taken to bombs on trains and on buses. In Colombo, around the presidential palace and the army HQ, the security is fierce. The main roads in the city begin to close shortly after sundown. Along the waterfront, just north from the tourist hotels, there is a sentry every 10 metres. Gunboats growl offshore. There are, away from the hotels, checkpoints everywhere. The rebels have had to go for soft targets.

We are stopped four times one night on the way to Colombo 13, a predominantly Tamil area. After a while it becomes a nuisance, although some police are more pleasant than others. Many are, like the Tamils, boys with guns. The Voeni Bar grows subtly more quiet on our entry. It's only after two hours, when most drinkers have got through a bottle of arrack, a fierce coconut liquor, that they will talk. However, "I have kept my mouth shut for 20 years," whispers one Tamil, "I'm not going to start talking now." This is the story of their lives: Tamils are wary of speaking either for or against the Tigers. Both the government and the Tigers are notorious for making people disappear. The UN working group on enforced and involuntary disappearances last year noted 317 in Sri Lanka, the highest number in the world. The security services deny involvement; the LTTE deny everything.

Guardian Weekly: Weekly review: Quiet war gets louder: Euan Ferguson returns to Sri Lanka to find conflict between Tamil rebels and government forces intensify....

Youngsters at the table are less reticent. "It is difficult to talk. Whatever you say, one side will see you as a traitor," says the most confident. "But I think things have changed, a little. A lot. LTTE used to have support from many people who were not Tamil. Here, in the cities, within the Sinhalese. These people are still our friends, my friends, we move freely. The man you are with . . ." He breaks off to take a cigarette from the taxi driver. "He is Sinhalese, and welcome. But most of them have fallen out with the LTTE now and do not like them. This business of bombing buses. It is the poorest people they get. It seems a mad thing to do."

We get stopped four more times on the way back to the hotel. It is good practice for the next day. The drive to Trincomalee, on the far east coast, should take about eight hours from Colombo, there and back. It takes 16. There are, at a rough count, 70 checkpoints. Each police or military commander is made to answer for any mistakes. Papers are checked four times, at heavy gunpoint. There are no computers, just pencils, and barked queries. There is much frustration. A quiet fear, beating away softly. The impenetrable nature of the forest beyond, the wilds of the Huluhu reserve, where elephants still roam - we almost hit two of them, grey boulders swinging suddenly into the jeep-lights - lasts for hundreds of miles north, to the Tamil enclaves. The early tracks have all been mined, by both sides; according to a couple of soldiers they have lost count of where they are, as have the rebels. And beyond that lie few villages, and days of walking, until the northern provinces. No one wants to go, apart from a party of Buddhist pilgrims, trying to get to Tamil territory to visit a shrine, a few weeks ago. They were bombed at Dambulla.

The soldiers are talkative. They say little you couldn't read in the Colombo papers: we are winning, Tigers are dying, it will be over by the end of the year. It's getting others to talk that is excruciating. "I know who you are, but I do not know who you may be talking to," says a young woman, watching a stall. "Trust is not good here. You say the wrong thing and the wrong side hears . . . children have disappeared. Families have disappeared. Both sides have had these tactics." In Trincomalee, once a coastal hideaway for tourists, few hotels are open, alcohol licences have been revoked, there are no tourists at all. Fort Frederick, a picturesque castle on the headland, has become once more a garrison. Troops march and strut and sweat and shout.

Back in Colombo, the Hilton is at 40% occupancy, the ritzier Galadari at 25%. Visitors still sun themselves, inured by money. Half a mile away, life for the Sinhalese has not been this hard for years. Inflation is racing. Rice has trebled in price within four weeks. Everywhere, checkpoints. Everywhere, signs of hapless poverty. Rubbish lies burning on every corner at night - most of it. Some is left to rot. Old women drag themselves through the detritus of markets, seeking scraps. There is an improbable number of men with one leg: landmines. It is into these poorest parts that the Tigers have taken their battle, and you can feel former sympathies evaporate.

It is not, I am told, by both moderate Tamils and worried Sinhalese, that it has been a mad cause. Tamils were mainly brought over from India by Britain, to help run the plantations in what was then Ceylon: they were schooled in governance, bookkeeping, administration, better than the locals. After independence, there was resentment from the Sinhalese majority, now at 80%. Tamils were effectively exiled to the north, around Jaffna, yet given little say in their own affairs - hence the liberation fight. And 80,000 dead, about 6,000 in the past two years; and today again, far to the north-west, another pitched battle is breaking out on the Mannar peninsula. The Tiger cadres are formed mainly of women and, reportedly, heavily defeated: there is scepticism at government reports, but not too much.

I meet Ajith Nivard Cabril, one of the president's closest advisers. He speaks of the many great plans for highways, docks, a revitalisation of the economy. He grows most passionate when talking of the Tigers. "You have to remember that the LTTE is the most ruthless terrorist organisation you can think of . . . And the LTTE is certainly not the Tamil people. The moderates do not have a voice. I want them to have that voice, as does the president, all of us." I ask him to explain the government's apparent promise to the world to resolve things politically while, in its own country, boasting daily of new victories and promising a rout within a year.

"The government is trying to work out a political solution with the Tamils, but not with the LTTE," Cabril says. "I was part of the 2006 delegation to talks in Geneva and met these people, heard what they had to say . . . It is a war on terror. The LTTE will have to change, stop, come to the table or . . . be reduced. They said for a long time this war was unwinnable. Well, we are winning now." I point out that the UN, Unicef and other human rights organisations

Guardian Weekly: Weekly review: Quiet war gets louder: Euan Ferguson returns to Sri Lanka to find conflict between Tamil rebels and government forces intensifyi....

have pointed at his government for illegal abductions, detentions, threats and violations. "In a warlike situation, mistakes are made."

It is an unhappy walk back to a tourist hotel. Soldiers bristle throughout this fortified zone. The streets are quiet but for the fires: a population cowed, by the threat from the north and the security measures that have kept the government and military safe but shifted the war to school sports teams, innocents on their way home with a repaired Hoover. It is a subtly changed country and a hardening one, rank with propaganda on both sides. But unless the Tigers radically change tactics soon they will have lost all support in the south of the country. "There has to, must be, international intervention," says Thevanayagan, the exiled Tamil. "But it has to be neutral. Not India. Our duty, as exiles, is to hold meetings, do anything, somehow, to simply tell the world this can't go on. I am a Tamil, yes, but look at what is happening to the whole country. The Sinhalese are not exactly having a good time."

The night before I fly out, I wander down to the beach at Colombo. The last time I was here, two days after the tsunami, crowds wandered by the sea every sunset, to look at the ocean. Some would climb up a disused watchtower: there was a feeling something could happen again. Today from the watchtower two mounted guns and a bristle of rifles point directly down into their own people, the enemy within. Within a couple of weeks of my departure, a suicide bomber exploded at the start of a marathon just outside Colombo, killing 13. Then a parcel was left on a bus departing a depot just south of the capital: the fireball killed 24 and injured scores. The local hospital had to close its doors. The bloodiest proper encounter, near the Tigers' Jaffna strongholds, claimed 52 rebels and 38 soldiers. Last month, the rebels made it into central Colombo, killing six with a bomb close to the Hilton. Bus bombs have gone off on the road to Kandy, which is tourist central. Things are coming closer, speeding up. Observer

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## *An African Journey*

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### **Body**

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Tampans Find Beauty, Turmoil On The Dark Continent

By WADE STEPHENS III

Special to the Tribune

For 30 days in January, Wade Stephens III and his 20-year-old daughter, Annie, traveled in North Africa and the Horn of Africa. They shared writing, audio and photography duties as they absorbed the culture conflicts in Egypt, Tunisia, the Sinai, Ethiopia and unfolding events in Gaza, Kenya and Somalia. Annie Stephens also did an independent study project for her college's international studies curriculum.

SOUTHERN SINAI - The whoosh that passed by was either the old man's gasp for air on the craggy goat trail to the top of Mount Sinai; a gust of wind whining across the granite crest of the mountain where the Lord talked to Moses; or the sound of a 7.6 mm round from the assault rifle of a Bedouin hashish smuggler. The January day had been that way.

"What am I going to tell mom?" asked the daughter on an independent study assignment from her Kentucky college.

"Not the truth!" said the old-man father, along to keep things safe.

It was the smugglers. There had been a shootout with Egyptian soldiers on patrol from their post at the roadblock on the new blacktop highway running westward from St. Catherine's monastery 50 miles to the Gulf of Suez.

The two American trekkers had taken the road to St. Catherine's at the base of the mountain where Moses spent 40 days and 40 nights talking with God about how to get his troubled tribe to the "land of milk and honey," as the Book of Exodus put it. Today it's the land of blood and gunpowder:

"Salah?" the old man from Tampa asked his Egyptian driver.

"Are you asking him how unsafe it is?" said the student in her steady voice.

"Salah?" the father asked again.

## An African Journey

"They say it is up to us. But if we go, the captain says we must go now, we must not use lights, we must not stop and we must go fast," Salah said. A crescent moon had risen. The Islamic New Year would begin as soon as the sun set - truly, two positive signs from the Prophet.

The father thought about the cautions as his daughter looked at him. Twilight was falling. The progressive colors of yellow to blue to purple to black cast shadows on the hills behind which the Bedouin lived in a no-man's land,

"Ok, Salah, go now!" he decided. The exhaust made a whooshing sound as the student and old man went past the soldiers dressed in black with their black automatic weapons slung at their sides.

### None Of The Soldiers Returned

ST. CATHERINE'S MONASTERY, Sinai - This is the land described in the Book of Exodus as "that great and terrible wilderness." It is 24,000 square miles of nothing in which the Israelites wandered a peninsula of red sand wadies, volcanic hills and pyrogenic mountains built by the Great Rift Valley. The tectonic twisting is still opening the bottom of the Red Sea. It continues to push Asia away from Africa, a detachment that makes Egypt the rare nation positioned on two continents. The amount of yearly rain would fill half a coffee cup.

It is a near-perfect isosceles triangle that since the Early Bronze Age Christian extremists, Jewish zealots and Muslim jihadists have invaded but not conquered. Only the Bedouin control things.

Last year 20 Egyptian soldiers went behind the hills that lined our highway. They were in pursuit of smugglers who drove their Toyota trucks with differentials that let Bedouins plow through the deep sand of the wadis as the wheels of Egyptian jeeps grind in up to their axels. Then the ambush began. In this fight, Egyptian searchers found 20 bodies.

It would be that type of trek for a month through Muslim and Christian countries across north and east Africa. There is a proxy war in Somalia where Ethiopian soldiers are backed by the United States to depose an Islamic government. Kenya is burning because a rigged election set amok ethnic cleansing in what was a model, prosperous nation. Palestinians in Gaza blew down a section of the metal wall that is their border with Egypt because Israeli forces had blocked food and energy supplies. Israel did not like the Kassam rockets launched into Israel by Hamas. We would see an antiquated synagogue on a Tunisian resort island where al-Qaida blew up 21 people to scare tourists, and kill infidel Jews. Bread riots began in Cairo streets as the start of world discontent and fear of rising food prices. Bread has tripled in cost in Egypt. Rice is up by 60 per cent. Corn is going to bio-fuels.

As this is read in May in Tampa, the World Bank, the African Union, the United Nations, the European Union, scores of think tanks and world media were warning that the precipitous rise in the cost of basic food threatens 60 countries and 60 million people. Good grief. Good God. Take the even or take the odd. Another big problem.

### Contrasts In The Land Of Lotus Eaters

JERBA - On this Tunisian island that Homer's Odyssey called the Land of the Lotus Eaters, the seducers of Ulysses' crew, a small portion of Jerba's Jewish community remains but no longer is a vital part of the island's ethnic makeup. But, for al-Qaida, any Jew is worth killing. Tunisian police were unable to detect Osama bin Laden's crew before it blew up a synagogue in 2002, killing 21. Not far from the house of worship is the village of Ajim, where the house of Obi-Wan Kenobi remains from the set of a Star Wars movie.

Other contrasts startle the trekkers. The trekker's Tunisian driver, Elyes, with black ponytail, sunglasses and Marlon Brando motorcycle jacket, wears a wedding ring to keep at bay the European women who, he says, want to pay his car fee with sex. But these European females are not the indigenous Berber women with saffron skin wrapped in cream-striped textiles topped with broad pale straw hats that walk gracefully through the heat and sparse vegetation past whitewashed domed buildings in town squares.

The student, alone in search of a sunset worthy of van Gogh, became misdirected among a maze of hotel back gates. A young French-speaking Arab handed over two dinars for a taxi, and in return wanted to sleep with her, she

## An African Journey

told her father. But she said she was Swedish and didn't speak French, so thanks and good-bye came out in English. Oops, but language usage was about to get funnier.

The pasta for dinner was imported from Italy but the shrimp was fresh from Jerba waters, served in a hotel owned by French investors in a liberal Arab country, all eaten while watching an American movie with Arabic subtitles and Pierce Brosnan's and Woody Harrelson's lips moving to English vowels but with Italian coming out.

"Good night," said the student, exhaling from the effort of a day that began 16 hours ago and hundreds of miles away.

The student had been on a tour of the ruins of Carthage, from which Hannibal and his elephants set out for the Swiss Alps and a successful invasion of Italy in 216 B.C. The old man and she had walked under observation but without challenge next to the white wall of the Ben Ali's presidential palace adjacent to the 2,000-year-old ruins of Roman baths. There was the Bardo Museum, where mosaics chart Tunisia's founding in 1100 B.C. by the great seafaring Phoenician explorers.

They were followed by invasions of Romans, Vandals, Byzantines, Arabs from the east in the 7th century bringing Islam and today's 98 percent Sunni Muslim population, Spanish Reconquistas, from Andalusia, Ottomans and, finally, a French intrusion in the 1880s to stem Italian influence.

This 3,000-year sequence illustrates the confrontation to indigenous cultures time and again from the expansionist forces of nationalism in pursuit of commerce and geopolitical advantage. (It was called "Manifest Destiny" in 19th-century America.)

They went quickly and easily between the sites traveling on the interconnected Metro Leger rail and bus lines that would make transit-confounded Tampa Mayor Pam Iorio want to invade, too. Then there was a one-hour flight to the place the U.S. Department of State's online travelers' advisory warned had been "recently the location of an al-Qaida bombing."

### Road To Awasa

AWASA, Ethiopia - You could play cards on top of the gharpha trees, but they were put to better use casting shade on the hot tan sand where the two American trekkers stood looking at 20 camel legs. A boy urchin had gathered stones from beside the modern highway they had taken in the five-hour, 150-mile drive south from Addis Ababa. He wore a burlap cloth waist to knee. His skin was thick with dust.

"What's that little boy doing?" asked the daughter. The boy was coming toward the father. He was figuring the dynamics of the carnage of the traffic accident that had killed five camels and demolished two Japanese-made freight trucks, the short, stubby, rough and tough warthog trucks that are the backbone of commerce here.

The poverty-stricken economy of Ethiopia is based on agriculture. Half of its Gross Domestic Product, 80 per cent of its exports and 80 per cent of its employment come from agriculture production. The trekkers and their driver, Addis, had driven past an estimated 650 pale green peaked greenhouses cheek-by-jowl filled with growing flowers. In an economic homage to world trade the enterprise is owned by Swiss investors, worked by Ethiopians and its product shipped to India, Italy and Saudi Arabia.

"I think he is throwing pebbles at me," said the old man, watching the child reaching back to deliver a second pitch. This boy descends from people who originated coffee, castor bean and grain sorghum where Man started his migration out of Africa.

"Yes," said Addis. He says "We move?" instead of "Want to leave?" A little circular scar marks his right cheek below his short black hair. He is thin with a happy face and is a Christian. He lives in a country where the CIA World Fact Book assesses the degree of risk of major infectious diseases as "very high".

"We move," Addis said. "He is unhappy you are taking pictures of the camels."



## An African Journey

And certainly none of the 11 vaccinations and immunizations would stop what now were rocks bouncing across the blacktop. Of 29 days in four African territories on many a dark walk on dusty roads and through dark alleys, only a banshee hotel worker in Cairo and a throng of Somalis in a tin-roofed refugee camp were as crazed as this small child who the Americans had offended as he sat under the gharpha trees with the dead camels.

Much friendlier was Kebru Omi, owner of the Lake Side Motel that sits a block from Lake Awasa, one in a series of deep cracks that opened and filled with water when the Great Rift Valley gave birth 8 million years ago. He is a Christian, too. He sits in his garden on a black bench atop green grass with a brown cat dragging its broken leg along the ground beneath the morning sun, and a chirping black and red bird on the tall white wall. Nearby a banner hung at a traffic circle next to an Orthodox church. The sign celebrated the New Millennium, an oddity explained that night by a man eating dinner at a nearby table: this country uses a calendar singular in the world: America's December 31, 1999 is Ethiopia's December 31, 2007.

"Oh, I'm a Hillary man," Omi said, prompted by the political talk he had been listening to on CNN just before he and the student walked outside to sit on the black garden bench. "You say you are from South Carolina. I know South Carolina. Yes, yes, there is about to be a quite important primary election there. This is how I know about where you come from."

"What goes on in America is important to us because of U.S. aid," he says. "America is our right hand now so we want to know what goes on there. The U.S. helps with AIDS medicine, which is cheap now, sometimes free. It was very disastrous but now people stay longer."

"Big American companies are good for the country because people get jobs and when American companies invest here other companies feel more comfortable and they will come to Ethiopia," Omi said, looking at his new black SUV parked in the shadows of the trees beside the lake. "Hillary's husband has everything to do with helping her. The economy was good when Clinton was president, so Ethiopians there sent back more money to feed their families."

"What about George Bush?" the student asked. "No more George Bush! No, oh, no, no more. With the Iraq war the economy in the U.S. goes down and Ethiopians working there don't send as much money back," Omi said with a tone.

In early May, the Gallup Poll declared President Bush had the highest disapproval rating of any modern president, even higher than when President Richard Nixon resigned. There was a camel accident on the road to Awasa, but in the garden with a white wall with a purring cat and a chirping bird beside the lake of the Great Rift Valley Omi sees an international train wreck if the upcoming election doesn't change things.

### What Exodus Said

The old man sat in the car driving beside the Red Sea back to Cairo reading passages from the Bible. In Exodus 34, Moses had gone to the top of the mountain in the third month after the flight from Egypt with two new tablets to receive the Ten Commandments again. The Lord appeared from his cloud and told Moses: "Take heed to thyself, least thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land goest, least it be for a snare in the midst of thee."

Wade Stephens III is a former newspaperman and is a Tampa mediator. Annie Stephens is a sophomore at Centre College in Kentucky, where she majors in Spanish and International Studies.

For more photos from the Stephens' odyssey, go to [TBO.com](http://TBO.com) and click "Opinion" in the dropdown menu under the "News" header in the navigation bar.

### Coming Tomorrow

Time in the Muslim quarter of Cairo, Egypt, leads to talks of Jimmy Carter, Osama bin Laden and proper etiquette in a mosque.

Photo credit: Photos by Annie and Wade Stephens III

## An African Journey

Photo: Wade Stephens III of Tampa and his daughter Annie, a college student in Kentucky, spent January trekking across north Africa.

Photo: (a young boy)

Photo credit: Photos by Annie and Wade Stephens III

Photo: Annie Stephens and her father visited many historic sites including St. Catherine's Monastery, the Bardo Museum and the ruins of Carthage, but few provided the view of Mount Sinai, where Moses may have received the Ten Commandments from God, according to biblical accounts.

Photo: (someone riding a camel)

Photo: American culture pops up throughout Africa, whether it's leftover sets from the "Star Wars" movies in Tunisia or clothing from U.S. universities at holiday celebrations in Awasa, Ethiopia.

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Australian (Australia)

October 29, 2007 Monday

All-round Country Edition

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### **Body**

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MOST TALKED ABOUT- WHOM DO YOU TRUST?

Even jobs for all can't compensate for conditions

IF WE needed any further evidence that John Howard is in a parallel universe, his campaign mantra of jobs, jobs, jobs provides it. ("PM picks jobs as rate hike looms", 27-28/10).

We read every day of labour and skills shortages; clearly anyone who wants a job can get one. Promises to create jobs make sense when unemployment is high, not when the market is crying out for workers.

But what sort of jobs is Mr. Howard offering? For voters, the jobs issue is to do with pay rates and conditions, the very things under threat from Work Choices. Peter Costello's recent hint that even the current inadequate unfair dismissal laws may be thrown out suggests life will be even tougher for workers under a Costello Government.

Isabelle Wharley

Willoughby, NSW

REGARDING the threat of increased wage inflation under Kevin Rudd's IR changes, I will believe Labor is serious about not letting this happen when Rudd/Julia Gillard/Wayne Swan use popular media forums to:

- a) Thank the unions for their long, expensive, very effective anti-Work Choices campaign, and union members for their financial contributions which made this campaign possible.
- b) Inform the unions and members that their wages will not be allowed to increase at a greater rate under Labor than they would under Work Choices.
- c) An apology probably wouldn't go astray.

N. Penny

Wulguru, Qld

WILL someone please ask Kevin Rudd the hard questions? We know he can look good, but so can a cardboard cutout. Is there any substance behind that ubiquitous grin? Are others watching his performance frustrated by his

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

replies to questions? He constantly reiterates areas in which he will improve government without ever mentioning how.

Meredyth Cilento

Willunga, SA

JOHN Howard's assurance this weekend that there would be no extension of Work Choices sounded a bit hollow. After all, he'll be stepping aside in 18 months or so, leaving Peter Costello in charge, and he's on record suggesting unfair dismissal laws should be removed altogether.

And of course Finance Minister Nick Minchin will still be around to make good on his words to the H.R. Nicholls Society last year, where he said the Coalition's IR agenda isn't finished.

Mira Toglin

Penrith South, NSW

THE Liberal Party advertisement promising low interest rates should be ignored because it ran for only two nights, according to the Prime Minister.

What's he got to say then about ads promising to introduce Work Choices, which did not run at all? If Mr Howard is foolish enough to try his "who do you trust?" campaign this time around, he is likely to hear voters roaring a resounding, "not you".

Jen Woodcombe

St Clair, NSW

KEVIN Rudd is presenting wonderful plans on how to run Australia. However, every businessman knows it is easy to have a plan but implementing plans need much more management skill.

Mr Rudd's majority of union heavies on his front bench have not demonstrated they have a high level of management skill and Mr Rudd cannot run Australia by himself.

Tom Wilcox

Kew, Victoria

AFTER all these years of not knowing how to differentiate between a core promise and a non-core promise, John Howard has finally given us a clue: any Howard assertion has to be advertised on television for more than two nights before there's a chance that it is true.

M. Pearce

Richmond, NSW

YES, Hilton Selvey, I remember the recession we had to have, the J-curve and the L-A-W tax cuts (First Byte, 27-28/10). I also remember John Howard's words in October 1996: "I inherited an economy in good shape, in some parts better than good."

Let us remember the full picture, not selective parts that suit political agendas.

B. Welch

Bridgeman Downs, Qld

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

JOHN Howard and Peter Costello claim there will be a wages push if their Work Choices legislation is wound back. Does this not admit implicitly that their draconian IR laws are specifically designed to force real wages down?

M.F. O'Dea

St Marys, SA

TRADE unionist Joe McDonald is out -- for now. He will be back the moment Kevin Rudd wins -- or loses -- the election.

K.M. Gunn

Lower Mitcham, SA

FIRST it was nurses, now it's teachers ("Teachers to strike for wages hike", 28-28/10). Is this a warning of the kind of rolling stoppages we can expect under wall-to-wall Labor?

Adam Johnston

Davidson, NSW

WELL, it's countdown time for the electrocution. Which socket will you put your finger in?

I think the big shock will come on the morning after, when we realise interest rates and inflation will be the same no matter who wins. The economy is global and local policies don't matter. The things we can change pertain to state powers over the spending of GST revenue which will rise as inflation rises -- this needs to go into our hospitals.

My finger's going into the green socket which exudes a warm, fuzzy glow.

Jane Clark

Alice Springs, NT

Why would Taliban bother about our election?

C. DICKER ("Timing of Taliban attacks on Diggers raises suspicions", Letters, 27-28/10) can relax. If the Israeli experience with Hamas and Islamic Jihad is any guide, terrorists prefer those who are seen to be tougher on terrorism. On several occasions they timed their bombings to assist the electoral prospect of the hard-line Likud. That leaves a reduced chance of any compromises which would entail loss of popular support. The Spanish experience was different because the conservative government was caught telling a whopper on the eve of the election.

The increase in Taliban activity is more likely to be seasonal, as in the past five years. It's a sort of a last hurrah before the bleak winter makes fighting difficult.

And I hear there is a shortage of magnifying glasses in Afghanistan, so there is not much chance they will be able to tell the difference between Labor and Liberal on this count.

Sol Salbe

Maidstone, Vic

JOHN Howard says Europe is not pulling its weight militarily in Afghanistan. The last time I checked, of the 714 battle deaths within the coalition, European forces had suffered 105 -- more than the British (82) and Canadian (71), and yes, Australian (3). But of course we Aussies are far better soldiers, aren't we?

Chris Moore

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Maylands, WA

Howard right on Kyoto

OUR Prime Minister was quite correct in not signing the Kyoto Protocol until the big three -- US, China and India -- had done so. These three would produce at least 50 per cent of the world's man-made carbon dioxide. Australia has 1 per cent of the world's carbon dioxide in total, and 0.1 per cent of the world-wide man-made carbon dioxide. If we were to reduce this by half, we would have saved 1/2000 of the world's man-made carbon dioxide. Is that worth millions of dollars, tripling our energy bills, ruining our motor industry and possibly some of our export industries? The last would also be paying at least twice the current price for power and losing their advantage over non-coal countries. ALP, please note.

David Davies

Pymble, NSW

JOHN Howard's position in not ratifying the Kyoto Protocol is illogical and dangerous. He says it is because he wants a global agreement that gets commitment from all major emitters. But refusing to ratify the protocol, the global agreement we have, sabotages this aim.

First, if Australia ratified it would make the US the only one not at the party, making it more difficult for it to shirk its international responsibilities. Second, ratifying would make it easier to get China and India to make commitments in the next negotiating round. They cite Australia's and the US's intransigence as the reason they will not commit.

As Environment Minister Malcolm Turnbull has argued, Australia has nothing to lose (we are going to meet our target anyway) and the global movement to tackle climate change has much to gain if we ratify. Refusing to do so shows how illogical and dangerous the Howard Government has become.

Natasha Hildebrand-Lockie

Fitzroy, Vic

What price growth?

I'M having a hard time comprehending how a model for economic growth that brings the world and society to the brink of annihilation can be described as a success.

This success, if that is what it is, has made water more scarce and costly, is pushing up the price of food because, in the absence of water to grow crops, supply cannot meet demand, and is driving up the price of power.

Political instability is another result because of the distorted distribution of wealth inherent in the Euro-American model in which persistent and increasing growth is the first principle. As a result, we all have to work harder so we can continue to consume more to feed the insatiable appetites of sound economic management.

While this wisdom endures, the major parties have no alternative but to agree on just about everything because growth guarantees revenue, and cash in the coffers is the lifeblood of their hollow promises. Neither has the courage to state the truth: the economy must adapt to the environment because the environment plainly cannot adapt to the economy. The current success is reliant on consuming the environment. What seems to be missing is acknowledgment that the environment is the economy.

Graham Pearcey

Red Hill, Qld

LIBERALS policy is to preserve the coal, uranium and aluminium industries at all cost, so we are doomed if Mr Howard is re-elected.

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Timothy Phillips

Coburg, Vic

GEORGE Pell states that we need to beware "radical environmentalists". I think we should be more concerned about people who speak to invisible friends.

Paul Stephens

Yamba, NSW

AT last -- someone speaking sense about population and climate change. Thank you Professor Short ("Professor warms to topic of effluent-spewing colony", The Australian, 26/10) for your blunt eloquence. In the climate-change debate, how often has anyone mentioned the fact that a large part of the problem is far too many humans consuming this planet in a suicidal bid for economic growth? Yes, Treasurer Peter Costello's stupid procreation policy is as short-sighted as the couples who succumb to the puny baby-bonus bribe. Economic growth, the mad mantra from both sides of politics, while tinkering with climate change, is merely postponing and enlarging the inevitable crisis of our survival on earth.

But then politicians love a crisis as it helps them shine as leaders to the new Jerusalem. Oh, for a politician with vision and leadership.

Nick Carroll

Valley View, SA

Cruel truth of jobless

I AM so sick of the lie of 3-5 per cent unemployment. Apart from the fact unemployment figures are spun beyond recognition, the truth is John Howard's cruel and draconian welfare-to-work policies are driving people who can't cope off welfare and into despair, to crime and to the charities.

I sat in the Centrelink office for an hour the other day while my daughter was berated by bureaucrats who had decided that she doesn't want to work, despite her putting in about 10 resumes a week and slogging all over town by bus to attend interviews.

While there, I watched the people come and go from the counter nearest my seat. Three women cried at the counter. The time before that, I saw a schizophrenic man I know crying at the counter because some bureaucrat had deemed him able to work 15 hours a week. The guy drools and talks to people who aren't there. Who is going to employ him?

Why should he have to go through the humiliation of rejection over and over? So that Mr Howard can use the vote-winning strategy of being tough on welfare recipients.

Christine Langtree

Wulguru, Qld

Let's talk about drugs

ISN'T it time to give Elka Graham a break? Her ill-considered revelation about drug-taking in swimming would be no surprise to many in the sport. She simply had the courage to say something about it.

She has always conducted herself as an excellent role model to young people and should be praised for bringing this issue to public prominence!

John Shailer

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

East Lindfield, NSW

Intervention questions valid

YOUR editorial condemning so-called Aboriginal elites for questioning the Government's NT intervention ("Let them eat rights", 26/10) flies in the face of what should be universal support for educated indigenous Australians participating in a debate on issues of vital concern to them.

Many Aboriginal people including some of those you have attacked, have called for attention on these issues over many years. They should not be abused because they, like us, have raised questions on aspects of the intervention that have no clear impact on child protection, such as land tenure and the permit system.

Reconciliation is impossible if we discourage open dialogue and refuse to countenance that there is a legitimate diversity of opinions across indigenous Australia as there is among white Australians. It's been said that the intervention should be a key issue for the election; your editorial is a reminder that an election campaign is not conducive to the kind of rational, open-minded discussion we desperately need in this area.

Jackie Huggins and Fred Chaney

Reconciliation Australia, Canberra, ACT

----- FIRST BYTE -----

[letters@theaustralian.com.au](mailto:letters@theaustralian.com.au)

It's not the swinging hammock Peter Costello has to worry about, M. Pearce (First Byte, 27/10), it's the swinging voter.

Colin Hugh Abbott

Jarrahdale, WA

Did Janette know about the Prime Minister's two-night stand during the 2004 election campaign?

Jonah Jones

Carlton, Vic

Now it's the interest rates overboard affair -- but again the PM knows nothing.

H. Richard Brinkman

Athelstone, SA

Hockey logic: if cabinet ministers were truly representative of the community they represent, less than 1 per cent of them would be lawyers. Vaile logic: if cabinet ministers were truly representative of their electorates, most of them would be sheep.

Keith Russell

Mayfield West, NSW

Indications are that the PM needs to take more radical measures to retain office, such as placing Kevin Rudd under house arrest.

M.F. Horton

Alice Springs, NT



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

With Peter Costello warning of the imminent collapse of the world economy, one is tempted to withdraw one's savings and put them under the bed, but that's exactly where those resurgent reds can get at them.

Sandra K. Eckersley

Marrickville, NSW

I agree with Malcolm Turnbull. It's every man for himself.

John Goldbaum

Potts Point, NSW

As the sun rises, people in Perth have 24 minutes less sleep-in time than those on the east coast. Now, thanks to daylight saving, we are dragged from our beds even earlier.

Gillian Lilleyman

Claremont, WA

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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## *Weird & wonderful*

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

March 27, 2008 Thursday

First Edition

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**Section:** THE SYDNEY MAGAZINE; Pg. 64

**Length:** 2779 words

**Byline:** Mark Dapin

### **Body**

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Fascinated by Freemasons? Keen on diseased organs? Mark Dapin views the quaint and the quirky at Sydney's smaller museums.

No Australian road trip would be complete without the traditional disappointment of turning up at a two-pub town to find the Big Thing is not particularly big and the small museum - with its meat safe, radiogram and Bakelite telephones - could easily be a lot smaller. But Sydney's specialist museums are a whole different billy of barra. The Museum of Freemasonry, the Harry Daly Museum of Anaesthesia, the Westpac Museum, the Sydney Bus and Truck Museum and the magnificent Museum of Human Disease each grant a peculiar and unexpected insight into Australian society.

The history of anaesthesiology is a particularly specialised interest, and I have one concern: will the exhibits send me to sleep?

The Harry Daly Museum of Anaesthesia in the Eastpoint Tower in Edgecliff sits among offices of pediatricians, gynaecologists, urologists, orthodontists and psychologists and the building directory reads like a spelling test. Curator Elizabeth Wall says most of the visitors are retired anaesthetists, although "we do get occasional visitors in ... and everyone asks, 'Do you have a hammer?' They think you just got bopped on the head."

So, does she have a hammer? "I don't have a hammer," she says.

Although surgery was possible in the days before anaesthesia, operations were terrifying and unimaginably painful. The first successful demonstration of ether in 1846 made it possible for patients to "submit to the knife that would otherwise have preferred death", in the words of Melbourne surgeon D.J. Thomas. Before ether, there had been experiments with nitrous oxide. Prior to that, some put their trust in mesmerism, which was "the idea that you could get hypnotised into a state where surgery was possible", says Wall. "And some people still believe that. If you're prone to being hypnotised ..." Her voice grows quieter "... some people still try and do that." Her volume lifts again. "We don't talk about that here."

The museum has many examples of ether vaporisers, including some Australian-made models. Their evolution saw them develop from something that looked like a carpenter's workbench via something more like a beer barrel to something close to a cappuccino-maker. What Wall describes as "some of our more interesting things" appear in the war-related cabinet. These include a vapouriser made from a spent artillery shell by an Australian soldier in World War I. Below the cases of vapourisers and a collection of dog-eared Gladstone bags, there are drawers

## Weird &amp; wonderful

devoted to progressions of needles and catheters, gauges and regulators. Each tray tells a pleasingly complete short story from the history of industrial design.

Dr Jeanette Thirlwell, the museum's honorary curator and executive editor of the *Journal of Anaesthesia and Intensive Care*, says retired anaesthetists like to keep in touch with one another. "We have loads of very pleasant memories and frightening stories to recall," she says.

Never mind all that. How does she feel about "the curative powers" of mesmerism? "I wouldn't put my faith in it at all," says Thirlwell. "Some people who are susceptible to hypnotism do actually succumb, as it were, and they do manage to have pain allayed by just believing. But a lot of people aren't susceptible to hypnotism. Objective people are not but certainly more ... hysterical people are."

For a movement that emerged from an ancient conspiracy to dominate the world, Freemasonry still has a surprising amount to learn about concealment. A secret society might be best advised not to build as its national headquarters the ugliest building in Sydney, for example. But as Chris Craven, the jaunty curator of the Museum of Freemasonry at the Sydney Masonic Centre, says with pride, the centre is "known as the finest example of Brutalistic architecture in the southern hemisphere" and cannot be altered because of its important place in the lightly admired Brutalist canon.

The brooding, concrete fortress attracted further attention when developers built a 25-storey tower on top of it, ensuring the building dominates its Castlereagh Street block at skyline as well as street level.

The Masonic Centre is a working building where several lodges hold their meetings. As well as lodge rooms and the museum, it contains a library, archives and several anterooms with Masonic displays. These include culinary-looking Masonic robes and beautiful painted tracing boards that carry images symbolising their philosophy. On one board, I notice a Hebrew inscription. Craven claims this is because early Freemasons built King Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem. Sure.

I adopt my best barristerial demeanour: Is it not true that, as the Covenant of the Palestinian militant group *Hamas* alleges, "The Freemasons, the Rotary and Lions Clubs ... work in the interest of Zionism ... [and are] behind the drug trade and alcoholism in all its kinds"?

"No," says Craven. "No, no, no, no." Is he certain about that? "Well, I'm pretty sure," he says, "because we have enough trouble getting enough members to our meetings, let alone controlling the world."

If Freemasonry is not a system bent on global domination, what is the point of wearing aprons? "Freemasonry is a system of morality that its members join because they wish to better themselves in some way," says Craven, patiently. "It has nothing to do with controlling anyone else." He argues that his organisation is one of the largest charitable institutions in NSW. "It's like people saying the CWA [Country *Women*'s Association] is going to take over the world by cornering the scone market," he says.

Craven says Freemasonry began as a way for stonemasons to codify their skills and protect their jobs but concedes the craft has long since slipped out of the hands of craftsmen. Of 26 Australian prime ministers, 10 have been Freemasons, including Edmund Barton, Robert Menzies, John McEwen and William McMahon. "They have been a mixture," says Craven, but it is a mixture of Protectionist, Country, National and Liberal that does not contain a single Labor man. The building has shrines to Freemasons such as Donald Bradman, who tried to control the world through cricket; Vic Patrick, who tried to control the world through boxing; and Billy Appieroth, who tried to control the world through inventing Aeroplane Jelly.

The museum boasts ceremonial swords, and stone quarried from King Solomon's Temple. The Holy Grail is not on display but I ask Craven if he has it stashed away somewhere. "I wish," he says. "We'd get a lot more tourists through." On a good week, 400 people might go through the museum. On a slow week, attendance figures might fall as low as 50.

## Weird &amp; wonderful

"We had a group from a historical society in here once and at the front of the lodge room there's a pedestal," says Craven. "One of them finally pointed it out to me and said, 'Is that where you sacrifice the virgins?' You'd be surprised at the number of people who think that Masons sacrifice and they're devil-worshippers."

Even in the face of my relentless interrogation, the most Craven will admit is that Freemasons sometimes help each other in business. OK then, what about the Lions Clubs? Are they out to control the world? "Well, heaven only knows," says Craven. "I was a member of Lions many years ago."

Aha!

John Ward from the Sydney Bus and Truck Museum, admits that "compared to the Powerhouse or the Australian Museum, it's a small museum in terms of members", but points out it has "a very large premises". Lodged in a former tram depot in Tempe, it is more than 30 times the size of the Museum of Anaesthesia, reflecting the different challenges involved in storing double-decker buses and Gladstone bags. The bus collection has vehicles dating back to the 1920s but there are only a handful of trucks. Ward explains this is because older trucks are quite small, and members can often garage them themselves. "Whereas buses are a bit more awkward to garage privately," he says, "and that's why we got these premises."

What? Are there people who collect buses? "You might say that, yes," says Ward. How big might a private collection be? "Probably, as a rule, only one or two vehicles, but there is a family group that we mix with that has a very large collection - somewhere around the far-flung western suburbs of Sydney - and I think they might have 100 or so.

I don't know why. [For] some collectors, it doesn't matter what you collect, but if you keep collecting you want more."

Only about 50-100 enthusiasts call in at the museum each week, many of them looking for a ride. Although the buses are not licensed to carry passengers commercially, visitors have the opportunity to travel on the double-deckers. "Children love them," says Ward, "especially younger children", and older people like to relive the journeys of their youth surrounded by advertisements for Ryvita, ("helps you win the inch war") and "the largest mid-week service in the world at St Stephen's Church".

The buses make a 20-minute run to Sydney International Airport, or to Newtown and back through Enmore and Marrickville. "We don't show destination signs on them when they go out," says Ward, "because people might think they can hail them down and travel on them."

The museum sometimes has the air of a glamourless streetscape by John Brack, but a mini-skirted mannequin in a 1970s conductress uniform recalls lost days of leeringly innocent sensuality.

Ward's favourite buses are Sydney AEC double-deckers from the 1930s-1950s. The most striking model is outfitted in military camouflage, with covered lights and windows so it could operate without being seen from the air. "During World War II, a large percentage of the fleet of Sydney buses was put into camouflage," explains Ward. "They thought they might have to use them as troop transport. We didn't have a very good rail system, and the railway to Darwin wasn't built then. They felt they might have to take troops in buses all that way. God knows how you'd get up in one of those things. At 30mph, it would've taken about three weeks to

get there, non-stop."

If the Sydney Bus and Truck Museum is a John Brack streetscape, then the Museum of Human Disease is a James Gleeson nightmare. It contains case upon case of human organs, preserved at the moment of death or at the instant they were removed after illness had destroyed their function. Some appear scorched or melted, others over-ripe or rotten, still others as if they had exploded or shrunk, sprouted or went to seed. They float in perfect stillness, preserved in Wentworth solution, alongside the occasional amputated hand, foot or nose.

The museum, which is at the University of NSW (UNSW), is fairly busy with students but, says its enthusiastic curator, Robert Lansdown, "Senior citizens are by far our most interesting visitors because not only can we actually

## Weird &amp; wonderful

show them the diseases but a lot of the time they've got first-hand experience of the symptoms. One of the most unusual specimens we have is a benign teratoma of the ovary. In that specimen, there is hair and tooth that has developed in the ovary and we've actually had a visitor that had that same condition."

Among the 3000 specimens on display, what is the most popular disease? "The things that we focus on and talk about a lot with people are the most common things," says Lansdown, "particularly cardiovascular disease and heart disease. But also anything else that's lifestyle-related, such as cirrhosis."

Eight thousand people a year come to view the collection of cysts, tumours and parasites, which includes about 30 different cancerous lungs. The majority are high-school groups but Probus clubs and other senior citizens' organisations regularly attend, too.

Lansdown stresses the need to be respectful of the specimens. "These are all real people," he says. The donors have to specifically donate their organs to UNSW for medical science, and the collection is becoming increasingly valuable since, with improvements in health care, many conditions are disappearing or never reach the extremes documented in the museum. Diphtheria, for instance, is almost eradicated, and tubercular lungs are mercifully rare. One emblematic exhibit shows a coal-black emphysemic miner's lung.

In the museum's computer room is a skeleton wearing a jaunty wig and a staring glass eye. Known as the Bionic Woman, she demonstrates the breadth of modern prosthetic devices and medical technology with her two hip replacements, knee prosthesis, colostomy bag, a pacemaker, plates in her bones, breast implants and artificial teeth. Retirees, apparently, stand around the figure and point to the devices keeping their own bodies going.

I notice the Bionic Woman is also listed as having an inflatable penile prosthesis. "She does," admits Lansdown. "It's fallen off at the moment."

The Westpac Museum in The Rocks does not charge an admission fee and therefore does not keep track of visitor numbers, but there are no customers while I am there, just as there were none at the Sydney Bus and Truck Museum, the Museum of Freemasonry or the Harry Daly Museum (which, to be fair, was not completely open). The museum, founded in 1988, was Westpac's bicentennial gift to the nation.

"What's in there?" asks a mate. "Tellers?" While there might not actually be a representative of that vanished breed of bank employee, there is a tableau of mannequins featuring a "lady typist", a branch manager and a ledger keeper, with his book, scroll and quill. Extensive banking memorabilia includes a Disney-series moneybox from the 1960s and a 19th-century typewriter. The "banking in the field" display case notes that travelling bush bankers carried miniature versions of their personal possessions, such as a portable ink well and field scales.

In the foyer of the museum is an ATM robot, which was used as an advertising prop when ATMs were introduced. Like most ATMs, it does not actually work.

The central problem for the Westpac Museum is, as curator Kerriane George admits, "Day-to-day banking in itself is fairly boring."

I didn't say it. "I didn't say that either," she says. "But, for museum purposes, it's hard to translate bank accounts and things like that into an exciting visual aspect. So you have to think of banking in other ways. Westpac has chosen to focus on its first employee, staff members and what an old branch may have looked like."

The display devoted to that first employee, Joseph Hyde Potts, is startling in its depth and scope. Potts joined the bank as a porter and servant in 1817 and retired 22 years later, having reached the position of accountant and married a **female** accountant. He spent several years sleeping in the bank's first branch and designed some of the bank's first notes. What on earth would Potts have thought of all the fuss?

"I don't know," says George. "The man worked for 17 years without a holiday. I would've thought he'd be quite proud."

## Weird &amp; wonderful

School groups, tourists and staff members visit the museum, says George. "Not so many Sydney staff would go there. Certainly country staff do it."

While banking may not be the most visually arresting occupation, banknotes are often objects of unexpected beauty. Westpac holds among its collection a turn-of-the-century note decorated with Chinese characters, to be used as currency by China's Gold Rush diaspora, an echo of the almost-forgotten early days of a racially mixed Australia.

I finish a fortnight's contemplation of Sydney's small museums with a new sense that the history of one thing is the history of everything. War taxed the creativity of anaesthetists and mechanics alike. Diseases have social causes: the miner's lung says as much about trade unionism as it does about biology. Multiculturalism has a past in banknotes. Freemasonry provides a link between several generations of conservative politicians. And godless Sydney, incredibly, was once home to the largest mid-week service in the world.

## Memory Lane

## Harry Daly Museum of Anaesthesia

Suite 603, Eastpoint Tower, 180 Ocean Street,

Edgecliff.

Phone: 9327 4022.

Open: Tuesday-Friday,

9am-5pm.

Admission: Free.

## Museum of Freemasonry

Level 3, 279 Castlereagh Street, city.

Phone: 9284 2872.

Open: Monday-Friday, 8.30am-4.30pm.

Admission: Free.

## Museum of Human Disease

UNSW School of Medical Sciences,

High Street, Randwick.

Phone: 9385 1522.

Open (by appointment): Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm.

Admission: \$11.

## Sydney Bus and Truck Museum

Old Tempe Tram Shed,

Gannon Street, Tempe.

Phone: 9558 1234.

Weird & wonderful

Open: Wednesday, Saturday, Sunday, 10am-3pm. Admission: \$10.

Westpac Museum

6-8 Playfair Street,

The Rocks.

Phone: 9763 5670.

Open: Monday-Friday,

9am-12pm; 1pm-4pm.

Admission: Free.

## Graphic

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FIVE PHOTOS: Harry Daly Museum of Anaesthesia Museum of Freemasonry Sydney Bus and Truck Museum  
Museum of Human Disease Westpac Museum Photography Dieu Tan

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## *Speaking of consensus*

The Jerusalem Post

May 7, 2008 Wednesday

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**Section:** FEATURES; Pg. 13

**Length:** 2863 words

**Byline:** DAVID HOROVITZ and REBECCA ANNA STOIL

**Highlight:** The public is fed up with narrow political bickering, says Knesset Speaker Dalia Itzik, lamenting the failure of her bid to get rival leaders to work together to confront Israel's key challenges. In a rare interview to mark Independence Day, she says she hopes for the country's sake that the latest accusations against the prime minister prove baseless, because 'I want a prime minister who can function. You can't function like this.'

## **Body**

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As we sit with Dalia Itzik in her Knesset Speaker's office on Sunday morning, her Kadima party leader, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, is opening the cabinet meeting a short walk away. A note summarizing what Olmert now says in response to the latest police investigation in which he is embroiled - his declaration that "wicked and malicious rumors" are sweeping the country, and that they will be laid to rest when the facts become clear - is quickly brought into Itzik's office. She reads it aloud, sorrowfully.

Unsurprisingly, Itzik has little to say about the specifics of the new Olmert crisis, other than that she hopes it will indeed prove baseless. But she has plenty to say about Olmert the prime minister, all of it positive. He doesn't overreact, she says. He knows how to make up his mind. He's got strong nerves. He can take criticism. He supports his ministers effectively.

Nonetheless, she says, the prime minister's job is nightmarish in the best of times - trying to protect the country from relentless external threats and enable it to flourish from within. Combine that with perennial coalition crises and, in Olmert's case, a seemingly endless succession of police probes, and you reach a situation in which, she says, it's almost impossible to function.

A former teacher who rose to the national stage via the Jerusalem City Council before entering the Knesset in 1992, Itzik, 55, has achieved much that does her credit in her two years as Knesset Speaker. She's introduced reforms designed to make ministers more accountable to parliament, and promoted greater accountability among Knesset members.

She's drastically reduced the amount of money allocated to special interest groups through the Arrangements Law, which had made such a mockery of the state budget in years past. She has refurbished the Knesset building and introduced a dress code that may help elevate its own sense of its status. And she's boosted her own popularity quite healthily in the process.

A poll this spring found Itzik to be by far the country's most popular ***female*** politician, with a satisfaction rating among prominent public figures bettered only by President Shimon Peres, Chief of General Staff Gabi Ashkenazi and Bank of Israel Governor Stanley Fischer.



## Speaking of consensus

In two key areas, however, Itzik has proven less successful, by her own admission. She says considerable headway has been made in the Knesset Constitution Committee headed by Menahem Ben-Sasson on an electoral process that would make Israel more governable. But there's been no substantive agreement among the parties, and there is no current prospect of a majority for the necessary radical change.

And her bid to encourage the establishment of a national unity government has foundered, although she insists there was a brief moment not all that long ago when she thought it might succeed. Her conviction, she says, is that Israel's most senior rival political leaders need to put aside their differences for an agreed period, and together grapple with the key challenges facing Israel - notably the parameters for an accord with the Palestinians, and a strategy for ensuring that Iran does not go nuclear. Now any notion of a "prime minister's club" heading a cross-party coalition, she acknowledges, has likely been dealt a death-blow by the new Olmert probe, since rival politicians see ever-less reason to enter into a partnership with a man they soon hope to replace.

In a relatively rare interview ahead of Independence Day, Itzik is healthily realistic about Israel. As the sixth of eight children of Iraqi immigrants, married with three children to the emphatically non-political Danny, she highlights the way her mother "fought like a lioness" to ensure a good education and says she sees her own and her siblings' absorption and success here as reflective of Israel's rise and the potential it offers. But she also expresses concerns over what she says are Israelis' intolerance of each other, and the worrying trend to violence in Israeli society.

Understandably, given the timing of our interview, she is also particularly passionate in criticizing what she considers the over-ready resort to criminal investigation of public figures, arguing that their good name is too casually sacrificed in probes that frequently come to nothing. She insists that she doesn't want to see the police or the judiciary weakened, and that she acts to marginalize legislative attempts to achieve this.

But she does not even endorse some cases in which convictions were achieved, reminding us that she opposed the lifting of Naomi Blumenthal's parliamentary immunity which led to the Likud MK's conviction for corruption. As for Kadima colleague Haim Ramon's conviction for the indecent assault of a young **female** soldier, Itzik asserts it should never have gone to court. He should, rather, have been subject merely to a disciplinary hearing for what she calls extremely inappropriate behavior.

Itzik also robustly defends the politician's right to change his or her mind, and suggests the public is sometimes short-sighted in regarding reassessment and compromise, centerpieces of politics, as opportunism and horse-trading. "I don't want to relinquish the Golan," she says at one point. "But if the Syrians agreed to lease it back to Israel for 30 years, and to stay out of Lebanon, and so on -- you can't say I won't move from positions."

Itzik is plainly reveling in the post of Speaker. She has given the Knesset greater centrality in the visits of leading overseas politicians, the vast majority of whom now make a call on the Speaker and the House part of their visit. And she has been prepared to drastically reduce her partisan political activity in order to invest the role with what she considers the necessary "above the fray" sensibility. The circumstances may have been dismal, but she also clearly flourished in the six-month period during which she served as acting president in the ignominious twilight of Moshe Katsav's tenure.

Itzik did not mention that our interview happened to take place on the second anniversary of her taking office as Speaker. She did tell us, twice, unbidden, in the course of a near two-hour conversation that she has absolutely no desire ever to become prime minister. But whenever her time in the Speaker's office is over, she certainly isn't ruling herself out from other senior positions.

Excerpts:

What's your sense of the nation at 60?

If the founders were asked whether they approved of how the state had turned out, they'd say there's no country like this in the world, trailblazing in every field - technology, medicine, agriculture. But they'd lament the intolerance of our society, particularly given the need for internal unity to meet external threats.

## Speaking of consensus

We have very unsympathetic neighbors. We've made peace with two of them. Cold and frustrating peace, though I'd sign agreements like that with all of [our neighbors] if I could.

But the Palestinians today are in a whole other place. There are two entities [Fatah and Hamas], and it is starting to become clear which of the two is prevailing. There is no reason for them to fire Kassams [from Gaza]. If they were wise, they'd not have fired and so encouraged us [to relinquish more territory]. But Israelis ask, "Why should we pull out [of further territory], if we'll be fired on?" Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said this week that the Arabs have to promise security. Israelis say, "Ok, so they promise. Can we trust that promise?"

I wouldn't switch places with the prime minister for a second. There's no country harder than this to run. We're fighting for our survival. It's not a cliché. It's the reality.

Given the latest investigation of the prime minister, is someone going to have to switch places with him soon?

I don't know the details of the case. I don't want to know. But I greatly want to believe that, as in other cases, nothing will come of it. I want this first of all for Israel and the people of Israel. I want a prime minister who can function. You can't function like this.

You've been urging the establishment of a national unity government, unsuccessfully, to better grapple with the external threats.

The egos need to be set aside.

I take [Iran's President] Ahmadinejad totally seriously. I'm not convinced anyone else will do the job [of thwarting Iran] for us. That requires serious thinking. The most experienced people need to put their heads together.

I initiated meetings and it nearly happened a few months ago. I thought the prime minister needed to call for a national unity government. It is his responsibility, and the opposition's too. The opposition did demonstrate considerable responsibility during the [Second Lebanon] War. We're great when there's an immediate threat. There's no one like us in an emergency. But we shouldn't only be united during wars.

Isn't the call for a unity government an expression of no confidence in the prime minister?

It's not a question of absent faith in this or any other prime minister. The instability of the political system is shocking. The system is impossible. But we can't change it because there's no majority to do so. So I wanted a government that would agree on a date down the road for elections and in the meantime take on the key two or three issues.

Essentially the Palestinian issue and Iran?

Yes, and maybe Syria. There may be a not bad chance for [progress with Syria]. But that also involves risks. They need to be carefully weighed. If the prime minister is spending all his time in interrogations and keeping his coalition safe from left and right, how can he run the business? Now the unity idea is hopeless, because there are people in the Knesset who think they'll be replacing the government at any moment. And there may be people in the coalition who say, "Why bring in the opposition?"

You argue that there aren't major differences among the main parties.

I saw [the Likud's Binyamin] Netanyahu return Hebron. He didn't have to meet with Arafat. [If he were prime minister], of course he'd have to talk [to the Palestinians]. The right wants peace too.

The public doesn't want to hear about narrow political rivalries. People say they're sick of it all. They're not stupid. We all want peace. The question is how we do it. We've never sat down [as a nation] and decided what borders we want. Is that reasonable?

## Speaking of consensus

In this job, you go to a lot of sad places. On Holocaust Remembrance Day and Memorial Day you go to the memorials and see the lined faces of the bereaved mothers. It heightens your sense of responsibility. The problems we face require more seriousness in leadership.

You've defended the prime minister, but the public does not see the war as having been successful, and it sees all these investigations against him.

A lot of mistakes were made in the war, but Hizbullah was very badly hurt. Modern warfare is fought in the media too, and there we failed terribly. If the public isn't appreciative that we kicked Hizbullah off the border, then that's our fault. If our enemies feel they can beat us, we're in trouble. If we feel that inside, that's also terrible.

This was a totally justified war. And when some of the Europeans lecture us about "proportionality," there's terrible hypocrisy. We weren't merely responding to a kidnapping of soldiers, but to a six-year build-up, under our noses, of astronomical quantities of weaponry intended to destroy us.

When the Winograd Committee speaks of the [way the] decision-making process [ought to work], it describes a utopian state. "The State of Winograd." It's not realistic.

But we do lack effective decision-making forums, and effective interface between the top military and political echelons. There is the security cabinet, and a smaller forum.

But is there a body that weighs long-term options?

The army has undergone a real process of reform. The Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee has more tools, more advisers. Look, these are some of the best people in Israel [at the top of Israeli politics]. Israel Prize winners, the ex-head of the Shin Bet, former chiefs of staff, ex-prime ministers. The political echelon realizes it needs to supervise the military more effectively.

We're dealing with increasingly sophisticated enemies, making increasingly sophisticated efforts to destroy us and to delegitimize us. The consequence in Europe

Europe was always hostile to Israel, and even a little traitorous. It always responded too little, too late. But today there are some very positive trends - the rise of Angela Merkel, Sarkozy, Berlusconi. Europe is starting to understand that our dispute with our enemies is not territorial. What territorial dispute did we have with Iraq, or with Lebanon, where we relinquished every inch? After the Madrid bombings, and the twin towers, and London, and Amman - where's the territorial dispute?

Not all Islam is terrorist. But all the terror is Islamic. The free world has to understand that this is not just Israel's problem. It's everyone's. Europe is starting to open its eyes.

In this region, Jordan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia - behind the scenes, they acknowledge that they are in the same boat.

I have no doubt that Israel's case is strong and just. The Israeli public has not moved to the right; it has become skeptical, because it tried and look what it got. It wants security guarantees. That's not an unjustified obsession. If you make peace with someone, you have to ensure that a day won't come when a crazy leader comes along and throws missiles at us. So if the prime minister does reach a deal with the Palestinians, he'll have a hard time convincing the public that it's more than a piece of paper.

Even so, the prime minister is managing the conflict by negotiating. Why do we need to be in dispute with moderate Palestinians? So he negotiates with them. I don't know what'll come out of it. But if we weren't negotiating, there'd be terrorism.

You speak about Ahmadinejad as though he's the threat, rather than representing a regime.

Individual leaders do make a difference. But no, he's not alone. There's a regime that supports him. And by the time the Iranian people stand up against him, it may be too late.

## Speaking of consensus

To date, Israel has taken action to prevent certain states attaining a nuclear capability. But I don't think [international pressure on Iran] is a lost cause. The sanctions are having an impact. They need to be intensified. Israel was reluctant to lead the struggle. But it has realized it needs to speak out loudly and clearly because we may be the ones who will pay the price.

How do you see Kadima's future?

It's unique for a party to arise one day and immediately be in power. So people want to knock it down. But the party is alive, vibrant, and these are people who left their political homes. When I went to see [Ariel] Sharon to tell him I'd decided to leave the Labor party, my legs were shaking.

I think Kadima has helped make the climate of political debate a little less fierce. It has defused some of the tribal aspect of Israeli politics. Some came to it from the left, some from the right, and that has shown that the political rifts aren't that wide.

Yes, Kadima is going through another crisis now, but I firmly believe that Israel needs a strong center party. I am sure it has a future.

So what of Labor?

Several parties will have to ask where this leaves them. That's why some parties have an interest in Kadima breaking up. Yet during this crisis, and previous crises, Kadima leaders haven't turned on the prime minister.

But the crises keep coming.

Not every matter should merit the resort to legal action. It's gotten out of hand. Eighty percent of the local council heads who were investigated have been cleared. The sense is being created that Israel is corrupt and that's not true. Believe me, the system is not corrupt. I was the trade minister, a deputy mayor, I allocated millions. Nobody tried to bribe me.

Look at the Ya'akov Edri case [involving allegations of breach of trust against the minister]. Huge headlines when it erupted. Then the case was closed with half a sentence. Everywhere [Edri] goes, people still say, "You're under investigation. He says "no, the case was closed." They say, "Oh, we didn't know that."

The media gets carried away, too. Editors will tell you it sells more papers.

No one can accuse me of being Avigdor Lieberman's biggest supporter. But 10 years under investigation. Is that reasonable?

Haim Ramon? This is the only place in the world where a government minister has been prosecuted for a kiss. Give me another example and I'll resign my post.

The public doesn't believe the media that much. But sadly, when it comes to politicians, it does believe. And [the sense of corruption] risks alienating people from politics, dissuading them from voting.

But I don't want to end an Independence Day interview on this note. I also don't want to claim that everything is great. There's plenty to make better. But I am a great believer in Israel. I'm proud to belong to this people. We do have so much more history than geography, but in this little geography we have so much talent. When you look back 60 years, we've made it, against all odds. We are truly a remarkable nation.

## Graphic

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## Speaking of consensus

2 photos: DALIA ITZIK: In this job, you go to a lot of sad places. On Holocaust Remembrance Day and on Memorial Day you go to the memorials and see the lined faces of the bereaved mothers. It heightens your sense of responsibility. The problems we face require more seriousness in leadership. THE ISRAELI public has not moved to the right; it has become skeptical, because it tried and look what it got... So if the prime minister does reach a deal with the Palestinians, he'll have a hard time convincing the public that it's more than a piece of paper. (Credit: Ariel Jerozolimski)

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## *The 1990s: The Illusion of Peace*

The Forward

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**Byline:**

Nahum Barnea is a senior political columnist with Yediot Aharonot, Israel's largest circulation daily newspaper.

### **Body**

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In the history of the State of Israel, the 1990s were the time of the Palestinians. The decade began with a Palestinian intifada and ended with a second Palestinian intifada, deadlier and more vicious than the first. Between the two waves of violence, Israel was swept like a roller coaster from the heights of euphoria to the depths of despair, from mania to depression, from ornate peace ceremonies on the White House lawn to mass terrorist attacks, from a dangerous rift between left and right to the murder of a prime minister.

During the 1990s the Palestinian problem was transformed from a theoretical, almost sterile discussion into an existential Israeli problem.

This statement calls for some clarification. In 1967, Israel defeated the armies of Egypt, Jordan and Syria. The Palestinians were not combatants; they raised white flags on the roofs of their houses and waited contritely for the conqueror.

With time, the notion took root in Israel that the Palestinians had no central role to play in the struggle over the future of the territories Israel had captured. They could hijack an airplane or plant a bomb on a downtown Jerusalem street, they could whip up crowds in Arab capitals and attract media attention, but they couldn't shake Israel's hold on the territories.

The debate within Israel over the future of the territories was considered an argument between Jews: The right called for settlement of every open spot in the West Bank and Gaza, while the left protested the evils of the occupation. The Palestinians were not a party to this debate.

Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians went out every day from their homes in the territories to the towns and villages of Israel to work as house cleaners, dishwashers, construction workers, auto mechanics and farm laborers. Many of them spent their nights in rented rooms in the poorer sections of Israel's main cities. In 1988, I was the editor of a weekly magazine with offices in a building in south Tel Aviv. One of the women who worked at the paper was caught in her car one night in an empty lot near the office. Dozens of Palestinians suddenly appeared out of nowhere, like a scene out of Tom Wolfe's *The Bonfire of the Vanities*. They were the residents of improvised shacks and abandoned buildings scattered on the lot whose existence had escaped our notice until that moment.

## The 1990s: The Illusion of Peace

The Yellow Wind, by Israeli author David Grossman, had appeared in our magazine in serialized form a year before Palestinian uprising began; it foretold the uprising's outbreak. The book became a bestseller. Responding to public demand, we hosted an evening in a Tel Aviv theater to acquaint our readers with Palestinians who appeared in the book. One of the guests was a Palestinian laborer who had been living for years under a stairwell in an affluent Tel Aviv apartment building. He described, in fluent Hebrew laced with sarcasm, his impressions of the neighbors who never noticed him. The audience members, most of them middle-class liberals, were shocked. They had been certain that the Palestinian problem was contained in the territories.

The 1990s exploded this unstable coexistence. The Palestinians won recognition, first as an enemy, then as a partner, then as a partner-cum-enemy and finally, in 2000, as a fully fledged enemy. The question of whether this was inescapable fate or human error, of who was to blame and why, remains an open wound in parts of Israeli society to this day. Elements on the right speak of the Oslo criminals, referring to the Rabin and Peres governments that served from 1992 to 1996. Elements on the left hurl back epithets, like murderers of peace, at the Netanyahu government, which served from 1996 to 1999.

Five prime ministers served in Israel during those years, far too many even in countries whose leaders must make decisions that are far less fateful. Each one embodied in his own way the dilemmas that wracked Israel throughout the decade.

Yitzhak Shamir was 75 in 1990. A radical and revolutionary in his youth, he had matured into a staunch conservative. The Jewish people, he used to say, has gone through enough revolutions for one generation. It has experienced the Holocaust, the establishment of Israel and all its wars. It doesn't need another revolution. For Shamir, this was not mere rhetoric but an entire worldview. He didn't have much in the way of charisma, but he did possess a strong character and nerves of steel, important qualities in a nation locked in war.

Early in 1990, Shimon Peres, Shamir's deputy in the national unity government, tried to unseat him in what Yitzhak Rabin called the stinking maneuver. The maneuver failed, and Shamir survived as prime minister in a narrow government of the right. Within months, Israel was caught in someone else's war. When the coalition of nations led by the United States went to war with Iraq in response to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, Saddam Hussein responded by firing his Scud missiles at Israel. The damage was minor, but the shock was enormous. For the first time since the 1948 War of Independence, the battlefield had moved to Israel's home front. Hundreds of thousands of Israelis fled their homes and moved to the periphery. The fear was great, and so was the frustration.

Elements in the defense establishment pressured Shamir to attack Iraq. He refused. He didn't believe that Israeli military engagement would reduce the missile threat. It would only hinder the Americans' conduct of their war against Iraq and bring them into confrontation with Israel afterward. And Shamir was right.

After the war, a victorious America sought to translate its gains in Iraq into leverage for an Israeli-Arab peace accord. Shamir didn't believe there was any possibility of an accord. More to the point, he didn't want to pay the price. He was forced into a confrontation with Secretary of State James Baker, a ruthlessly ambitious lawyer. Baker wanted to convene a Middle East peace conference, and the conference was indeed convened. Shamir was dragged there unwillingly.

The Madrid conference brought neither peace nor reconciliation. What it did provide was a stage for a propaganda war between Israel, represented by the brilliant rhetoric of Benjamin Netanyahu, and the Palestinians, represented no less brilliantly by Hanan Ashrawi. The main achievement of the Madrid conference was the fact that it took place.

In 1992, Shamir's Likud lost a parliamentary election. Rabin became prime minister. The Rabin of 1992 was in many ways the antithesis of his predecessor. He entered the job full of adrenalin, certain of his ability to bring about change in Israel's relations with the Arab world, within Israeli society and in the lives of individuals. When he promised just before the election to sign a peace treaty with an Arab party within 10 months, he was thinking of Syria. But Syria's president, Hafez al-Assad, hesitated and dragged his feet, and in the end he sank the negotiations. Rabin was left with no alternative but to reconsider the Palestinian front. In Washington, Madrid

## The 1990s: The Illusion of Peace

follow-up talks were under way between second-tier Israelis and Palestinians from the territories, the latter of whom were secretly taking orders from Yasser Arafat in Tunis.

The talks were going nowhere. Within Rabin's Labor Party, calls were mounting for Israel to recognize the Palestine Liberation Organization. Rabin feared a party mutiny, led from behind the scenes by his foreign minister and bitter rival, Peres.

In 1993, Rabin succumbed to the inevitable. He entered the Oslo process like a basketball player guarding his rear. But the process was stronger than he was. The huge enthusiasm it evoked around the world, the expectations it aroused in Israel, the Israeli domestic political battle that was verging on civil war—all these circumstances conspired to put him in a position that he had never occupied in his long career as a soldier and statesman: advocate and icon of peace.

Oslo was a failure. More precisely, perhaps, it was a heroic failure, a case of good intentions foiled by a bad reality. The matter of who was responsible for the failure remains an open question: whether there was an unbridgeable gap from the outset between the declared positions of the two sides and their actual intentions and behavior on the ground, whether the accord's phased steps toward peace doomed it to failure, whether the assassination of Rabin and the victory of the Likud party in 1996 killed any chance of

Terrorism robbed Israel of dreams it had nurtured since 1967.

peace or whether there never was any chance to begin with.

Oslo bore secondary fruits whose value must not be overlooked. Thanks to Oslo, Rabin was able in 1994 to sign a peace treaty with Jordan. The Arab world was opened for the first time to Israeli diplomats, entrepreneurs and tourists. Most of the Arab contacts eventually flickered or went underground, but the Arab boycott died and Israel found itself thrust all at once into the heart of the global economy. Within a matter of months, 120 multinational corporations entered into business deals with Israel.

Yasser Arafat returned to the territories in 1994 after 16 years' absence, and this time under Israeli auspices. When he crossed the border at Rafiah, his vehicle was carrying smuggled weapons. The Israelis, who had hoped to see in Arafat a Palestinian version of David Ben-Gurion—a politician who would know how to shape his powers as a leader into the responsible molds of statecraft—discovered to their alarm that he was still the same old Arafat.

And the Palestinians learned that Israel was still the same Israel. Even as it negotiated peace, it was stepping up the pace of settlement in the territories. The Israeli government was torn between conflicting political imperatives. The occupation was not over. In many senses it became less comfortable, mainly because of the security problems that resulted from the presence of armed PLO forces in Gaza and the West Bank.

Terrorism returned, first in small, manageable doses and then in gradually increasing waves. Rabin, who had believed that Arafat would halt terrorism if not out of concern for Israel then at least to secure his rule, discovered that Arafat was using terrorism for his own purposes. Rabin tried to hold the stick at both ends, to fight terrorism as though there were no Oslo and pursue Oslo as though there were no terrorism. Peres, his successor, tried to do the same thing. The results were frustrating.

The assassination of Rabin in November 1995 was every bit as traumatic as the assassination of John F. Kennedy in its day, if not more so. It called into question not just the stability of the Israeli state and the ability of Israeli society to settle its internal differences in a democratic fashion, but also the very idea of solidarity among Jews. There had been an unwritten compact among all the streams of Israeli politics, forged in the early years of the state and reinforced through years of common battles against external enemies, that however bitter the debates might become, assassination was beyond the pale.

Israel has no written constitution. What has preserved it as a genuine, vibrant democracy was respect for the rules of the game. Yigal Amir, Rabin's assassin, cast doubt on the viability of the rules of the game.



## The 1990s: The Illusion of Peace

Peres was the first to feel the impact of this new doubt. His brief term as prime minister just seven months was characterized mainly by paralysis. Peres came into the prime ministry after passing through every shade of Israeli opinion. He was in the right wing of the Labor Party at one time and the left wing at another. He was the patron of the settlements in the 1970s and the apostle of peace in the 1980s. For much of his life his path was marked by his feud with Rabin. Sometimes he was trying to hold Rabin back, at other times to drag Rabin after him. Now he had no Rabin to feud with. He had lost his way.

In May 1996, in Israel's first-ever direct elections for prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu emerged the victor. Three years after the Oslo Accords was signed, it was put to the test of facing a hostile Israeli government. The difference was in goals: Peres wanted to bring the process to a happy ending, to reach a peace agreement between the Israeli government and a Palestinian government. Netanyahu wanted to minimize the damage. If he could, he would have pressed the delete key and buried the agreement between the pages of history. But he was too weak and too eager to play the game successfully. At one of their meetings, Arafat offered him a cigar. Netanyahu accepted it eagerly and proceeded to sit with Arafat, puffing happily away as though it were a peace pipe.

Netanyahu survived just three years as prime minister. He didn't know how to meet the expectations of the right, nor to calm the traumas of the left. But his greatest difficulty was at the center of the political map: He couldn't offer Israelis consistent, trustworthy, visionary leadership. His tenure was marked by petty, embarrassing scandals; corruption within the ruling party, and tensions with the American administration. Fears of a renewed outbreak of Palestinian violence kept the public on edge.

In May 1999, Netanyahu was defeated by Ehud Barak. Barak saw himself as the true heir of Rabin. Both Rabin and Barak came to politics after brilliant military careers, scarred by wars, culminating in terms as military chief of staff a position of enormous prestige in Israel. Both men were born and raised in the bosom of the labor movement. Both were sworn hawks who knew the advantages and the limits of military power. Both of them believed that governing a country such as Israel is like riding a bicycle: If you don't keep moving forward, you'll fall. And both of them were intent on reaching a historic decision during their tenures; each of them believed that no one coming after him would be capable of reaching a peace agreement that could protect Israel's security for generations to come.

But Barak was less focused than Rabin, and less experienced. Like Rabin, he tried to reach an accord on the Syrian front, and failed. This time the responsibility for the failure did not fall solely on Assad's shoulders. Public opinion polls had convinced Barak that a majority of the Israeli public was opposed to a Syrian presence on the shores of Lake Kinneret. He balked at the price entailed in an agreement. When Assad was ready, Barak hesitated. When Barak was ready, Assad had taken sick. Assad devoted his final efforts to ensuring a smooth transfer of power to his son, Bashar.

During his election campaign, Barak promised to withdraw from Lebanon. Lacking a partner, he ordered a unilateral withdrawal. This was a brave decision. It removed a painful topic from Israel's public agenda. Unfortunately, it removed it only temporarily. The Lebanon problem would return at full force in the coming decade.

Barak tried to advance an agreement with the Palestinians, while at the same time authorizing the army to prepare secretly for a new Palestinian intifada. The military preparations undermined efforts to improve daily Palestinian living conditions in the territories and to progress toward an agreement.

In the end, Clinton and Barak dragged Arafat to Camp David for a summit billed as a last-ditch attempt at peace. The terms that Barak offered Arafat were generous, even bold when measured against the expectations of Israel public opinion: He offered at least 90% of the territory, including Arab neighborhoods in East Jerusalem. When Arafat refused to discuss details, Barak improved the offer. He behaved as though he had no red lines.

Barak thought he was operating in a win-win situation: If he returned from Camp David with a peace agreement, he won; if he returned with a failure for which Arafat alone was blamed, he still won. When it was over, though, he found he was in a lose-lose situation. He had lost his support on the Israeli left, and the right unleashed a torrent

## The 1990s: The Illusion of Peace

of hostility. Even worse, the breakdown at Camp David paved the way for a wave of terrorism the likes of which Israel had never known.

Palestinian terrorism had been a central factor in the victory of

Rabin over Shamir in 1992. Shamir had been perceived as helpless in the face of terrorist attacks and the rioting that followed. Terrorism also played a decisive role in the defeat of Peres in 1996 (or so Peres told me, with considerable justification), and terrorism led to the defeat of Barak and the victory of Ariel Sharon in 2001.

Terrorism robbed Israeli society of the dreams it had nurtured since 1967. The dream of a Greater Land of Israel, in which, as Jabotinsky once wrote the son of Araby, the son of the Nazarene and my own son will dwell in happy accord the dream, in other, more contemporary words, of an enlightened, magnanimous Israeli occupation ruling over the Palestinians forever was no more.

The dream of peace, which had assumed that if only Israel withdrew from most or all of the territories, dismantled settlements and allowed the Palestinians to establish a state of their own then the two nations could live side by side in comfort and joy that dream, too, collapsed. When Israel unilaterally withdrew its settlements from Gaza and pulled its troops back to the old border Hamas took over Gaza and the nearby towns in Israel proper found themselves subjected to daily rocket bombardment.

Terrorism caused even worse damage to Palestinian society. It drove away investors who had come into the territories in the wake of the Oslo Accords. It prompted a mass exodus of anyone with the means to leave. The middle class was destroyed. Anarchy and rage ruled the Palestinian cities. The justice system collapsed. Generations of young Palestinians gave over their futures, and sometimes their lives, to Islamist terrorist organizations.

Israel survived, and in many senses it emerged stronger. One million immigrants, the majority of them from the lands of the former Soviet Union, a minority from Ethiopia and the West, came to Israel and were absorbed into Israeli society. It was one of the most successful immigration waves the state had ever known. The immigrants wrought dramatic changes in the atmosphere of the development towns and outlying settlements. They contributed mightily and brought real advances in the fields of education, culture and high-tech.

Looking back, eight years after the decade's close, the 1990s appear as a series of experiments some of them bold and far-reaching, to change the state of affairs between Israel and its neighbors. The experiments failed, but along the way they clarified the parameters of any future settlement. The central problem seems to be finding a partner, not deciding on the borders.

The bad news is that the very existence of the State of Israel has been called back into question. At the beginning of the decade, between one peace ceremony and another, between one summit and another regional conference, Israelis began to feel that they were finally a part of the region they lived in. By the end of the decade, they had good reason to fear that they were living, as they had in the 1950s, with their backs against the sea.

## Graphic

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IMAGE: israel simyonskiUnder Attack:Iraqi Scud missiles fell on Tel Aviv during the first Gulf War in 1991. Many Israelis fled their homes.; /ipa

IMAGE: gety imagesNew Arrivals:A wave of immigration from the former Soviet Union changed the face of Israeli society.

The 1990s: The Illusion of Peace

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**THE NEWS IN REVIEW 2007 (Part 1 of 2); From the rise of Shilpa Shetty to the fall of the Brown bounce, it was to be a tumultuous 12 months. Scottish politics may have witnessed momentous change, but it was the story of one missing girl that commanded the news agenda.**

Sunday Herald

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## **Body**

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IT was a year dominated by just one name - Madeleine McCann. Across acres of newsprint, through hours of television airtime and on photocopied posters at all the United Kingdom's exit and entry points, the picture of the missing threeyear-old was everywhere, and no-one was untouched by her disappearance.

Her parents, Gerry and Kate McCann, were sanctified and demonised in turn as the media spun a story across eight months based on virtually no solid information at all. Every angle, from paedophilia and infanticide through to slavery, were rehearsed in this horror version of Little Red Riding Hood. Yet we were gripped, because every parent could empathise with the McCanns and we clung onto every scrap of gossip and rumour in the hope that there would be a resolution.

It was a year of momentous political change - Scotland elected its first Nationalist government, and Alex Salmond predicted that independence would be achieved by 2017. Tony Blair stepped down as Labour's most successful and most controversial prime minister and the yo-yo effect of opinion polls bounced his successor Gordon Brown into the doldrums and up popped David Cameron as the man most likely to.

We were told to worry less about Iraq and more about Afghanistan, as the death toll of British troops involved in intensive fighting in the southern province of Helmand rose. Iran proved to be a sure-footed and persistent irritant to the West, and George Bush, beset by domestic problems, began to look like a faded warrior whose time had passed.

The biggest worry was the environment. The ice caps melted at an unprecedented rate, polar bears replaced whales as symbols of a threatened environment and it rained as if Noah were alive and well and living in Cambridgeshire or Hull.

THE NEWS IN REVIEW 2007 (Part 1 of 2) From the rise of Shilpa Shetty to the fall of the Brown bounce, it was to be a tumultuous 12 months. Scottish politics may....

It was one hell of a year.

## JANUARY

Presaging a crisis in television that spanned the year, 2007 began with the racist bullying of Indian Bollywood actor Shilpa Shetty by fellow guests on Celebrity Big Brother.

Shetty went on to win the show, giving her an international profile, lucrative contracts and a meeting with Tony Blair. Jade Goody, her tormenter, emerged from the BB house to find the true meaning of reality television - her successful perfume, biography and her TV contracts were axed.

Whether it was media hysteria, a class-based catfight or plain ignorance, the programme sparked a huge race row and a little soul-searching, resulting in Channel 4 receiving a record 45,000 complaints and being forced to make a public apology.

For broadcasters, it was the beginning of a year of apologies, from profiteering on phone-in competitions to the misleading footage that gave the false impression that the Queen had stormed out of a photoshoot. Once the trusted source of news and entertainment in the corner of the room, television crossed a rubicon which left it looking vulnerable to new media.

By the end of the year, the Queen was broadcasting herself on YouTube and could probably have watched it all on an iPhone. In January, Apple introduced to the US market what chief executive Steve Jobs described as a revolutionary mobile phone.

Savage storms with winds close to 100mph tore across Britain, killing 13 people, and scavengers descended on Branscombe Beach in Devon to plunder consumer goods - from nappies to BMW motorbikes - washed ashore from the shipwrecked MSC Napoli.

President George W Bush, entering his last full year in office, proposed to send 20,000 more troops to Iraq as part of a "surge" strategy to counter the growing death toll. It seemed to work, and although Iraqi civilians were still being killed, the number of attacks on US troops in Baghdad did decrease in the months that followed.

Also in the US, footballer David Beckham signed a dollars-1 million-a-week deal with Los Angeles Galaxy. At home, Magnus Magnusson, television's Mastermind interrogator and Icelandic culture-bearer, died aged 77.

## FEBRUARY

In February, Britain was hit by its first major outbreak of bird flu. A disease which had moved slowly across Europe after spreading from the Far East was now on our doorstep. At Bernard Matthews's processing plant in Suffolk, almost 160,000 turkey chicks had to be slaughtered; GBP70m was wiped from the company's profits. Initially, wild birds were blamed, but the outbreak was eventually traced back to one of Matthews's farms in Hungary.

An official report into the outbreak found waste meat trimmings had been left in open bins outside the plant, where flocks of gulls were seen picking through the scraps. Yet Bernard Matthews received almost GBP600,000 in compensation for the compulsory slaughter of its birds - and the company was never prosecuted, as the Food Standards Agency concluded that there was insufficient evidence.

In a turnaround for one member of the "axis of evil", North Korea agreed to dismantle nuclear facilities and allow international inspections in exchange for oil and aid, exactly what the communist state had been demanding in the first place.

One woman died and 89 people were injured when a Virgin Pendolino train bound for Glasgow derailed in Cumbria.

Always one to spin a story, Richard Branson praised the train driver as a hero for staying at the controls when in fact following a derailment there was nothing the man could practically do.

THE NEWS IN REVIEW 2007 (Part 1 of 2) From the rise of Shilpa Shetty to the fall of the Brown bounce, it was to be a tumultuous 12 months. Scottish politics may....

Tony Blair told a packed House of Commons that it was time for British troops to come home from Iraq, although thousands of British soldiers would stay into 2008. Four years after the invasion, life had become dangerous and difficult for British troops in the southern city of Basra. Where once they had walked from street to street, they were now being pounded with mortar fire and were reviled by all sides in a country on the brink of civil war.

Withdrawal from Iraq simply equated to reinforcement in Afghanistan, where an intense campaign was being fought against the Taliban in Helmand Province.

The Queen won an Oscar for Helen Mirren and Forest Whitaker won the best actor award for his portrayal of Ugandan president Idi Amin in *The Last King Of Scotland*. Martin Scorsese's *The Departed* won the Oscar for the best film and Al Gore's *An Inconvenient Truth*, underlining the catastrophic effects of climate change, was given the Oscar for the best documentary. Global warming remained high on the agenda for the rest of the year and Gore, the former US vice-president, went on to share the Nobel Peace Prize with the UN climate panel.

## MARCH

The number of British troops killed in Afghanistan reached 50 when Ross Clark, 25, and Liam McLaughlin, 21, were killed in Sangin, a Taliban stronghold that would be liberated by British troops some weeks later. By midDecember another 36 British troops would be dead. Attempts to persuade other Nato states to send more soldiers to Helmand faltered and the number of British troops engaged in the vicious war with the Taliban climbed from 5500 to 7800.

Slightly to the west, Iran remained defiant after the UN Security Council unanimously banned weapons sales to the Islamic state and froze the assets of key Iranians to push Tehran into suspending its uranium enrichment.

In the US, sales of homes fell by 3.9-per cent, the lowest rate in seven years. People started talking about a sub-prime market but no-one on this side of the Atlantic took much notice.

APRIL The Royal Navy become embroiled in a Carry On Up The Gulf debacle when 15 British personnel were seized by Iran during a routine patrol in disputed waters.

The sailors were paraded on Iranian television, with particular focus on the only **female** captive, Leading Seaman Faye Turney, who was made to appear wearing an Islamic headdress, confessing to the crimes of trespass and spying.

Turney and her colleagues were pawns in a tense, 13-day standoff between the West and Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's hardline regime in what could be a precursor to the next venue for war in the Middle East.

On their release the military personnel were allowed to sell their stories to the British newspapers, an order that was swiftly rescinded by an embarrassed defence secretary, Des Browne.

The diminutive Arthur Batchelor, one of the captives, was lambasted by the other tabloids when he told the Daily Mirror that he'd cried and that his captors had called him Mr Bean and stolen his iPod. Amid withering criticism, the Ministry of Defence banned further story sales.

Five members of a UK al-Qaeda cell were jailed for life over their role in a failed fertiliser bomb plot.

Virginia Tech joined the annals of US gun atrocities when a student killed 32 people and then turned the weapon on himself in what was the country's worst shooting rampage.

Boris Yeltsin, the hero of the failed coup d'etat of August 1991 and flamboyant former Russian president, died aged 76.

Mortgage defaults in California hit an all-time high and house prices stagnated in the US. In Britain everyone carried on as normal and Gordon Brown, Tony Blair and Jack McConnell predicted economic disaster if the SNP won the forthcoming Scottish parliament election.

THE NEWS IN REVIEW 2007 (Part 1 of 2) From the rise of Shilpa Shetty to the fall of the Brown bounce, it was to be a tumultuous 12 months. Scottish politics may....

## MAY

The disappearance of three-year-old Madeleine McCann from apartment 5A in the Ocean Club resort in the Algarve village of Praia da Luz became an international news story. The personal tragedy of Kate and Gerry McCann, something every parent can empathise with, was played out in the full glare of the media spotlight.

There were more questions than answers as the weeks and then months progressed, as "sightings" of Madeleine, from Belgium to Morocco, came to nothing. A local British-born man, Robert Murat, was questioned and declared an arguido, or formal suspect, after a tip-off from a British journalist who told police he seemed suspicious.

Friends of Murat, friends of the McCanns and the McCanns themselves were questioned as witnesses.

Since Portuguese law bars police from giving information about an ongoing investigation, local tabloids, translated and amplified by British reporters, filled the gap.

The story continued to dominate the news agenda for weeks and, in a series of startling developments months later, it was reported that DNA samples from the McCanns' flat and a car they had rented weeks after the disappearance suggested that Madeleine's body had been present in both. The wild speculation that the youngster's body had been carried in the rental car was almost certainly wrong. Kate and Gerry were again questioned and this time made arguidos - mainly because of "contradictions" in their and their friends' testimony about what had happened on May 3. As the year wore on we learned a lot about the McCanns, about Portuguese police practice, but nothing about the fate of missing Madeleine.

Scotland had a new government - the SNP won one more seat than Labour in the third Holyrood election. Nationalist leader Alex Salmond formed a historic minority government with the support of two Green MSPs.

The SNP had 32.9-per cent of the vote, the highest in the party's history, compared with Labour's 32.2-per cent, and 47 MSPs to Labour's 46. For Labour leader Jack McConnell it was all over and he resigned in August. Wendy Alexander went on to replace him, unopposed, the following month.

The whole election process was marred by a voting debacle that created 150,000 spoiled ballot papers, prompting an investigation that cast blame on all, but responsibility on the then Scottish secretary, Douglas Alexander.

The sense that Britain would not be quite the same again extended to Northern Ireland where Sinn Féin and the DUP entered a power-sharing agreement. Martin McGuinness and the Rev Ian Paisley once sworn enemies, took centre-stage in the strangest political pairing in the province's troubled history.

France elected a new leader - Nicolas Sarkozy overwhelmingly defeated the Socialist candidate Segolene Royal, replacing Jacques Chirac as president.

He promised to "rupture" France away from its reliance on a bloated public sector and an overdrawn welfare state. By the end of the year he had started taking on and facing down the country's trade union movement.

In Lebanon, dozens were killed in battles between troops and militants in a Palestinian refugee camp.

## JUNE

The rains that fell during June 25 on Hull and surrounding areas flooded 24,000 homes and helped make the British summer of 2007 the wettest since 1766.

The following month, nine other counties further south, including Gloucestershire, Berkshire and Worcestershire, also fell victim to flooding. Rivers swelled and burst their banks, drains backed up and spewed their filthy contents in torrents onto the streets and people ran, or swam, for their lives. The water picked up cars, washed through homes, destroyed gardens and killed pets. The worst flooding in 200 years claimed the lives of 11 people.

THE NEWS IN REVIEW 2007 (Part 1 of 2) From the rise of Shilpa Shetty to the fall of the Brown bounce, it was to be a tumultuous 12 months. Scottish politics may....

After a decade in power and leading the Labour Party to an unprecedented three election victories, Tony Blair stepped down as prime minister. A showman to the final curtain call, he won a standing ovation from the House of Commons after his "that is that, the end" flourish during his ultimate Prime Minister's Questions on June 27. By standing down as an MP too, Blair freed himself to take up his new post as Middle East peace envoy, but he left his successor Gordon Brown with a Labour government trailing in many polls because of Iraq.

In the turbulent Middle East, Hamas took control of the Gaza Strip after weeks of fighting, while in the West Bank, Palestinian Authority president Mahmoud Abbas swore in an emergency government. The US and EU announced they would resume aid but not to Gaza. In Iraq, the revered Shia alAskariya mosque at Samarra was again bombed - an attack in 2006 saw a huge surge in violence - and Shias blew up two Sunni mosques in retaliation.

Three days after Gordon Brown became prime minister, and a day after two car bombs were found in London, Scotland experienced its first terrorist attack since Lockerbie. Two alleged Islamic extremists, one a doctor, drove a Jeep into the security bollards at the entrance of a busy Glasgow Airport on the first Saturday of the local school holidays. The car carried explosive gas canisters and although it burst into flames on impact, most of the containers remained intact. A few bystanders were injured, and were treated at nearby Royal Alexandra Hospital where one of the alleged terrorists worked. The driver of the car, Kafeel Ahmed, 27, died a month later from his burns, and others suspected of being involved in the attack were apprehended on the M6. All the suspects in the case were foreign recruits to the NHS.

An unlikely hero emerged from the acrid smoke at the airport. John Smeaton, a 31-year-old baggage handler, had come to the aid of the police by kicking one of the attackers and dragging a holiday-maker to safety.

He maintained that three other men deserved equal praise for bravery - one sustained a broken leg - but none of them conveyed the gallus Glasgow sensibilities of John Smeaton.

"Glasgow doesnae accept this, " Smeaton told a TV news team. "If you come tae Glasgow, we'll set about ye." Laughing in the face of terror might be displacement activity of the highest order, but Smeatomania swept Scotland and although he never looked entirely comfortable with fame, John Smeaton was lauded by press and politicians alike.

## JULY

With his 10-year torment over, a smiling Gordon Brown surprised critics with his assured handling of a series of crises.

From more floods in England that turned the town of Tewksbury into an island, to reaction to the terror attacks, he exuded a calm confidence. He also reached out to political opponents, flaunting a consensual style and pulling off a masterstroke when he invited Baroness Thatcher to tea at Downing Street. It seemed he could do no wrong in these heady early weeks, but as the months wore on, and Brown faltered, Labour MPs found themselves pining for the showman and Blair's ability to get out of a tight corner by gently mocking himself and the messianic ease with which he had mapped out the "vision thing".

Nail-biting for prime ministers was still allowed, but a smoking ban came into effect in England, following the example of Wales, Scotland and the Republic of Ireland. Tobacco sales fell by 11-per cent and parts of Germany and Denmark also introduced bans, as Estonia and France had done, marking a turning point in a global health campaign.

Journalist Alan Johnston was freed 114 days after being kidnapped at gunpoint by the Army of Islam in the Gaza Strip.

The BBC reporter said it was "just unimaginably good to be free" and his ordeal had felt like being "buried alive".

The Live Earth concerts were scheduled to run in nine countries, publicising action and awareness of rising emissions to two billion people. But most commentators just wanted to know how Madonna would be arriving.



THE NEWS IN REVIEW 2007 (Part 1 of 2) From the rise of Shilpa Shetty to the fall of the Brown bounce, it was to be a tumultuous 12 months. Scottish politics may....

Four men were found guilty of plotting to bomb London's transport network on July 21, 2005. Muktar Ibrahim, 29, Yassin Omar, 26, Ramzi Mohammed, 25, and Hussain Osman, 28, were convicted at Woolwich Crown Court of conspiracy to murder.

In other legal matters, the Crown Prosecution Service announced that it would not bring any charges against the three Labour aides arrested over the cash-for-honours investigation, bringing an 18-month police inquiry that marred the last days of Tony Blair's leadership to an end.

Troops stormed Islamabad's Red Mosque, ending a bloody standoff with Islamists and killing dozens. Pakistan's supreme court, the crucible for the power struggle against President Musharraf, reinstated chief justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry, whose sacking caused riots in Karachi and 39 killings in May. Finally, and perhaps hopelessly, the UN Security Council voted unanimously to spend a record \$2bn deploying 26,000 peacekeepers to Darfur in Sudan.

## Graphic

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Clockwise, from left: an Iraqi man warns people to flee after a car bomb attack at a market in Baghdad, one of three attacks that killed dozens of people; locals in Devon take cargo from Branscombe beach after the MSC Napoli sank and containers holding everything from nappies to motorbikes were washed ashore; Bollywood actress Shilpa Shetty reacts after winning Channel 4's Big Brother, which was marred by racist remarks and sparked 45,000 complaints Photographs: Ceerwan Aziz/ Reuters; Peter Macdiarmid/Getty; Luke MacGregor/ Getty The shadows of the McCanns, above, as Madeleine's mother carries her cuddly toy, and right, a fish flops on a flooded road in Sheffield. Below, clockwise from left: a policeman restrains one of the men involved in the attack on Glasgow Airport; Gordon Brown shakes hands with Tony Blair in Manchester after being confirmed as the new Labour leader; Alex Salmond prepares to vote in the May election Photographs: Nacho Doce/Reuters; Darren Staples/ Reuters; UniversalNewsand Sport.com, and Jeff J Mitchell/Getty

**Load-Date:** January 3, 2008

## [Jihad, 1948](#)

The Jerusalem Post

May 9, 2008 Friday

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**Section:** FEATURES; Pg. 14

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**Byline:** ABRAHAM RABINOVICH

**Highlight:** Though Palestinian Arabs received support from a nascent Israel's neighboring countries, writes historian Benny Morris in his new tome, it was anything but altruistic. Box at end of text. The writer is author of The Yom Kippur War.

## **Body**

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'I haven't revealed any smoking gun,' says Benny Morris, sitting in a Jerusalem cafe.

That muffled drumbeat on the eve of publication of his latest book - a history of the War of Independence - may be reassuring to Israelis still shaken by the smoking gun he laid on the table with his first book. That tome, on the Palestinian refugees, revealed that many of those who fled in 1948 were deliberately uprooted by Israel.

Morris's new book, called 1948, reshapes half a century's published research on the first Arab-Israeli war, vitalizes it with his own extensive archival forays and weaves a tale so gripping that even an informed reader feels he is learning about the country's early history for the first time. (Disclosure: This writer worked at the desk next to Morris's in the newsroom of The Jerusalem Post when the world was younger.)

Morris's book on the refugees, which brought him international renown when published two decades ago, made him a hero to the political Left, which saw him boldly acknowledging the plight inflicted on the Palestinians by Israel. It made him anathema to the political Right, which saw him gratuitously granting comfort and political ammunition to the country's enemies. In subsequent interviews, Morris made it clear that both sides had him wrong: The tragedy which overtook the Palestinians was something that merited an honest historical account, he argued, but not an apology. The Arabs had started the war with the intention of driving out or annihilating the Jews. Furthermore, he says, if a large, demonstrably hostile and fast-growing Arab minority had subsequently remained in place, a Jewish state would not have taken root.

Despite the new book's title, the story it tells begins in 1881 with the onset of modern Jewish settlement in Palestine; the chapters devoted to the pre-1948 years are among Morris's most absorbing. A sense of déjà vu that the book sometimes evokes comes from recognition that the underlying state of play a century ago and 60 years ago is often still the state of play today.

The 1948 war was a conflict between two national movements, but something else underlay the passions, says Morris. "It was also a jihad. 'To wipe out the infidel' - that's what drove the masses in the squares of Cairo and Baghdad to demand war and that's what drove the Arab leadership in making war. I don't know how much they were thinking about the Palestinians."

## Jihad, 1948

The Jews were divided into contentious political camps but it was rare for them to employ violence against each other and they proved able to achieve broad unity on major issues in orderly fashion. However, differences within the Palestinian camp - between militants led by the Husseini family and the more moderate faction led by the Nashashibis - were bloody and debilitating to the Palestinian cause, a theme echoed in the current ***Hamas***-Fatah face-off. Lack of common purpose was in abundant evidence. The Nashashibis as well as the Husseinis publicly condemned the influx of Jews but both secretly sold land to them and hundreds of Arabs collaborated with the Zionist intelligence agencies.

MORRIS DIVIDES the war into two segments. The "civil war" between Jewish Palestinians and Arab Palestinians, the latter supported by volunteers from Arab countries, lasted from December 1947 to May 1948. The militias had initial successes in cutting roads to Jewish settlements and imposing a siege on Jerusalem, but when the Hagana went over to the offensive in April it was able to decisively crush them.

The major test came when 20,000 troops from the Egyptian, Jordanian, Syrian and Iraqi armies crossed into Palestine following Israel's declaration of independence on May 14. (The Lebanese army did not cross the border but provided some artillery support. Israeli troops did later cross into Lebanon.) On paper, the Hagana outnumbered the invading Arab forces, but half the 30,000-person Jewish army, says Morris, was made up of rear-echelon troops, while the Arab contingents were all combat units. No less important, the Jews had no artillery when the war began and virtually no tanks, while the Arab forces had both.

"At this stage, when the Jews didn't have heavy equipment, motivation was a critical factor. They really did stop tanks with Molotov cocktails at Deganya and elsewhere, and at Kibbutz Nirim 60 members and a few Palmahnikim really did fight off 600 Egyptians."

Although the dispatch of the four armies to the Palestinian arena was seemingly a high point of Arab unity, that soon proved illusory. There was no effective joint command and each army had its own agenda. The clearest was that of Jordan's Arab Legion. King Abdullah intended initially to seize only territories assigned to the Arabs by the UN partition resolution. He changed his plan so as to include Jerusalem - designated by the UN as an international enclave - when the Jews began attacks on the Old City and he feared the loss of the Muslim holy places, says Morris. But he never attacked areas assigned by the partition plan to the Jews.

"The Jordanians came into the war to take the West Bank. The other armies were out to destroy Israel if they could but, if not, then to take as much land as they could and also to prevent the Jordanians from taking too much."

The Egyptians, driving up the coast toward Tel Aviv, sent a column northeast through Hebron to Jerusalem not to support the Jordanians but, says Morris, in an effort to prevent the southern part of what became the West Bank from falling into Jordanian hands. Israeli attacks forced the Egyptians back.

The Jordanians blocked the road to Jerusalem at Latrun not with the intention of cutting off and capturing the Jewish half of Jerusalem as the Israelis believed, but to prevent the passage of Israeli reinforcements that might enable the Jews in Jerusalem to capture the Arab half of the city. Although Jordanian armored cars were stopped, with Molotov cocktails, when the Legion attempted to capture Notre Dame monastery on the seam between the two halves of the city, it had no intention of risking a plunge into the built-up Jewish neighborhoods. One of the first things the Jordanians did, says Morris, was to disarm the Palestinian militias and incorporate the West Bank into Jordan in defiance of the UN resolution and of the Palestinian elite who wanted a Palestinian state.

As the war continued, with intermittent truces, both sides grew in strength. By the end of the year, the Hagana had 110,000 men under arms, while the Arab forces numbered 60,000-80,000. By this time only the Egyptian army was engaged in active combat.

The UN partition resolution had allocated 6,000 square miles to the Jewish state. By war's end, an additional 2,000 square miles had been won in the field.

## Jihad, 1948

WHEN THE WAR had started, 630,000 Palestinian Jews had faced twice as many Palestinian Arabs. The latter held a greater part of the country and were assured the intervention of the Arab armies on their side when the British left. How, then, did the Jews prevail?

"They were far better organized for war," says Morris. "There was command and control, logistics, intelligence. Kibbutzim had trenches, barbed-wire fences and perimeter lighting. Much of this was done during the civil war before the real attack came."

Also, he says, the Jews were fighting with their backs to the wall. "They were fighting with their families alongside them and the Holocaust at their back, only three years earlier."

The Arabs were also fighting for hearth and home but knew that if defeated they would find refuge at no great distance.

At the end of May the first fighter planes arrived from Czechoslovakia. There would be 20 serviceable aircraft at war's end. The bulk of the pilots and ground crew were foreign, with probably more than half the pilots Christian. A number of non-Muslims served with the Arab forces, including a few SS veterans.

In the confrontation between the Yishuv and the Palestinians, writes Morris, societal differences were a major factor. "One [society] highly motivated, literate, organized, semi-industrial; the other backward, largely illiterate, disorganized, agricultural." Arab society was also deeply divided along social and religious lines. "For Palestinian men, loyalty lay mainly with family, clan, village and occasionally region. Nationhood remained a vague abstraction."

The basic history of the War of Independence until a few years ago was a book written in the 1950s, *The Edge of the Sword* by Netanel Lorch, founder of the IDF Historical Division. In the 1990s, official archives began making accessible previously classified material on the war. This was tapped by historians Yoav Gelber and David Tal to publish books in 2000. Official archives were also the principal source for Morris, who does not believe in relying on live testimony from participants or even, if he can help it, memoirs.

"People forget and distort. Collective memory becomes confused with personal memory. And as long as a conflict is ongoing, everybody will tilt [their testimony]. I decided I would do without memoirs unless there was such a big black hole that I had to fill it somehow."

He did not even rely on the memoirs of David Ben-Gurion, the central figure in the story. "He was wholly history-conscious all his life. He doesn't lie but he omits a lot, which of course is lying."

Ben-Gurion, who apparently didn't trust memory either, would compile his diary in real time. One official describes sitting down opposite him and seeing the white-maned head lowered as Ben-Gurion transcribed their ongoing conversation into a notebook. When Ben-Gurion's head rose, the visitor knew the conversation was over. Aware that history would be looking over his shoulder, Ben-Gurion would edit the diary afterward.

"We have the diaries of others who participated in meetings in which expulsion of Arabs was discussed," says Morris. "Ben-Gurion, in describing these same meetings in his diary, would not write 'expulsions.' He would say we discussed renovation of villages or settlement of Jews in villages."

In retrospect, Morris regrets not having interviewed one player who was still alive when he began working on the book - Yitzhak Rabin, who was a senior Palmah commander in 1948. "He was a very honest man."

What Morris does rely on are official documents like operational orders, battle reports, intelligence reports and diplomatic analyses. Cabinet protocols are an important source. In the US, Morris notes, cabinet meetings are not recorded, while in Britain, cabinet minutes are taken but only a terse precis reaches print. This is aimed at giving ministers greater leeway in expressing themselves.

In Israel, a stenographer records the cabinet discussions verbatim and types them up. Ministers are able to amend their words in the printed draft but almost always these changes are limited to matters of style, since the other

## Jihad, 1948

ministers will see the changes. On extremely sensitive subjects, entire pages are occasionally blanked out. Morris believes that the blanked-out sections from the 1948 protocols include a discussion on the expulsion of Arabs from Lod and Ramle which sat astride the main road between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem.

A major hole for any historian of the Israel-Arab conflict is the absence of access to Arab records from any period. "Their archives are closed," says Morris. "To everybody. We don't even know what's in them."

Although an occasional document might be leaked or sold, Morris says, that is an out-of-context finding, not the product of serious archival research. Because of the presence of British officers in the Arab Legion, some material from Jordan did reach the British public records office, which Morris also researched together with American archives. Indirect access to the Arab side was available through Israeli intelligence reports, POW interrogations and diplomatic reports, including from foreign military and political attaches.

Morris hesitates to use the word "great" when asked to evaluate Ben-Gurion as a leader. "Ben-Gurion devoted all his life to accumulating power - personal power and then for his nation. He was both a gambler and cautious. He was always pushing things but pulled back when he had to."

As prime minister during the war he made critical operational decisions, but he also twice overrode his military advisers and ordered attacks on Latrun which proved costly failures.

One of Ben-Gurion's most important moves was to steer the Zionist movement away from the concept of a Greater Israel to partition. He had been enthusiastic about the recommendation of the British Peel Commission in 1937, whose partition proposal included transfer of Jews and Arabs out of the territory designated for the other group.

"He had resigned himself to the necessity of partitioning Palestine," says Morris. "He may have pushed during the war for expanding the Jewish part, and adding Jerusalem, but he never seriously thought of capturing all the Land of Israel."

Why not? "Maybe because of international circumstances. Maybe because of morality. Maybe he felt that the Palestinians deserved a chunk of Palestine."

(BOX) A catastrophe of their own making?

Visiting Haifa at the beginning of May 1948 in the wake of the battle for the city and the flight of most of its Arab inhabitants, Golda Meyerson (Meir) was taken aback by the sight of coffee and pita left on tables in Arab houses, scenes which reminded her of the sudden uprooting of Jews in Europe during the Second World War. Back in Jerusalem, she described the exodus of Haifa's Arabs to her fellow members of the Jewish Agency Executive - the political leaders of the Yishuv - as "dreadful" and asked whether the city's Arabs who had chosen to leave might not be permitted to return.

The vignette is a rare report of Israeli empathy during the War of Independence for uprooted Palestinians. A week after the future prime minister posed her question, four Arab armies invaded with the intention of snuffing out the newborn state. With that, any lingering humanitarian considerations gave way to cold strategic calculation.

Morris notes that in the first months of the war, the Hagana's policy was defensive and few Arab villages were touched. Only in March did it draw up an offensive plan, Plan D, which outlined steps in anticipation of the invasion by regular Arab armies, such as securing vital roads and occupying strategic locations. The order gave brigade commanders the option of evicting inhabitants of villages and towns in their operational areas, many of which were bases for hostile activity. "Nowhere does the document speak of a policy or desire to expel 'the Arab inhabitants' of Palestine or of any of its constituent regions," writes Morris.

As the struggle intensified, however, pressures to do just that mounted, first so as to clear the field of a hostile population and, subsequently, to append territory for a viable state. "The Israeli decision to bar a refugee return consolidated between April and August." At a cabinet meeting on June 16, foreign minister Moshe Shertok (Sharett) took note of the change. "Had anyone said that one day we should expel all of [the Palestinians], that would have

been madness. But if this happened in the turbulence of war, a war that the Arab people declared against us, then that is one of those revolutionary changes after which history cannot be turned back."

When plans for a score of new settlements were drawn up early in the war to secure sensitive areas, the planners placed them alongside abandoned Arab villages but not on the village sites themselves so that the refugees would have a place to return to. This approach was quickly dropped and orders were given not to allow the Arabs to return. The permanence of the refugee problem, writes Morris, stems from this "almost instant decision" in the summer of 1948. Captured Arab villages were razed and Jewish settlements built in their place. All Jewish settlements captured by the invading Arab armies - about a dozen - were likewise razed.

MORRIS IS unflinching in describing the mass flight of the Palestinians and the tragic destruction of a society, unflinching too in his conviction that the Arabs brought their nakba, or catastrophe, upon themselves. Given the implacable Arab opposition to the creation of a Jewish state in their midst - an opposition made clear over the years by armed actions and chilling rhetoric - the Jews saw as existential the need to reduce the danger from a sizable Arab population in their own midst. Ben-Gurion referred to the obdurate nature of Arab hostility when he attempted, in a conversation years after the war, to depict the Arab mind-set and its negation of the Jews' historic connection to the land. "Why should the Arabs make peace? We have taken their country. Sure, God promised it to us, but our God is not theirs. There have been the Nazis, Hitler, Auschwitz, but was that their fault? They only see one thing. We have come here and stolen their country." Expulsion of the Arabs, writes Morris, had never been part of the Zionist platform, and a sizable Arab minority would indeed be left in the country at war's end, constituting today some 20 percent of Israel's population. However, expulsion of the Jews - at least those who arrived after the Balfour Declaration - was a central plank of the Palestinian national movement from its inception.

"Without doubt, Arab expulsionism fueled Zionist expulsionist thinking." The bulk of the 700,000 refugees fled their homes as battle approached their villages or even before. "Most likely expected to return within weeks or months on the coattails of victorious Arab armies or on the back of a UN decision or Great Power intervention."

Despite his clearly pro-Zionist sentiments, Morris has no hesitation about spelling out atrocities committed by Jewish soldiers during the war. "The Jews committed far more atrocities than the Arabs and killed far more civilians and POWs in deliberate acts of brutality. In the yearlong war, Yishuv troops probably murdered some 800 civilians and prisoners of war." There were also a dozen reported cases of rape by Jews, few by Arabs.

The disproportion is clearly connected with the fact that the Jews captured some 400 villages and urban areas while the Arabs captured only a handful of settlements. The regular Arab armies which captured these settlements committed no large-scale massacres of civilians or POWs. In several instances, like in Jerusalem's Jewish Quarter, they protected prisoners from the local population.

Given that the war was fought in populated areas, writes Morris, and given the nature of similar wars elsewhere, "1948 is actually noteworthy for the relatively small number of civilian casualties both in the battles themselves and in the atrocities that accompanied them or followed." The incidence of rape, he says, was "extremely low."

Total casualties, however, were the highest proportionally of any of Israel's wars. The Yishuv lost some 5,800 dead, almost 1 percent of the population. One quarter of the fatalities were civilians. In some of the fiercest battles at kibbutzim, women numbered up to a quarter of the defenders. Palestinian casualties are unclear. The Egyptians lost 1,400 dead and the other Arab armies each suffered several hundred dead.

That the war did not entirely extinguish human sentiment is suggested by a report retrieved from intelligence files by Morris. In the chaos engulfing the Arab-inhabited Lower City of Haifa during the battle there, with residents trying to reach boats in order to escape, a Palmah scout in Arab dress saw an old Arab man sitting on steps and crying. "I asked him why he was crying," the scout wrote in his report, "and he replied that he had lost his six children and his wife and did not know where they were. I quieted him down. It was quite possible, I said, that the wife and children had been transported to Acre, but he continued to cry. I took him to the hotel... and gave him 22 pounds and he fell asleep."

## Graphic

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6 photos: Historian Benny Morris. Arab unity in 1948 soon proved illusory. An illegal immigrants' camp, 1939. The chapters devoted to pre-1948 are among the most gripping. Jewish laborers building a road near Latrun as a local passes, circa 1948. Benny Morris. Jewish refugees in a Cyprus camp, 1946. Increased immigration drew calls of jihad among Palestinians and their Muslim brothers in the Middle East. (Credit: Ariel Jerozolinski; Cornelius Ryan; Yagi Morris; Fred Cszaznik; Beth Hatefutsoth)

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**Ones to watch in 2008 - Correction Appended**

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Staff

**Body**

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We asked Cox Newspapers' foreign correspondents to give us a list of people around the world worth watching in 2008. Here's their list of notable politicians, athletes, business people, artists and others:

EUROPE

NICOLAS SARKOZY

President of France

52

Paris

Smart and outspoken, Sarkozy was France's youngest mayor when he took over as leader of Paris' affluent suburb of Neuilly at 29. He went on to become interior minister before succeeding Jacques Chirac as president in May. Amid rioting in late 2007, he pledged to revive the work ethic and fight intolerance. Known for his strong stance on law and order, he is expected to continue taking a hard line against Iran as he pursues closer ties with the United States.

JAVIER BARDEM

Actor



## Ones to watch in 2008

38

Madrid

A sex symbol in his home country, Bardem is breaking into Hollywood in a big way. The former member of the Spanish rugby team just picked up a Golden Globe nomination for his portrayal of a serial killer in the Coen brothers film "No Country For Old Men." Soon he will be seen in the film adaptation of Gabriel Garcia Marquez' "Love In The Time Of Cholera" as well as Woody Allen's "Vicky Cristina Barcelona." He's also set to star in "Nine," a new movie from Rob Marshall.

LIONEL MESSI

Soccer player / 20 / Barcelona, Spain

It may be an exaggeration to call Leo Messi the world's best soccer player. But his display of talent for FC Barcelona demonstrates that it is no exaggeration to call him the most promising. At 20, this Argentine right winger has emerged as the star of Barcelona's club team and was third in this year's voting for European Footballer of the Year. In 2007, he lit up highlight reels with eye-popping goals that led to comparisons to Argentine soccer legend Diego Maradona. With his best years presumably ahead of him, Argentina expects big things from him in the 2010 World Cup.

LEWIS HAMILTON

Racecar driver

22

Stevenage, England

Britain's Formula One sensation narrowly missed out on this year's world title. But look for another thrilling title battle in 2008 between winner Kimi Raikkonen and Hamilton. Hamilton's idol status has put him on track to become the sport's highest-ever earner. But Hamilton, who recently announced he is moving to Switzerland, has been a bit of a troublemaker. He was just banned from driving in France for a month after getting caught driving 120 mph.

DMITRI MEDVEDEV

Prime minister of Russia / 42 / Moscow

Change in Russia? Probably not. Russian President Vladimir Putin has endorsed this bookish former academic from St. Petersburg as his successor. In return, Medvedev has said he would name Putin as prime minister. In the end, Medvedev may hold the key to just how much influence Putin continues to yield after his term ends early next year. Already Medvedev has said that Russia must continue on the path set by Putin since he took office in 2000.

ASIA

PERVEZ MUSHARRAF

President of Pakistan

64

Islamabad

The assassination of Benazir Bhutto last week makes Pervez Musharraf all the more important to the United States, since he is perhaps the only leader in Pakistan likely to further U.S. interests in the region. (And some argue that he has done a poor job of it so far, since, after billions in U.S. aid, Osama bin Laden remains free and Pakistan's border with Afghanistan remains unstable.) In November, Musharraf declared a state of emergency, fired Pakistan's

## Ones to watch in 2008

Supreme Court, forced independent news channels off the air and had thousands of his opponents arrested. After the world cried foul, he released most of the prisoners and resigned as army chief. But his actions have polarized Pakistan. Bhutto's assassination is likely to further undermine Musharraf's standing with the people, which was already shaky at best.

## ZHOU XIAOCHUAN

Governor of China's central bank

59

Beijing

Called "China's Greenspan" and "Mr. Renminbi," a reference to China's currency, Zhou wields enormous power over the world's most rapidly growing economy. Since taking over the central bank in 2002, he has presided over reforms including allowing the renminbi to strengthen against the U.S. dollar, a shift that makes Chinese exports more expensive and could upset China's role as manufacturer to the world. Top-level politics in China are murky and Zhou could be moved to a new job soon. But he is certain to remain deeply involved in decisions about how quickly China's currency should strengthen and how to keep China's red-hot economy from derailing.

## KEVIN RUDD

Prime minister of Australia

50

Canberra

After Rudd was sworn in as prime minister this month, he immediately changed Australia's course by ratifying the Kyoto Protocol on climate change, leaving the United States as the only industrialized nation that has refused to do so. While Rudd views Australia's alliance with the U.S. as a foreign policy cornerstone, he has promised to withdraw Australian troops from Iraq, possibly next year. For President Bush, Rudd's election could shake relations with one of Washington's closest allies.

## GUO JINGJING

Diver on the Chinese national team

26

Beijing

On Aug. 8, the world will turn its attention to the Beijing Olympics. The Games will be a grand coming-out party for China's newly revamped cities and for its powerful sports program. As China's top ***female*** diver, Guo is considered a leading contender to win the most gold medals of any Chinese athlete (during the 2004 Games, she bagged two) and she will receive a lion's share of the team's attention. Already, Chinese journalists have dubbed her a "hero of gold medals." Expect her soon on a TV near you.

## RAJENDRA PACHAURI

Chairman of the U.N.'s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

66

New Delhi, India

## Ones to watch in 2008

Accepting the Nobel Peace Prize this month on behalf of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the U.N. panel that shared the prize with Al Gore, Pachauri called the recognition a "clarion call for the protection of the Earth." In 2008, look for Pachauri to play a larger role in pushing governments to curb emissions of carbon dioxide and other gases blamed for rising temperatures.

## MIDDLE EAST

## Gen. DAVID PETRAEUS

U.S. Army general

55

Baghdad

Perhaps no other human being in 2008 will have as much influence on events in the Middle East as Petraeus. Since he became commander of the Multi-National Forces in Iraq in February, the general has redefined the U.S.-led mission and produced results. Peace is still a distant goal, but --- contrary to some forecasts when he took command --- Petraeus has not failed. Aside from bombs and bullets, he will have to continue to contend with election-year politics in the United States and sectarian politics in Iraq.

## EHUD BARAK

Israeli defense minister

65

Tel Aviv

The former prime minister (1999-2001) is once again angling for the top job after taking over as chairman of the Labor Party and being appointed minister of defense in Ehud Olmert's government in 2007. Some Israelis fear that his determination to prove his muscle, however, may lead to costly military incursions into the Gaza Strip, which is currently controlled by the radical Islamic movement Hamas, and a refusal to loosen the Israeli army's control of the West Bank, undermining the Bush administration's hopes for a settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by the time Bush leaves office.

## SHEIK MOHAMMED BIN RASHID AL-MAKTOUM

Ruler of Dubai

58

Dubai

Simmering labor troubles notwithstanding, there is no reason to think that the architect of the economic dynamo that is Dubai will lose his touch in 2008. In the past quarter alone, the investment firm owned by his Dubai government has bought a "substantial stake" in Sony, and state-run Dubai World has purchased a 9.5 percent share in the Las Vegas-based casino firm MGM Mirage. He also oversees the world's most expensive collection of racehorses and has an interest in buildings: He is likely to be on hand when his brainchild, the Burj Dubai, is topped off in late 2008 at 2,625 feet, thus becoming the tallest freestanding structure in the world.

## MOHAMMAD BAQER QALIBAF

Mayor

46

## Ones to watch in 2008

## Tehran, Iran

Qalibaf is considered a top contender to succeed Mahmoud Ahmadinejad as president of Iran. Elections are scheduled for early 2009, but his supporters see this spring's parliamentary race as a bellwether of his chances. Qalibaf, who lost to Ahmadinejad in presidential balloting two years ago, is allied with a coalition of political parties intent on winning back parliament from the president's hardline bloc. A former air force commander, Qalibaf has strong conservative credentials but also appeals to Iran's reform-minded younger generation. As mayor, Qalibaf oversees Iran's largest daily newspaper, a platform he has used to criticize Ahmadinejad's nuclear policies and to bolster his populist resume.

## QUSAI KHIDR

MTV Arabia host / 30 / Saudi Arabia

Khidr, aka Don Legend, is a Saudi-born rap star who puts a hip-hop face on a nation better known for giving birth to Osama bin Laden and the Sept. 11 hijackers. A graduate of the University of Central Florida and based in Orlando, Khidr is host of MTV Arabia's flagship program, "Hip HopNa." Khidr's gig is to uncover the Middle East's best rap acts, a musical genre that is quickly coming into its own in the region, where under-30s make up two-thirds of the population. Khidr, a heavily tattooed, bilingual business school graduate who has been rapping across the Middle East and the U.S. for five years, is proof that the cultures have something in common after all.

## SOUTH AMERICA

## HUGO CHAVEZ

President of Venezuela

53

Caracas

After nearly a decade of triumphs, Chavez suffered his first serious political defeat in late 2007 when voters narrowly rejected his proposals for sweeping constitutional changes. Chavez had hoped to win approval for measures that would have enabled him to run for re-election for life. Despite the defeat, Chavez remains popular among Venezuela's poor majority, and the opposition has yet to unite behind a single leader. Look for him to continue blasting U.S. "imperialism" in 2008, cementing his role as heir to Fidel Castro as the hemisphere's chief U.S. critic. He'll also continue doling out Venezuela's oil billions to foreign leftists and his own poor supporters, aiming to build an anti-U.S. bloc among emerging nations.

## EVO MORALES

President of Bolivia

48

La Paz

Bolivia's president hasn't grabbed as many headlines as Hugo Chavez has. Yet he's been pushing his own socialist reforms that have created no less of a stir within this Andean nation of 9 million. Morales, a former coca farmer elected in 2005 as the nation's first indigenous president, surprised many by bringing stability during his first year in office. But he has been creating controversy in recent months with his push to create a new "Magna Carta" in Bolivia. A constitutional assembly recently approved his reforms, which now go to voters in a referendum. The proposed changes, which would affect large landholdings and indigenous rights, have been sparking protests and deepening divisions in the country.

## JOSE PADILHA

## Ones to watch in 2008

Filmmaker

40

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

This award-winning documentary-maker released his first fiction movie this year and all but shook the earth in Brazil. The release of "Elite Squad," which tells of Rio de Janeiro's drug wars from the perspective of a specialized police unit, has become the most talked-about Brazilian film in years. Based on extensive research and co-written by a former Rio cop, the movie takes a harsh view of police corruption, brutality and torture. It hit such a nerve that the Rio police sought --- unsuccessfully --- a court order to ban it.

CRISTINA FERNANDEZ DE KIRCHNER

President of Argentina

54

Buenos Aires

Endlessly compared with Hillary Clinton, Fernandez de Kirchner will be closely watched as Argentina's first elected ***female*** president. The former first lady and senator was sworn in this month while her husband, outgoing President Nestor Kirchner, looked on. Observers have expected her to raise Argentina's international profile and warm frosty relations with the United States. But earlier this month, after U.S. prosecutors accused the Venezuelan government of trying to smuggle money into Argentina to contribute secretly to her campaign, she derided the U.S. claims as "garbage in international politics."

MEXICO AND THE CARIBBEAN

CARLOS REYGADAS

Filmmaker

36

Mexico City

How much do critics love director Carlos Reygadas's latest movie, "Silent Light"? It scored a seven-minute ovation at Cannes. The movie, about a love triangle in Mexico's little-known Mennonite community, has transformed Reygadas into the latest Mexican director to be showered with worldwide praise, following greats like Alfonso Cuaron and Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu. Reygadas, a former Mexico City lawyer, is perhaps Mexico's most daring filmmaker and is best known for his refusal to use professional actors, preferring instead to squeeze wrenching performances out of everyday people. Reygadas used to be known for shocking audiences --- his first movie featured graphic sex scenes with elderly actors --- but now he's headed for more mainstream success: "Silent Light" will be Mexico's representative in the best foreign film category at the 2008 Oscars.

MARCELO EBRARD

Mayor of Mexico City

48

Mexico City

Ebrard, the bespectacled, bookish and, let's face it, nerdish mayor of sprawling Mexico City, seemed unlikely to make a splash in his first year in office. Instead, Ebrard made headlines for nearly 12 months: he brought the world's biggest ice rink to the city's Zocalo plaza, built urban beaches in rough neighborhoods, kicked 15,000 street

## Ones to watch in 2008

vendors out of Mexico City's historic downtown, supported the city's groundbreaking legalization of abortion and ordered government bureaucrats to bike to work one day a month. Detractors say Ebrard prefers hype to substance and should concentrate more on the city's vast infrastructure challenges and widespread poverty. But the left-leaning mayor looks to be taking the long view, perhaps preparing a run for the presidency in 2012.

## LORENA OCHOA

Professional golfer

26

Guadalajara, Mexico

Ochoa became the face of women's golf in 2007, snatching the No. 1 ranking from Annika Sorenstam and winning eight titles on the LPGA tour, including the Women's British Open. She's been compared with Tiger Woods for her ability to lure nonfans to golf and she has single-handedly created interest in the sport in her soccer-mad Mexico. Despite her success, Ochoa hasn't forgotten her roots. She has built golf academies and schools for underprivileged kids. At 26, Ochoa should keep getting better, bad news for other players on the LPGA.

## FIDEL and RAUL CASTRO

Leaders of Cuba / 81 and 76 / Havana

Cuba's lingering state of limbo may finally give way to a new era in 2008 --- or not. It all depends on the health of Fidel Castro, who has not been seen in public since July 2006, when he underwent emergency surgery for a stomach ailment. Raul Castro has ruled in his brother's absence, but the question of whether he has complete power is still unclear. Many observers believe the more pragmatic Raul will open Cuba to economic reforms and perhaps reconciliation with its longtime foe, the U.S., but that his hands are tied as long as Fidel is strong enough to exercise behind-the-scenes power. Fidel has vowed that his longtime motto of "Socialism or death" will remain in force after his death, despite the obvious hunger among Cubans for more freedom and opportunity.

## AFRICA

## JACOB ZUMA

Leader of the African National Congress

65

South Africa

A former anti-apartheid guerrilla who has tried to shatter the staid, secretive image of the African National Congress, Jacob Zuma is considered a favorite to become South Africa's third post-apartheid president in 2009. His rise seemed doomed after he was accused but later acquitted of rape and was fired as deputy ANC president over corruption charges. Now the ANC has appointed him its leader, and he will bring a more bombastic, populist image than those cultivated by his predecessors, Nelson Mandela and Thabo Mbeki. The only hitch: new graft charges could come soon, and a conviction would rule out a presidential run.

## BINYAVANGA WAINAINA

Magazine editor

36

Kenya

## Ones to watch in 2008

Wainaina, editor of the Kenyan literary magazine Kwani? (So What?), is the most famous of a batch of young Kenyan writers who are unafraid to challenge both foreign and home-grown perceptions of their country. Currently a writer-in-residence at Union College in Schenectady, N.Y., he gained renown with an essay in Granta magazine, "How To Write About Africa," which ridiculed white foreigners' treatment of African themes. "In your text, treat Africa as if it were one country," he wrote. "Africa is to be pitied, worshiped or dominated. Whichever angle you take, be sure to leave the strong impression that without your intervention and your important book, Africa is doomed."

NGOZI OKONJO-IWEALA

World Bank managing director

53

Lagos, Nigeria

The first woman to hold the post of finance and foreign minister in Nigeria, Okonjo-Iweala was recently appointed a managing director at the World Bank. Educated at Harvard and MIT, she gained the nickname "Trouble Woman" for her drive to fight corruption in her homeland, one of the most corrupt nations on the planet. Okonjo-Iweala is a fellow at the Brookings Institution and a co-founder of the Makeda Fund, which invests in African women entrepreneurs. "When it comes to doing my job, I keep my ego in my handbag," she once told Britain's Guardian newspaper. Among the inflated egos of the World Bank, that attitude could prove useful.

Gen. LAURENT NKUNDA

Rebel leader

40

Eastern Congo

Rebel leader Laurent Nkunda holds the fate of hundreds of thousands of long-suffering people in Eastern Congo in his hands. He has been battling the Congolese army for months, a war that has forced some 200,000 people from their homes. Nkunda claims he is protecting Tutsis from Rwandan Hutus who crossed into Congo after the 1994 genocide, but his critics call him a serial human rights abuser, and the Congolese government has a warrant out for his arrest. Peace talks at the end of December may help end the fighting at last, but Nkunda has recaptured much of the territory he had lost to the Congolese government, and he may be in no mood to negotiate. Congolese, who have seen no end of war in the last decade, will likely suffer the most.

DENIS MUKWEGE

Physician / 52 / Bukavu, Congo

Mukwege is the lead doctor at Panzi General Hospital, the only facility in eastern Congo that performs major surgery on women who have survived rape at the hands of a host of predators: the Congolese army, Hutu fighters who fled the Rwanda genocide, rebels belonging to a handful of groups terrorizing the region. Mukwege, a married father of five, is a savior and a rare glimmer of hope for the estimated 3,600 women who come to his hospital every year suffering the wounds of a massive war in Congo that the outside world has ignored for the past decade. With the help of international donors, he is now training doctors under him to help share the burden.

Compiled from reports by Shelley Emling in London, Craig Simons in Beijing, Margaret Coker and Craig Nelson in Jerusalem, Jeremy Schwartz in Mexico City, Mike Williams in Miami and special correspondents Andrew Marra in Buenos Aires and Nick Wadhams in Nairobi.

## Correction

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## Ones to watch in 2008

In the @issue section for Sunday, two photo captions featuring Chinese names used the wrong part of their names. In China, surnames come first, so the caption for Zhou Xiaochuan should have said "Zhou." The caption for Guo Jingjing should have said "Guo."

**Correction-Date:** January 3, 2008

## Graphic

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Photo: VLADIMIR RODIONOV / RIA NovostiProtege of Russian President Vladimir Putin (right), Dmitri Medvedev has already said he would appoint Putin prime minister if he is elected president./ImageData\* ImageData\*

Photo: Sarkozy/ImageData\* ImageData\*

Photo: Barak/ImageData\* ImageData\*

Photo: Bardem/ImageData\* ImageData\*

Photo: Associated Press / 2000 photoFidel Castro (left) has not been seen in public since July 2006. It's still unclear how much power brother Raul has./ImageData\* ImageData\*

Photo: Chavez/ImageData\* ImageData\*

Photo: OLIVER MALTHAUP / AP/ImageData\* ImageData\*

Photo: Kirchner/ImageData\* ImageData\*

Photo: Al-Maktoum/ImageData\* ImageData\*

Photo: Associated Press / 2006 photoArgentina expects a lot from Lionel Messi, the star of Barcelona's club team. /ImageData\* ImageData\*

Photo: Morales/ImageData\* ImageData\*

Photo: Associated Press / 2006 photo/ImageData\* ImageData\*

Photo: Pachauri/ImageData\* ImageData\*

Photo: Petraeus/ImageData\* ImageData\*

Photo: Rudd/ImageData\* ImageData\*

Photo: Zuma/ImageData\* ImageData\*

Photo: Wainaina/ImageData\* ImageData\*

Photo: Musharraf/ImageData\* ImageData\*

Photo: Jingjing/ImageData\* ImageData\*

Photo: Qalibaf/ImageData\* ImageData\*

Photo: Nkunda/ImageData\* ImageData\*



## Ones to watch in 2008

Photo: Associated PressDr. Denis Mukwege (center) helps repair the broken bodies of war victims. Panzi General Hospital sees about 3,600 women a year suffering severe genital injuries, victims of what an expert called the worst violence against women in the world./ImageData\* ImageData\*

Photo: Ebrard/ImageData\* ImageData\*

Photo: Reygadas/ImageData\* ImageData\*

Photo: Okonjo-Iweala/ImageData\* ImageData\*

Photo: Xiaochuan/ImageData\* ImageData\*

Photo: Padilha/ImageData\* ImageData\*

Photo: MTV/ImageData\*

**Load-Date:** January 4, 2008

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## *An Interview With President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad*

The New York Times

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### **Body**

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On Sept. 25, 2008, President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad was interviewed by Neil MacFarquhar of The New York Times. The following is an edited transcript of the interview provided by Mr. MacFarquhar. Ellipses are put in place of Koranic verses, missed words or exchanges devoid of content.

The New York Times: In about seven months you will be facing re-election, so what are you going to present to the people of Iran as your main accomplishments? Do you think they are going to vote against you because people are upset about the economy, about high inflation and high unemployment? There have been some questions asked in the Majlis [the name of Iran's Parliament] and elsewhere about where the oil revenue of about \$120 billion dollars has been spent?

President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad: In the name of God the merciful, the compassionate .... We are indeed very glad to be able to discuss issues with one another. Our government has had numerous achievements in different sectors -- cultural, economic and political sectors. It is true that the entire world is faced with economic problems today. It is only natural that Iran's economy is affected. But Iran has had very rapid economic growth in some areas. We are in fact going through a period where we are experiencing a steady high level of economic growth. It's true that there is also inflation, but we are preparing to curb it. Pretty much all over the world we can find that the absolute figure for inflation has doubled. It hasn't yet doubled for us. I have very good relations with the Majlis. Our Majlis is a very free one. They express opinions on every issue.

Regarding the question you have asked where the oil revenue has gone, I have never heard that question asked from us .... Perhaps you are reading articles by some groups critical of the government in Iran. You can find a lot of those articles; they can say things. But our revenue is actually much higher than the figure you said. The oil revenue is part of the Iranian revenue. We have numerous other aspects to the revenue. We have tax revenues, customs revenues, revenues from our mineral resources, from fields and lands and also revenue from non-oil exports. According to Iranian law all the revenue that Iran receives should be held by the public treasury. All expenditures must be approved by the parliament and the parliament monitors expenditures and they prepare very clear reports which are also published annually. So this is the legal process.

NYT: Hasn't Mr. [Hassan] Rohani published a letter asking where the oil revenues have gone? Hasn't His Excellency the president replaced the central bank governor twice? All the oil-producing countries have experienced an unprecedented economic boom, and yet Iran still has high unemployment. I think there are a lot of questions raised inside Iran about how he has been running the economy?

## An Interview With President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad

President Ahmadinejad: Iran is a free country for people to express their opinion. I'm surprised you show such sensitivity to the domestic issues. Mr. Rohani is a free person in Iran who is free to express his views. Everyone is free to express what he or she wants whether for or against the government and there are in fact hundreds of opinions that in fact speak in favor of our policies. In fact unemployment rates are decreasing in Iran. Of course because of the high population growth in Iran, at a certain juncture of time employment generation became a challenge. I would say the problems facing you here in America are probably 10 times bigger than any facing Iran. Our problem is not so big for us to infuse the economy with 700 billion dollars, not even 70 billion dollars, not even 5 billion dollars.

It is only natural that managers at times change. That, too, happens everywhere in the world. We are about to embark on a new economic plan, so we need to establish an economic team that is well-coordinated, and that has happened now. These are all a natural part of running this economy. Do you think it is essential to discuss this bilaterally with you?

NYT: I've been to Iran a lot, and I know people work two jobs to survive and they really are angry about the economy. When you talk to Iranians it is the one thing that they really criticize the government for all the time.

President Ahmadinejad: Let's wait a few months and see how people will vote in the elections. We are always constantly in touch with the people, we live together side by side. I invite you to make the trip with me to Iran, to visit Iran so you can hear what people say. There is a lot of freedom in Iran. They express themselves, they participate in elections, they hold rallies and gatherings. We are not too concerned, and neither should you be concerned.

NYT: The other economic point is the question of gasoline. We know that Iran is one of the largest oil-producing countries in the world, and yet it imports 40 percent of its gasoline. That is another thing that people get upset about. Why is it so high, and why don't you invest more money in refineries, for example?

President Ahmadinejad: Are people really angry over this?

NYT: Yes, occasionally they riot and burn gas stations.

President Ahmadinejad: That is not the reason why they put those on fire. We are actually about to build seven additional refineries. Of course gasoline is used at very high rates in Iran because it is extremely cheap. The government pays a lot of money to afford that.

NYT: You said that human rights and freedom of expression exists in Iran and that people are very free, but there has been a lot of criticism of your human rights record. Iran leads the world now in juvenile executions -- I believe more than 30 recently -- and is now second only to China in executions over all. Why have you felt the need for this increased repression?

President Ahmadinejad: You have asked very good questions. In Iran youngsters are not executed. Where have they been executed? Our law actually sets 18 as the criminally liable age for capital punishment. So I don't really know where you brought the number 30 from.

NYT: It was in a Human Rights Watch report. Behnam Zare?

President Ahmadinejad: Ah. Sometimes these figures get confused with the execution of drug traffickers. A large band of drug traffickers was actually executed in Iran, that is true. We have laws in Iran. People who carry more than a certain volume of drugs on them are subject to execution. It's a very good measure. We are spending so that you can live a healthier life here. Please remember that several thousand members of our security forces have died as a result of combat with drug traffickers, in fact close to 4,000. These drug traffickers are not normally juveniles. Our penal code is in fact very strong and very advanced. In our legal procedures, every person had the right to five appeals, which is almost unique in the world. Let us also remember that a lot of the reaction given to Iran is politicized. That is why we don't pay much attention to it. There are people who like to use this as a reason to put more pressure on Iran.

## An Interview With President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad

You must know that people in Iran love their country and like their government. For 30 years we've heard these kinds of statements made about the Iranian government. But at the same time 30 big elections have been held in the country. Annually at least two large demonstrations are held in the country during which almost 30 million people rally in support. Tomorrow on Friday is one such rally. The other is on the anniversary of the victory of the revolution in February.

The relationship between the people and the government in Iran has its own special nature. We live among the people, with people from all strata of society -- students, university students, government employees, farmers, businessmen. There is really no restriction in our relations with the people. Our leader holds meetings in which people come and form a queue to ask questions directly. Everyone can come and ask those questions, very freely. There are no restrictions on it. The relationship between the government and the people in Iran is a very friendly one. All the people support their government. Of course there are people who criticize it or are against it, and that you find everywhere. But they are an absolute minority. We really don't have a major problem in Iran with our people. We live with them, side by side. The entire government is elected by the people -- the leadership, the government, the Parliament, everyone is elected somehow. So the points you raise are really highly politicized issues that matter most abroad outside Iran. Inside it is not the case that we talk about this all the time.

NYT: On another subject, you are a Persian; you are not an Arab. Your country has never directly at least fought a war with Israel, and yet you seem obsessed by the Jews. Why?

President Ahmadinejad: We have nothing to do with their business at all. Jewish people live in Iran; they have lived there historically. They have a representative in our Parliament. Although there are only 20,000 people, they still have one representative in Parliament. Whereas for the rest of the population you have a minimum requirement of 150,000 people to have one representative. So the Jewish people are treated just like everyone else, like the Christians and the Muslims and the Zoroastrians. They are respected. Everyone is respected.

The question is really over Zionism. Zionism is not Judaism. It is a political party. It is a very secretive political party, which is the root cause of insecurity and wars. For 60 years in our region people have been killed, they have been threatened for 60 years, they have been aggressed upon for 60 years. Several large wars have occurred. A large number of territories there are occupied. More than five million people have been displaced and become refugees. Women and children are attacked in their own homes. They demolish homes over the heads of women and children with bulldozer, in their own house, in their own homeland. These are not crimes that one can shut ones eyes to. We disagree with these criminal acts and we announce it loud and clear. The anger of the U.S. government does not prevent us from saying loud and clear what we think about these acts. As long as these crimes are not rooted out we will continue voicing our concern.

I am surprised that in your media there is hardly any attention to the human rights crimes committed by the Zionist regime, nor to the ongoing crimes in Afghanistan and Iraq. NATO troops went to Afghanistan to establish security, but the just expanded insecurity. Terrorism has increased. The production of illicit drugs has multiplied. Some days there are 10 people killed, some days there are 100 people killed. Sometimes wedding ceremonies are bombarded and insecurity has now affected Pakistan as well. In the process of occupying Iraq over one million people have been killed, a lot of women and children, several million people have been displaced. Is there enough forces in America to represent those innocents who have been deprived of their rights innocently those countries?

There are seven billion people living on this planet, close to 200 countries. Why is it that politicians here in the United States only rise to defend the Zionists? What commitment forces the U.S. government to victimize itself in support of a regime that is basically a criminal one? We can't understand it. When human rights are violated in Abu Ghraib or Guantanamo, how come there is just not enough attention given to it? In a lot of countries that are friends of the United States there are vast human rights violations. Human rights has become completely politicized with multiple standards that apply to different parts of the world. I would like to repeat myself: People in Iran like their government. You will see in the election.

NYT: Can we ask about relations with the U.S. government, and in particular whether under a new U.S. administration there would be any possibility of a grand bargain?

## An Interview With President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad

President Ahmadinejad: I have said many times that we would like to have good relations with everyone, including the United States. But these relations must be based on justice, fairness and mutual respect. Whenever the U.S. government declares its commitment to these fundamental principles, we will be ready to talk, even though we are very saddened by the behavior of the U.S. government. U.S. administrations have really misbehaved with our people. They have really acted in a misguided way with our people in the last 50 years or so. There is a long list of these misguided policies .... But once the American government states its commitment to the principles of fairness and mutual respect, then we don't see any problems talking.

One can embark on a new period for talks. I've said that our absolute principle for these talks are fairness and mutual respect. We helped in Afghanistan. The result of that assistance was Mr. Bush directly threatening us with a military attack. For six years he has been engaged in similar talk against us. Next time around we need to take more measured steps, more firm steps. Of course wherever we can help ease the pain of people we will continue co-operating in those areas.

NYT: The Bush administration is considering a proposal to open an interests section in Tehran. Is this something that you could agree to?

President Ahmadinejad: I have announced before that we will look at the proposal with a positive frame of mind.

NYT: Have they discussed it with you in any way?

President Ahmadinejad: There has been no official request made.

NYT: Could you talk about how you perceive the U.S. election. Do you see any difference between the two candidates?

President Ahmadinejad: What do you think?

NYT: I am more interested in what you think.

President Ahmadinejad: Vice versa .... We do not interfere in domestic affairs here in the United States. We believe that an election is something that is the right of the people here in the United States. People here must decide for themselves.

But we hope that whoever is elected will start a new path on their exchanges with others. We do believe whoever comes to office has to take care of two issues.

The first is to restrict the scope of America's interventions abroad to the geography of this country alone. These interventions have caused instability and insecurity around the globe. And place enormous financial pressure on the American people as well as people around the world. Nobody has invited the U.S. government to be the head of the global village. The early founders of the United States chanted slogans that demonstrated their single desire to assist people within America. You need to solve the problems of the people of this country within the geographic boundary of this country itself. Look at the neglect of these American concerns that have been replaced by an over concern by what goes on abroad and the country's military budget is increasing every year. Maybe if the American government had not gotten so involved abroad there would have been more peace and security in the world and more welfare for the American people today. The economic crisis here today is now hurting the whole world. It probably would have been better if this enormous expenditure had been used to improve the welfare of the people, bringing more health and education to people in this country. Had that been done more than 100,000 Afghans and more than one million Iraqis would still be alive. People in America would not have had these problems, banks here would not have gone bankrupt. The government would not be considering infusing 700 billion dollars into these large corporations. We think the world can indeed be managed better. So we believe that whoever becomes president must focus on removing the problems here at home and focus on achieving the welfare of the American people.

The second issue they must give attention to is to fix relations with Iran. That answers your question. We hope whoever is elected brings about real fundamental changes.

## An Interview With President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad

NYT: On the question of fixing problems at home instead of working abroad, sometimes in Iran you hear criticism--particularly when I was there after the earthquake in 1990 and in Bam after the earthquake. Iranians always say, "Why are we sending money to Palestine, why are we sending money to Hamas and Hezbollah? We should be rebuilding our houses at home." So does what applies to the United States also apply to Iran?

President Ahmadinejad: I really want to thank you for caring so much for the Iranian people .... I am an Iranian. I live with the Iranian people. Iranians know best how to fix their problems.

NYT: You talk about fixing relations with the United States. At the core of that disrupted relationship is the nuclear question. India, Pakistan, North Korea, they all have nuclear programs, they have all made accommodations with the United States in some way and they have benefited from it. So why don't you just suspend enrichment, you don't have to end your program you can just suspend it, you have made a lot of progress, and just take the incentives that the six powers have offered?

President Ahmadinejad: I believe I answered your question before. Who has invited the United States and its allies to determine how others should live or that others should seek their permission first if they want to do something?

NYT: But there is a United Nations mandate that Iran should stop enrichment?

President Ahmadinejad: The United Nations is completely under the pressure of the U.S. administration. Head of the I.A.E.A. told me personally that he is under pressure.

NYT: But the Chinese and the Russians, who are allies of yours, have gone along with it?

President Ahmadinejad: It doesn't matter, it has no connection with the relationship that the United States has established with the agency. We believe that behaviors should change. If they don't, problems won't get resolved. If the U.S. wants and likes something for itself they should like it for us, too.

Actually the question in our mind is that the U.S. has good relations with countries that have the atomic bomb and bad relations with countries like us who are simply pursuing peaceful nuclear energy. It was one of the biggest blunders of the U.S. government to cease its relations with Iran. I recall vividly that when the U.S. president at the time announced on television that the United States would cease relations with Iran, it seemed that the United States expected that the government of Iran would soon disappear. That did not happen.

Iran is a very big country, with very big people, with a very big culture. So it is not easy to bring about a downfall of Iran with these kinds of actions. Iran's economy is 100 times larger than what it was back then. Scientifically it has advanced at least 100 times. So we think the U.S. government was mistaken to break those ties, like many other mistakes. Can you just point to one good decision in the international arena in the past 30 or 50 years that the American government has taken. It is mistake after mistake.

The conditions of the world today are the result of the American management of the world. Do you like this what you see? An arms race, threats, increased gap in income, extreme poverty, continuous wars. We don't want all this. We like to have friendships. I really don't think that the American people like what they see either. If the American people had the chance to truly express themselves they would definitely express opposition to how the world has been run. Nobody likes wars or acts of terror or occupation or threats. All people are the same. The American and Iranian people are the same too. They don't like acts of aggression and they do not like to be humiliated.

NYT: In Afghanistan you had previously cooperated with the United States. There has been a resurgence of the Taliban who were very violent toward the Shiites, does that concern you and is that a possible route to cooperate with the United States again?

President Ahmadinejad: I think that I have responded to that already. The U.S. government and NATO do not understand Afghanistan well and they are not managing it well. You said yourself extremism has increased. Who is responsible for it? Whose management is responsible and accountable? Obviously those who have stationed military troops in Afghanistan today. They are also unwilling to hear advice from others. They simply think that all problems can be fixed with military might and bombs and guns. That is wrong by itself. In Afghanistan with the level

## An Interview With President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad

of human calamity a humanitarian approach must be adopted. Otherwise extremism will be on the rise again and next time NATO won't be able to stop it. Although we also have very concise information that some members of NATO are also in touch with these extremists. And this complicates matters further.

NYT: You border on the Caucasus, so what is your opinion about what happened in Georgia, and is it a concern of yours?

President Ahmadinejad: Similar things have happened around the Georgian crisis. We believe that NATO did not have a good analysis of the situation on the ground in Georgia. And some Zionist elements and groups -- [The Georgian president, Mikheil] Saakashvili was encouraged to attack, and he made a mistake. Border disputes with one's neighbors cannot be fixed with wars. They should have managed the dispute, so we are unhappy with what happened. We have historical ties with the people of Georgia, and historical ties with the Russians. If NATO stops interfering the issues can be resolved on a regional basis. The problem arises when external groups try to intervene. Efforts to try to besiege Russia or Iran -- the whole calculation is wrong. This behavior belongs to bygone days. Those days are over. Issues must be fixed with constructive cooperation, with dialogue with all. For the United States to try through colorful revolutions to alter the political landscape of countries in that region is a miscalculation. Even 5-year-old kids understand the plans here by the United States. For the people in the region this is a joke. I think if they stop intervening the people in the Caucasus know well how to re-establish security on their own.

NYT: Do you support Russia's decisions to send troops into Georgia?

President Ahmadinejad: We never support conflicts. We always prefer dialogue and negotiations. We are unhappy with what happened there. We sincerely believe that the Georgian government could have managed the situation there to prevent this conflict. But unfortunately it was encouraged. It is young itself. It doesn't have a very long political experience. So it was encouraged. So now things are complicated and we are not happy about it. It was in the news that about 6,000 people lost their lives. I mean 6,000 people. Six thousand people are no longer around. Their families have been broken. Many children lost fathers or mothers. Or people who lost their children. This is terrible. Who is to respond to it? We are unhappy.

NYT: As you know the level of violence is quite a bit down in Iraq. Do you think that is progress or do you think it cannot last?

President Ahmadinejad: We believe that Iraq's internal problems and issues belong to the Iraqi people. Iraq is a country with a long history. People in Iraq will be able to find a resolution to their problems. Whatever choice they make we'll respect .... You are absolutely correct, the situation there has calmed tremendously, luckily. And we assisted a lot. I think for this to remain a permanent condition will have a lot to do and depend on how the American troops operate over there. In every sector where security has been handed over to the Iraqi government things are calmer and managed better. So we believe that if full responsibility is -- in a very reasonable and logical framework -- handed over to the Iraqi government the whole situation will be managed far better. It seems that on this particular issue we agree. So I certainly hope that the exigencies of the time here in the United States will not create new conditions whereby the United States will decide to alter the current trend. We will soon see the establishment of full security, God willing. In that everyone will come out a winner.

NYT: You know you said earlier people weren't angry with the Iranian government when they burned gas stations, but you didn't explain why they did burn them?

President Ahmadinejad: I owe you one for later.

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**Weekend: A WEEK IN THE WAR IN TEXAS: Every week one Texan soldier dies in Iraq and 10 are wounded. Gary Younge reports on how war is affecting Bush's home state.**

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## **Body**

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In Texas, late summer, the sun clings to you like a second skin, baking the day and all those who venture into it. The Lone Star State is vast, the size of Germany, Italy and Denmark combined, and coping with the heat is one of the few things that unites everyone who lives here. On a sweltering Friday, Carl Rising-Moore and three others stand next to a ditch by the Broken Spoke ranch in Crawford, Texas, and wait for President George Bush to arrive home for a barbecue. Rising-Moore holds a banner saying "Traitor-Impeach". The secret service tell him to move to the other side of the gate. He refuses. They arrest him and send him to jail.

More than 100 miles away in Fort Worth, Lance Corporal Patrick Myers returns home to streets lined with American flags and an escort of "Patriot Guard Riders" on motorcycles. Myers, 23, used to ride a motorcycle himself, but rolls home today in a wheelchair from an army medical centre in San Antonio. Two years ago he was driving his Humvee near the Syrian border in Iraq when it struck a wayside bomb and he lost both his legs.

In a New York courtroom, Texas oilman David Chalmers pleads guilty to conspiracy in a scheme to pay illegal kickbacks to Saddam Hussein's regime in return for the right to buy oil.

And in Austin that same day, Will Martin, 19, stands in the shadow of the State Capitol at the head of a youth demonstration to announce the end of the war. "A lot of young people lack the confidence to challenge authority," Martin says. "We want to tell them that things can change if you want them to. The first step is to declare the war over."

While the war does not dominate daily conversation in America, it nags at people's consciousness, like a dripping tap or a wayward car alarm. "It is kind of like a low-grade fever," a Democratic congressman told the New York Times recently. "It worries them, but they are so used to the drumbeat of death, destruction and confusion, they don't know how to react."

Nowhere more so than in Texas, home to nearly 200,000 military personnel as well as the president who has deployed them. According to a recent Lyceum poll, Texans believe the war is by far the single most important issue facing the nation. Almost everyone here, including me, seems to have a relative or friend in the military or to have served themselves - my cousin from Houston has fought in the war.

Weekend: A WEEK IN THE WAR IN TEXAS : Every week one Texan soldier dies in Iraq and 10 are wounded. Gary Younge reports on how war is affecting Bush's home stat....

In any average week, the body of one Texan soldier will be flown home from Iraq and 10 others will return wounded. In that sense, this random Friday was the beginning of a very regular week.

Friday, Austin

Martin had hoped for 1,000, but in the end only around 150 show up. Most I speak to are disappointed with the turnout. "We haven't had a good demonstration here since March," David Morris says. "It's hard to tell why people aren't more motivated."

Austin, a university town, has a reputation, as a liberal island marooned in a sea of Texan conservatism, that is not entirely deserved. Texas isn't that conservative and Austin isn't that liberal. The last time Bush's approval ratings were above 50% here was January 2006 - he's more popular in 20 other states. In 2004, the year Republicans took the state with 68% of the vote, Dallas elected a lesbian, Hispanic, Democratic sheriff. Most of the border counties are also Democrat. It may be the home state of the leader of the war on terror, but it was also the native land of the leader of the war on poverty, President Lyndon Johnson.

"Texas is unfairly characterised as homogenous and monolithic," says Daron Shaw, the director of the Lyceum poll. "On some issues, like gun culture, it's almost impossible to be too conservative. But on others, like immigration, it's a moving target and much more diverse than people give it credit for. When I conducted the recent poll, I was shocked by how polarised and disparate attitudes to the war actually were."

Back at the State Capitol, what the demonstrators lack in numbers they make up for in spirit. Six older women, one bare-breasted, spell out "I-M-P-E-A-C-H" on human billboards, while another man carries a banner rallying "Girlie men against imperialism". Most messages involve permutations of "oil", "troops", "impeach", "war", "Bush" and "Cheney".

The demonstration began as a re-enactment. In 1967, guitarist and activist Phil Ochs declared the Vietnam war was over to a crowd of around 100,000 (eight years before the White House recognised that the end had come). Forty years later, Martin and the other teenage organisers - some of whose parents had demonstrated against the Vietnam war - replicate Ochs' message, word for word at some points, for a smaller crowd and a different war.

Psychologically, it seems as if America has not yet finished with the Vietnam war, let alone this one. Throughout the week, Vietnam would keep coming up, stalking the debate like a cloud in search of a silver lining. By the end of the week even Bush will be drawing his own idiosyncratic parallels between Iraq and Vietnam.

Back at the Capitol, Martin strums his guitar and Ruby Willmann, 17, performs a poem likening the trapping and shooting of hogs to enlistment in the military. It ends with Amazing Grace. As the march sets off through town, some honk their horns in support, a couple shout abuse. And most just look on, with curiosity or indifference.

Saturday, Dallas airport

At Dallas Fort Worth airport, Connie Carmen waits with red, white and blue pompoms and lungs full of patriotic fervour. It's before 7am and the "huggin', kissin' grandma" is ready, as she is most mornings, to welcome home the troops from the front in Afghanistan and Iraq. "They're my heroes," she says. "They're fighting for my freedom."

At international arrivals, a couple of hundred others wait with flags and banners. Almost every morning it's the same. They consult a hotline the night before, which tells them what time the plane is landing from Prestwick or Shannon airports, and the word goes out. On an average day 150 people will show up; at the weekend it goes up to around 350. As well as friends and families there are church and veterans groups, boy scouts and even a girls' soccer team decked out in stars and stripes.

But Carmen is one of a few regulars with a pass that lets her through security to greet the soldiers the moment they step off the plane. When they emerge, her pompoms are the first things they see. Her shrieks - "We love you" and "Welcome Home" - draw the attention of the passengers waiting in the lounge. A few stand up and clap as a blur of camouflage yomps along the walkway.

Weekend: A WEEK IN THE WAR IN TEXAS : Every week one Texan soldier dies in Iraq and 10 are wounded.  
Gary Younge reports on how war is affecting Bush's home stat....

Back at the arrivals gate, it's like July 4. The soldiers make their way out of customs and into a crowd reaching out to touch them, hug them and shake their hand. There is a baby dressed in camouflage and a woman wearing a picture of Christ on the cross with the message, "He did this for you." Donna Cranston, of Defenders Of Freedom, which supports returning troops, stands with a clipboard directing the soldiers to their connecting flights.

Supporting the troops has become an unconditional part of the American political and public discourse. On many planes, the flight attendant will announce if there are soldiers on board and, to great applause, thank them for their service. Quite how this support for the troops relates to support for the war is far less obvious. War protesters wear bumper stickers saying, "Support the troops, bring them home."

Bert Brady, who comes to Dallas most mornings, concedes such a position is possible: "I know people say they support the troops but oppose the war, but you don't see many of them here." Once again, the ghost of wars past is present. "It isn't like it was with Vietnam when people spat on the soldiers and called them baby killers," Brady says. "The bad thing about that time was that there were people who knew it was happening and didn't stand up like this. We're not going to let it happen again."

Sunday, Sherman

At the entrance to the sanctuary of the Faith Church at Sherman, a picture of Braden Long as a boy stands alongside a quotation from President Bush's address the night the bombing of Afghanistan started: "We will not waver; we will not tire; we will not falter; and we will not fail. Peace and freedom will prevail."

Inside, Long, a gunner with the First Infantry Division, lies in a flag-covered casket. Two weeks earlier, just three days from his 20th birthday, his Humvee came under grenade attack in Baghdad and he was killed. White boys from small towns are overrepresented among the military casualties returning from Iraq, but their deaths seem to make little impact on national public opinion about the war.

"The American public is partly casualty-phobic," says Christopher Gelpi, associate professor of political science at Duke University, "but it is primarily defeat-phobic. You can muster support for just about any military operation in the US so long as you can get enough of the defeat-phobic people on board."

Long had wanted to join the military since he was eight. He reported for basic training a month after he graduated from high school. A few months after that, he married Teresa, who today sits clutching his medals and wiping her eyes. "I met him August 18 2004," she told the Hays Daily News. "The first day of school, I heard about him. The second day of school, I saw him. The third day of school, I met him, and the fourth day of school, I started dating him."

Compared with other military funerals, Long's is a well attended if low-key affair. We learn that in his short life he had acquired a love of cars, family and country. For the second time in three days, I hear Amazing Grace. With a Stars and Stripes shimmering on a screen overhead, the military chaplain, Ken Sorenson, says, "Freedom is never free. . . This death serves as a reminder of the cost."

Seven uniformed men come marching down the aisle in formation, small steps, shoulders back and turning as one towards the casket to carry away Long. On their way out, an older veteran stands and salutes while others sob.

At the Cedar Lawn Memorial park, six soldiers meticulously fold into a triangle the flag that had draped the coffin and hand it to Teresa - a widow and not yet 21.

Monday, Dallas

In the overflow room at the Earl Cabell federal courthouse in downtown Dallas, around a dozen people are watching lawyers shuffle papers and listening in on a terse judicial exchange.

"Do you see the memo?" asks one lawyer.

Weekend: A WEEK IN THE WAR IN TEXAS : Every week one Texan soldier dies in Iraq and 10 are wounded. Gary Younge reports on how war is affecting Bush's home stat....

"I see it," comes the reply. "It's not fact. But I see it's written."

"Just answer the question. Do you see it?"

"Yes."

The lawyer is representing the Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development, a charity accused of funnelling at least \$12.4m to Hamas. President Bush closed the foundation and froze \$4m of its assets shortly after September 11. The witness is an Israeli secret service agent, which is why the court has been cleared and we cannot see his face.

"The whole thing is a charade," Mustafaa Carroll says afterwards. He is the executive director of the Dallas chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (Cair). Earlier this year, Cair was named as an "unindicted co-conspirator" in the Holy Land case, so Carrell has a particular interest in it. "The trial is strictly political. It's not about terrorism. It's about the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. The American public don't have a clue about what is going on in the world, which is why it's difficult for them to make a fair assessment. We have no love for people who blow themselves and others up indiscriminately - that's not our thing. But we don't see a Palestinian mother's pain as being any different from an Israeli mother's pain."

Carroll is a convert. Raised in a Christian family, he was destined for the ministry; his brother is a chaplain in the navy. "People were always somewhat sceptical (about his being a Muslim). But unless they saw you with a kufi on or 'covered funny', as they put it, then they really didn't pay much attention."

When he came to Texas from Gary, Indiana, in the late 70s, he had other worries. "Before people saw me as a Muslim, they would see me as a black person," he says. "And since I was coming to the south, that was my main concern."

September 11 changed all that. "People started driving by mosques and shooting inside with high-calibre guns. Since then there's been a culture of fear." But Carroll doesn't think the Muslim experience in Texas is worse than anywhere else in the country. "If you try to buy a house or get a job and you have a certain name or wear a scarf, you might not get it. . . But I have found some of the most open-hearted, honest, decent people in Texas. I know there are some crazy ones here, too. But at least they're not talking out of two sides of their mouths."

Carroll says the Iraq war has simply "ramped up" hostility towards Muslims. After September 11 the Bush administration said to itself, "We're going to have to whoop somebody's arse," he says. "And if not you (Bin Laden), then somebody that looks like you. Saddam Hussein was a good candidate for an arse-whoopin'."

Tuesday, San Antonio

On the first day of the war, Eric Alva, 36, sat in his Humvee just outside Basra "waiting for word" to invade. "We'd been there for about two and a half hours," he says. During that time he got out of his truck a few times. Once to get supplies for another vehicle; another time to heat up his MRE (meal-ready-to-eat) of spaghetti and meatballs. The third time he went to the passenger side to get something, he can't remember what. In the end, it wouldn't matter. He never made it. On his way, he stepped on a landmine that he must have twice walked over and was blown 5-10ft away. "There was black smoke everywhere," he recalls. "My hearing was gone. I could see that my arm was blown open. I tried to sit up, but my lower half couldn't move."

His fellow soldiers rushed to him, ripping off his clothes so they could administer emergency aid. Many things ran through Alva's mind at that moment. He thought he was going to die. He had broken his promise to his mother that he wouldn't get hurt. And why weren't they removing his right boot?

Alva's right leg had been blown off. The war was just three hours old. "I have the dubious honour of being the first American to be injured in the war," he says. While in hospital in Washington DC, he received a visit from President Bush and former defence secretary Donald Rumsfeld. When he came out of rehab in San Antonio, he was sporting

Weekend: A WEEK IN THE WAR IN TEXAS : Every week one Texan soldier dies in Iraq and 10 are wounded. Gary Younge reports on how war is affecting Bush's home stat....

a prosthetic leg emblazoned with the Stars and Stripes. His arm was a mass of scars and he was missing his right index finger.

Alva was invited on Oprah and CNN. In San Antonio he became a local celebrity. When he went to restaurants people would sometimes pay for his meal. His closest friend, Darrell, told him he should capitalise on his renown: "If you ever plan to do anything about this, you should do it quickly, because people won't remember you 10 to 15 years from now."

So Alva did. He told the world that he was gay, that Darrell was his partner and that he had earned the right to challenge the military's policy of "don't ask, don't tell".

He contacted the Human Rights Campaign, a national gay rights advocacy group. Next, he came out on Good Morning America. Within minutes he was the centre of a different kind of attention. He was the grand marshal in San Francisco's Gay Pride parade and was on the cover of the Human Rights Campaign's magazine. How did those who praised him for his service respond to his sexuality? "Most people were really good about it. People who have a problem with it just don't mention it. And that's fine."

As a gay man in the military, Alva knew he had to be careful. He had started having a clandestine relationship with a fellow soldier, but broke it off after a friend warned him to be more discreet. "We would have both been discharged if someone had reported us," he says. Once he dated a man who wanted to get serious. "I said, Terry, you can't call me at work." Terry didn't get it. Alva had to call it off.

Slowly he took others into his confidence. But one man he told threatened to report him. "My friends gathered around and said, 'If you say anything, we'll make up something about you.'" The man dropped it. But, for all that, Alva enjoyed his time in the military. "I was having fun. I loved the discipline, the structure, the organisation. I loved the physical fitness and the camaraderie. I had a great time."

Alva no longer supports the war. "Back in 2004 I would have said, yes, I support the troops, no matter what. But I don't support the government's decision to stay there. I don't say, 'Bring the troops home' because I know it's not that easy. But I don't support our cause any more. I don't know what our cause is any more."

And the incongruity between Alva's sacrifice abroad and experiences at home soon became too much for him. "In 2005, Texas voted to change its constitution to ban gay marriage. I thought, 'That means you, Eric. This is your state. You can't just sit here any more while they strip your rights away.' I fought for full equality, so that people could be treated with dignity and respect abroad. Why should I come back and be treated like a second-class citizen?"

"I was not the first gay American to serve my country and I won't be the last. A number have died. But the government's not going to recognise the partners of a gay soldier and say, 'I'm sorry to inform you. . .'" The veterans' benefits he gets, including preferential loans, can't be passed on to Darrell. "If anything happens to me, Darrell couldn't stay in this house. That's wrong."

Wednesday, El Paso

On John Cook's desk, there is a hand grenade with the inscription "Complaint department". Just where you would pull the pin, it says, "Please take a number." Such is the gallows humour of the mayor of El Paso, a military town on the Mexican border that is home to between 12,000 and 15,000 soldiers stationed at the Fort Bliss base.

At the airport, families are in tears either because someone is leaving for the front or has just come back. My cab driver is a veteran. So, too, is Cook - he'd been at the base himself before heading out to Vietnam. "Back then, the demonstrations were aimed at the warriors rather than at the war," he says. "This time, it's the exact opposite."

The hotel where I'm staying features the Pentagon Channel - a propaganda outlet for the defence department; when I tune in it's carrying an ode to the troops from secretary of state Condoleezza Rice. There is an entire economy of tattoo parlours, brothels, pawn stores and bars up on Dyer Street that are dependent on the troops.

Weekend: A WEEK IN THE WAR IN TEXAS : Every week one Texan soldier dies in Iraq and 10 are wounded.  
 Gary Younge reports on how war is affecting Bush's home stat....

"The military is a crucial part of the town," Cook says. "It's the largest single employer and the main economic driver." According to economists at the University of Texas in El Paso, it contributed \$2bn to the local economy in 2005.

Around 19,000 more troops are coming to El Paso, following a routine military shake-up a few years ago, bringing with them more jobs and demanding more schools and housing. But the changing nature of America's wars will also change the demands on the local economy. "In this war, we're fighting guerrillas with no uniforms," Cook says. "Our soldiers have giant Humvees and they are operating bombs with garage door operators. We need things like unmanned jeeps rather than tanks."

So with the new influx of soldiers is coming a new emphasis on robotics, unmanned aerial craft and other technologies. "That will probably be bigger to the economy than the 19,000 soldiers," Cook says with a twinkle in his eye. "It means defence contractors are coming and will probably stay. We've got about 700 graduate engineering students at universities near here. It's a major opportunity."

Thursday, Crawford

Back in August 2005, Cindy Sheehan told a Veterans For Peace convention in Dallas that she was going to stay outside George Bush's ranch in Crawford until the president interrupted his holiday and spoke to her. Sheehan, whose son, Casey, had died in Iraq a year earlier, had met the president once before and says she felt patronised. The president never made an appearance, but reporters did and, soon, so did many others who joined Sheehan at "Camp Casey".

Sheehan's protest marked a significant turning point in the coverage of the war on the home front. By that time, a slim majority of Americans were already against it - but to read the papers or watch TV, you wouldn't have known it. Now the anti-war protest had found an acceptable and accessible face in the form of this white, suburban, middle-class mother seeking answers about her son. "For some reason the revolution was not being televised," says Kay Lucas, director of the Crawford Peace House. "But when the media turned their cameras on Cindy, they found a peace movement that was already there and was already active."

Around 13,000 people signed in at the house during that time. With them, says Lucas, came a sense of camaraderie. "There was a lawyer from Arizona who directed the traffic, a retired grandmother who did the parking, a Texas state representative who drove the shuttle bus."

The peace house was set up to establish a permanent presence after around 1,700 protesters came to demonstrate in Crawford when Tony Blair went to meet Bush shortly before the war. At the end of that August came Hurricane Katrina and effectively the end of Bush's credibility. "It was like the exclamation point on a very important sentence," Lucas recalls. A lot has changed since then. The Republicans are out of Congress. Bush's popularity never recovered, Cindy Sheehan is now challenging Democratic House Speaker Nancy Pelosi in San Francisco for failing to impeach the president and stop the war.

Crawford is small - a population of 705 and one main crossroads. A few years back, a rash of stores selling Bush memorabilia opened here. Now, as the president's lame-duck status becomes increasingly evident, not even protesters come any more. But the memory of them still rankles. One shop sells a T-shirt asking, "Sin-D Sheehan. What planet are you from? V-Nuts or Uranus?"

So the week ends as it began. One more body has come home to Texas and another Texan has died in Iraq. In a speech to the Veterans of Foreign Wars in Kansas City that same Thursday, Bush is harking back to the Vietnam war, warning of dire consequences if the job is not finished. "Here at home, some can argue our withdrawal from Vietnam carried no price for American credibility, but the terrorists see it differently," he says.

Over at Camp Casey, less than a mile from the Peace House, Carl Rising-Moore is out of jail and back holding the fort. "So long as George W Bush is coming to Texas, I plan to live either here or in jail," he says. "I don't know

Weekend: A WEEK IN THE WAR IN TEXAS : Every week one Texan soldier dies in Iraq and 10 are wounded.  
Gary Younge reports on how war is affecting Bush's home stat....

whether I'm delusional - that's possible - but my dream is that the American people wake up out of their slumber.  
And if they wake up in time, they can save the republic."

And, with that, he headed out, in the searing heat of late afternoon, to "take back" the ditch in the name of peace  
and the republic.

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## *Her Dream, Branded as a Threat*

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### **Body**

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Debbie Almontaser dreamed of starting a public school like no other in New York City. Children of Arab descent would join students of other ethnicities, learning Arabic together. By graduation, they would be fluent in the language and groomed for the country's elite colleges. They would be ready, in Ms. Almontaser's words, to become "ambassadors of peace and hope."

Things have not gone according to plan. Only one-fifth of the 60 students at the Khalil Gibran International Academy are Arab-American. Since the school opened in Brooklyn last fall, children have been suspended for carrying weapons, repeatedly gotten into fights and taunted an Arabic teacher by calling her a "terrorist," staff members and students said in interviews.

The academy's troubles reach well beyond its cramped corridors in Boerum Hill. The school's creation provoked a controversy so incendiary that Ms. Almontaser stepped down as the founding principal just weeks before classes began last September. Ms. Almontaser, a teacher by training and an activist who had carefully built ties with Christians and Jews, said she was forced to resign by the mayor's office following a campaign that pitted her against a chorus of critics who claimed she had a militant Islamic agenda.

In newspaper articles and Internet postings, on television and talk radio, Ms. Almontaser was branded a "radical," a "jihadist" and a "9/11 denier." She stood accused of harboring unpatriotic leanings and of secretly planning to proselytize her students. Despite Ms. Almontaser's longstanding reputation as a Muslim moderate, her critics quickly succeeded in recasting her image.

The conflict tapped into a well of post-9/11 anxieties. But Ms. Almontaser's downfall was not merely the result of a spontaneous outcry by concerned parents and neighborhood activists. It was also the work of a growing and organized movement to stop Muslim citizens who are seeking an expanded role in American public life. The fight against the school, participants in the effort say, was only an early skirmish in a broader, national struggle.

"It's a battle that's really just begun," said Daniel Pipes, who directs a conservative research group, the Middle East Forum, and helped lead the charge against Ms. Almontaser and the school.

In the aftermath of Sept. 11, critics of radical Islam focused largely on terrorism, scrutinizing Muslim-American charities or asserting links between Muslim organizations and violent groups like Hamas. But as the authorities have stepped up the war on terror, those critics have shifted their gaze to a new frontier, what they describe as law-abiding Muslim-Americans who are imposing their religious values in the public domain.



## Her Dream, Branded as a Threat

Mr. Pipes and others reel off a list of examples: Muslim cabdrivers in Minneapolis who have refused to take passengers carrying liquor; municipal pools and a gym at Harvard that have adopted female-only hours to accommodate Muslim women; candidates for office who are suspected of supporting political Islam; and banks that are offering financial products compliant with sharia, the Islamic code of law.

The danger, Mr. Pipes says, is that the United States stands to become another England or France, a place where Muslims are balkanized and ultimately threaten to impose sharia.

"It is hard to see how violence, how terrorism will lead to the implementation of sharia," Mr. Pipes said. "It is much easier to see how, working through the system -- the school system, the media, the religious organizations, the government, businesses and the like -- you can promote radical Islam."

Mr. Pipes refers to this new enemy as the "lawful Islamists."

They are carrying out a "soft jihad," said Jeffrey Wiesenfeld, a trustee of the City University of New York and a vocal opponent of the Khalil Gibran school.

Muslim leaders, academics and others see the drive against the school as the latest in a series of discriminatory attacks intended to distort the truth and play on Americans' fear of terrorism. They say the campaign is also part of a wider effort to silence critics of Washington's policy on Israel and the Middle East.

"This is a political, ideological agenda," said John Esposito, a professor of international affairs and Islamic studies at Georgetown University who has been a focus of Mr. Pipes's scrutiny. "It's an agenda to paint Islam, not just extremists, as a major problem."

That portrait, Muslim and Arab advocates contend, is rife with a bias that would never be tolerated were it directed at other ethnic or religious groups. And if Ms. Almontaser's story is any indication, they say, the message of her critics wields great power.

Ms. Almontaser watched city officials and some of her closest Jewish allies distance themselves from her as the controversy reached its peak. She was ultimately felled by an article in The New York Post that said she had "downplayed the significance" of T-shirts bearing the slogan "Intifada NYC."

Last month, federal judges issued a ruling -- related to a lawsuit brought by Ms. Almontaser to regain her job -- stating that her words were "inaccurately reported by The Post and then misconstrued by the press."

While city officials and the Education Department declined to comment about Ms. Almontaser because of the lawsuit, a lawyer for the city said she had not been forced to resign.

In her first interview since stepping down, Ms. Almontaser said that education officials had pressured her to speak to The Post and had monitored the conversation. After the article was published, she said, the department issued a written apology in her name, without her approval.

"I kept saying I wanted to set the record straight," said Ms. Almontaser, 40. "And they kept telling me, 'You can't undo what was done.' "A Call to Lead

In April 2005, Debbie Almontaser got a telephone call that would change her life. The man on the line, Adam Rubin, worked for a nonprofit organization, New Visions for Public Schools. He was exploring whether to help the city create a public school that would teach Arabic. The group already had seed money -- a \$400,000 grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation -- but needed the right person to help lead the venture.

Everywhere Mr. Rubin went -- from the mayor's office to a falafel stand in Brooklyn -- people mentioned Ms. Almontaser. She was a teacher, a native Arabic speaker and arguably the city's most visible Arab-American woman.

## Her Dream, Branded as a Threat

After 9/11, Education Department officials had enlisted Ms. Almontaser to hold workshops on cultural sensitivity for schoolchildren. She spread the message that Islam was a peaceful religion. She told of how her own son had served as a National Guardsman in the clearing effort at ground zero. She was soon attending interfaith seminars, befriending rabbis and priests. Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg honored her publicly. She became a ready commentator for the media, prompting some Muslims to joke that she was the city's "talking hijabi."

In fact, it had taken a long time for Ms. Almontaser to embrace the hijab, or head scarf. Born in Yemen, she was 3 when she moved with her family to Buffalo. Her parents encouraged her to blend in. She called herself Debbie rather than Dhabah, her given name. She began wearing a veil in her 20s, as a Brooklyn mother whose life revolved around PTA meetings and Boy Scout trips. She took to riding on the back of her husband's motorcycle, her head scarf tucked beneath a black helmet. She got used to the stares and learned to be unapologetic.

In the months following the Sept. 11 attacks, she offered other Muslim women the lessons she had learned: "The only way to claim this as your country is to continue on with your life here," she recalled telling them.

For years, Ms. Almontaser had hoped to become a principal. But soon after joining hands with New Visions, she faced her first challenge. To administer the Gates grant, the school needed a community partner. Two groups wanted the job: a secular Arab-American social services agency and a Muslim-led organization that runs Al-Noor School, a private Islamic establishment in Sunset Park, Brooklyn.

Ms. Almontaser said she tried to remain neutral as discord erupted between the two groups. Quietly, though, she worried that if an organization linked to a private Islamic school took the lead, the city would never approve the project, despite the group's pledge to keep religion out of the curriculum.

Ultimately, a steering committee led by Ms. Almontaser voted in favor of the social services agency. Leaders of the Muslim group walked away feeling disrespected and distrustful of her, several of the group's members said in interviews. It was a rupture that would come back to haunt Ms. Almontaser.

As preparations moved forward, a design team assembled by Ms. Almontaser named the school after the Lebanese Christian poet and pacifist Khalil Gibran. A Palestinian immigrant had suggested the name, hoping it would deflect any concerns that the school carried a Muslim orientation.

In February 2007, the Department of Education announced that the school had been approved. It would eventually encompass grades 6 through 12, teach half of its classes in Arabic and be among 67 schools in the city that offer programs in both English and another language, like Russian, Spanish and Chinese. Ms. Almontaser designed a recruitment brochure to attract the school's first class of sixth graders.

The leaflet cited the words of Mr. Gibran: "In understanding, all walls shall fall down."

### Opposition Forms

Irene Alter, a peppy, retired Queens schoolteacher, was sitting at her computer one morning that February when she read an article in The New York Times about the Khalil Gibran school, she said. A series of questions flooded her head.

Which courses would be taught in Arabic? How would Israel be treated in the study of Middle Eastern history? Then in April, she read an op-ed article by Mr. Pipes in The New York Sun.

Conceptually, such a school could be "marvelous," Mr. Pipes wrote, but in practice, it was certain to be problematic. "Arabic-language instruction is inevitably laden with Pan-Arabist and Islamist baggage," he wrote, referring to the school as a madrassa, which means school in Arabic but, in the West, carries the implication of Islamic teaching.

Given how little Mr. Pipes knew about the school at the time, the word was "a bit of a stretch," he said in a recent interview. He defended its use as a way to "get attention" for the cause. It got the attention of Ms. Alter, 60, who

## Her Dream, Branded as a Threat

contacted Mr. Pipes and, with his encouragement, helped form a grass-roots organization in response to the school project. Mr. Pipes joined the advisory board of the group, which called itself the Stop the Madrassa Coalition.

Mr. Pipes, 58, has emerged as a divisive figure in the post-9/11 era. An author of 12 books who has a doctorate in history from Harvard, he has made a career out of studying and critiquing Islam. His research group, which he established in downtown Philadelphia in the early 1990s, "seeks to define and promote American interests in the Middle East," according to its Web site.

Among his supporters, Mr. Pipes enjoys a heroic status; among his detractors, he is reviled. Those sharply divergent views reflect the passions that infuse Middle Eastern politics, arguably nowhere in the United States more than in New York City.

Mr. Pipes is perhaps best known for Campus Watch, a national initiative he created to scrutinize Middle Eastern programs at colleges and universities. The drive has accused professors of, among other things, being soft on militant Islam and sympathetic to the Palestinian cause. It has stirred widespread controversy and, in some cases, may have undermined professors' bids for tenure.

Mr. Pipes was joined in the monitoring effort by other self-declared watchdogs of militant Islam. Their Web sites are often linked to one another and their messages interwoven. One critic, David Horowitz, founded Islamo-Fascism Awareness Week, a campaign aimed at college campuses. He noted in an interview that monitors of radical Islam have increasingly trained their sights on nonviolent Muslim-Americans.

"They don't throw bombs, but they create political cover for ideological support of this jihadi movement," he said.

Mr. Pipes places Muslims in three categories, he said: those who are violent, those who are moderate and those in the middle. It is this middle group, he argued, that now poses the greatest threat to American values.

"Are these people who are not using violence but who are not fully enthusiastic about this country and its mores, its culture -- are they on our side or are they on the other side?" he asked.

Ms. Almontaser never considered herself unenthusiastic about America, she said. But as the conflict over the Khalil Gibran school intensified, she came to be seen by many through Mr. Pipes's lens. In his article in *The Sun*, he referred to Ms. Almontaser by her birth name, Dhabah, and called her views "extremist." He cited an article in which she was quoted as saying about 9/11, "I don't recognize the people who committed the attacks as either Arabs or Muslims." (As *The Jewish Week* later reported, Mr. Pipes left out the second half of the quote: "Those people who did it have stolen my identity as an Arab and have stolen my religion.")

The Stop the Madrassa Coalition focused primarily on Ms. Almontaser as a strategy, said Mr. Pipes, because the group could get little information about the school itself. The coalition quickly publicized several discoveries. Ms. Almontaser had accepted an award from the Council on American-Islamic Relations, a national Muslim organization that critics claim has ties to terrorist groups (an assertion the group adamantly denies). In news articles, Ms. Almontaser had been critical of American foreign policy and police tactics in fighting terrorism. She also gave \$2,000 to Representative Cynthia A. McKinney of Georgia, whom Mr. Pipes and others have characterized as an Islamist sympathizer. (Ms. McKinney, who is no longer in office and did not respond to requests for an interview, has had a strong following among Arab-Americans in part because of her criticism of the Patriot Act.)

Critics of the Madrassa Coalition say its tactics are typical of campaigns singling out Muslims: They lean heavily on guilt by association. The nuances of the claims against Ms. Almontaser were lost as the controversy lit up the blogosphere, said Chip Berlet, a senior analyst at Political Research Associates, a liberal organization outside Boston that studies the political right. One Web site, *MilitantIslamMonitor.org*, displayed photographs of Ms. Almontaser wearing her hijab in different styles, suggesting that she had undergone a public relations makeover to "disguise" her "Islamist agenda." The criticism of Ms. Almontaser and the school spread to newspapers, eliciting negative editorials in *The Daily News* and *The New York Sun*.

## Her Dream, Branded as a Threat

Ms. Almontaser was stunned, she said: Her school would touch upon religion only in its global studies class, following the same curriculum as all New York public schools. She tried to keep her head down, she said, and set out to recruit students, half of whom she hoped would be Arab. But opposition to the school mounted after critics learned that its advisory council included three imams (along with rabbis and priests), that there would be an internship for students with a Muslim lawyers' association and that the proposal for the school suggested it might offer halal food. (The advisory council never met and has since been dismantled, and the school does not offer halal food, Education Department officials said.)

As the attacks continued, Joel Levy of the New York chapter of the Anti-Defamation League published a letter defending Ms. Almontaser in The Sun. Mr. Levy made reference to the possibility that his organization would provide anti-bias training to Ms. Almontaser's staff.

The letter caused a stir among some Arab-Americans, who were bothered by Ms. Almontaser's ties to Jewish groups. In late June, Aramica, an Arabic and English newspaper based in Brooklyn, ran a cover story with the headline "Zionist Organization Supports Gibran School Principal," focusing on the link between Ms. Almontaser's school and the Anti-Defamation League.

In just five months, Ms. Almontaser's image had been transformed. She was rendered a radical Muslim by one group and a sellout by another.

### T-Shirts, and a Resignation

At first, some city officials rallied to Ms. Almontaser's side. Among them was David Cantor, the chief spokesman for the Department of Education, who wrote in an e-mail message to the editor of The New York Sun, Seth Lipsky: "I won't allow Dan Pipes a free pass to smear Debbie Almontaser as an Islamist proselytizer who denies Muslim involvement in 9/11. It is a false picture and an ugly effort."

But behind closed doors, department officials were nervous, Ms. Almontaser recalled. With her help, she said, they drafted a confidential memo of talking points to review with reporters: the school was "nonreligious," for example, and Ms. Almontaser was a "multicultural specialist and diversity consultant."

The Stop the Madrassa Coalition pressed its campaign. In July, one of its members, Pamela Hall, made a discovery that would elevate the controversy. At an Arab-American festival in Brooklyn, she spotted T-shirts on a table bearing the words "Intifada NYC." The organization distributing them, Arab Women Active in the Arts and Media, trains young women in community organizing and media production. The group sometimes uses the office of a Yemeni-American association in Bay Ridge, Brooklyn. Ms. Almontaser sits on the association's board.

Ms. Hall took a photograph, and a few weeks later, the coalition announced on its blog that Ms. Almontaser was linked to the T-shirts.

On Aug. 3, Ms. Almontaser received a call from Melody Meyer, a spokeswoman for the Education Department. "What does 'Intifada NYC' mean?" Ms. Almontaser recalled Ms. Meyer asking.

Ms. Almontaser was stumped, she said. She knew of the group. But she had never heard about the T-shirts, she said she told Ms. Meyer, adding that "intifada" meant "uprising" and was linked to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Most reporters lost interest in the T-shirts after Ms. Meyer explained that neither Ms. Almontaser nor the school was linked to them, but The Post persisted. Ms. Almontaser said Ms. Meyer and Mr. Cantor pressured her to respond to the newspaper in an interview.

"I said, 'Wait a minute,' " recalled Ms. Almontaser, who was critical of The Post's coverage of Arabs and Muslims. "I am not comfortable doing the interview.' "

Ms. Meyer promised to monitor the conversation, Ms. Almontaser said, and Mr. Cantor instructed her not to be "apologetic" about the T-shirts. While both Ms. Meyer and Mr. Cantor said they could not comment on the case, a

## Her Dream, Branded as a Threat

city lawyer said that Ms. Almontaser was told to avoid discussing the T-shirts and intifada altogether, and was never pressured to speak to The Post.

During the Post interview, Ms. Almontaser said, she told the reporter, Chuck Bennett, that the Arab women's organization was not connected to her or the school, and that she would never be affiliated with any group that condoned violence. Then Mr. Bennett asked her for the origins of the word intifada, she said.

"The educator in me responded," Ms. Almontaser said. She explained, with Ms. Meyer listening in on the three-way phone call, that the root of the word means "shaking off." Ms. Almontaser then offered what she described as a lengthy explanation about the evolution of the word and the "negative connotation" it had developed because of the Arab-Israeli struggle.

"The thought went across my mind to be extremely careful with my words -- not to offend the Jewish community and not to offend the Arab-American community," she said. "I was feeling pressure from all sides."

Although Ms. Almontaser said she never spoke to the reporter about the T-shirts, she defended the girls in the organization because she believed that the reporter was set on "vilifying innocent teenagers."

After the reporter hung up, Ms. Almontaser recalled, Ms. Meyer told her, "Good job."

The next day, The Post ran the article under the headline "City Principal Is 'Revolted' -- Tied to 'Intifada NYC' Shirts." The article quoted Ms. Almontaser as saying that the girls in the organization were "shaking off oppression," words that The Post, according to a ruling by federal appellate judges, attributed to Ms. Almontaser "incorrectly and misleadingly."

Complaints about Ms. Almontaser began pouring into the Education Department, and Mr. Cantor informed her that an apology would be issued in her name. Ms. Almontaser objected, she said, and asked that the department clarify her comments to The Post, which she said were distorted, rather than apologize.

Mr. Cantor insisted on an apology, she said, and e-mailed her the proposed wording. The first sentence was not negotiable, she recalled him telling her. The apology began: "The use of the word intifada is completely inappropriate as a T-shirt slogan for teenagers. I regret suggesting otherwise." Ms. Almontaser responded in an e-mail message that Mr. Cantor should change the latter sentence to "I regret my response was interpreted as suggesting otherwise."

The press office issued the original apology. Pressure soon mounted for Ms. Almontaser to resign. Randi Weingarten, the head of the teachers' union, published a letter in The Post criticizing Ms. Almontaser for not denouncing "ideas tied to violence." On Aug. 9, Deputy Mayor Dennis M. Walcott asked Ms. Almontaser to step down, she said. "The mayor wants your resignation by 8 a.m. tomorrow so he can announce it on his radio show," Ms. Almontaser recalled Mr. Walcott saying.

She said he promised her that in exchange for her resignation, the school would still open, and she would remain employed. She resigned the next day, taking an administrative job at the Education Department. She kept her principal's salary of \$120,000.

On his radio program, Mayor Bloomberg announced that Ms. Almontaser had "submitted her resignation," which "was nice of her to do."

"She's certainly not a terrorist," he said, adding that she was not "all that media savvy maybe."

Three days later, Ms. Almontaser was replaced by an interim principal, Danielle Salzberg, who is Jewish and speaks no Arabic.

Chaos in a New School

## Her Dream, Branded as a Threat

On Sept. 4, the Khalil Gibran International Academy opened its doors at 345 Dean Street as parents ushered their children past a throng of reporters, photographers and television crews.

Chaos soon erupted inside. Students cut classes and got into fights with little consequence, said staff members, parents and students. At least 12 of the 60 students showed signs of behavioral problems or learning disabilities, said Leslie Kahn, a licensed social worker and counselor who was employed at the school until January. (Education Department officials, who denied repeated requests by The Times to visit the school, said there are currently six special-needs students there.)

"Something is flying through the air, every class, every day," Sean R. Grogan, a science teacher at the school, said in an interview. "Kids bang on the partitions, yell and scream, curse and swear. It's out of control."

Physical altercations are frequent, Mr. Grogan and others said, with Arab students and teachers the target of ethnic slurs. "I just don't feel safe," said an Arab-American student, 11, who will not return to the school next year.

In the first days after Ms. Almontaser resigned, she felt numb, she said. Her support among Arab-Muslims remained uneven. Had she not alienated some who wanted more of a role in the school's creation, "the whole community would have stood behind her," said Wael Mousfar, president of the Arab Muslim American Federation. "A lot of our kids would be part of that school."

Ms. Almontaser soon found herself flanked by a new group of supporters, including Jewish and Muslim activists, who began lobbying for her to be reinstated as the school's principal. On Oct. 16, Ms. Almontaser announced that she was suing the Education Department and the mayor. She claimed that her First Amendment rights had been violated because she was forced to resign after she was quoted as saying something controversial.

She requested that the city be prevented from hiring a permanent principal until her case was resolved. A judge rejected the request, and Ms. Almontaser appealed. In March, a federal appeals court upheld the ruling, but the judges were sharply critical of the city's handling of Ms. Almontaser's case.

"This was a situation where she was subject to sanction not for anything she said, not for anything she did, but because a newspaper reporter twisted what she said and the result of it was negative press for the city and the Board of Ed," Judge Jon O. Newman told a city lawyer at a hearing in February.

Ms. Almontaser's case will proceed in the Federal District Court in Manhattan.

The Stop the Madrassa Coalition continues to protest the school. The group sued the Department of Education in October, requesting detailed information about the school's creation, faculty and curriculum. While the department has handed over thousands of records, the coalition's lawyer said the documents leave many questions unanswered, including which textbooks the school is using to teach Arabic. A department spokeswoman said that a list of textbooks selected for the school was sent to the lawyer last fall.

The coalition has also broadened the reach of its campaign. Some members have joined with the Center for Policy Research in American Education, a new organization that will research the influence of radical Islam on public schools around the country.

In recent weeks, conditions at the Khalil Gibran school have improved, said several students and staff members. Holly Anne Reichert, who was appointed as the permanent principal in January, said in an interview that she had reduced some of the disruptive behavior by minimizing class sizes. She added that the media attention had led to a "chaotic experience" for students. "Adults have created this, and children are the ones who have had to endure," she said.

The school will move to a larger space in Fort Greene, Brooklyn, by next fall.

Ms. Almontaser still attends interfaith dinners and awards ceremonies. During the day, she works for the city's Office of School and Youth Development. Part of her job entails evaluating other schools.

## Her Dream, Branded as a Threat

In an odd twist of fate, she was sent to the Bronx last fall to review a small, innovative school that had opened the same month as Khalil Gibran. It also taught a foreign language: Spanish. The students seemed to be thriving. As Ms. Almontaser walked the hallways, she was shaken, she said.

"It wasn't that I was envious that her dream materialized," said Ms. Almontaser, referring to the principal. "It was seeing her sixth graders, her teachers, and seeing that she did it. And I didn't get a chance."

<http://www.nytimes.com>

## Graphic

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PHOTOS: Debbie Almontaser, labeled a "jihadist" by some opponents, amid supporters at a church in Brooklyn in January.(PHOTOGRAPH BY JAMES ESTRIN/THE NEW YORK TIMES)(pg. A1)

FIGHTING BACK: Debbie Almontaser, who built ties with Christians and Jews, announced in October that she would sue to be reinstated as principal.(PHOTOGRAPH BY ANNIE TRITT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

PROTEST: Opponents of the school outside City Hall in January: Stuart Kaufman, center, Irene Alter and, in the rear, Jeffrey Wiesenfeld.(PHOTOGRAPH BY NICOLE BENGIVENO/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Daniel Pipes

Debbie Almontaser(pg. A16) CHART: A Call to Lead: In April 2005, Debbie Almontaser got a telephone call that would change her life. The man on the line, Adam Rubin, worked for a nonprofit organization, New Visions for Public Schools. He was exploring whether to help the city create a public school that would teach Arabic. The group already had seed money -- a \$400,000 grant from the Bill

The Evolution of a School Controversy. Chart details timetable for various dates of interest. (pg. A16)

**Load-Date:** April 28, 2008

## **WHERE ALAA AL ASWANY IS WRITING FROM**

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Pankaj Mishra is the author of "Temptations of the West: How to Be Modern in India, Pakistan, Tibet and Beyond." His last article for the magazine was on Wang Hui, the Chinese New Leftist.

### **Body**

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One evening last fall I joined a small crowd in a dusty room off busy Qasr-Al-Nil street in Cairo, facing a banner that read, "Welcome to the Cultural Salon of Dr. Alaa Al Aswany." Many of those seated around me seemed to be simple celebrity spotters, there to see in the flesh the biggest-selling novelist in Arabic, Al Aswany, who is also an increasingly bold critic of President Hosni Mubarak's regime, which in Egypt has held power uninterrupted for 27 years. The rest appeared to be aspiring writers or students eager for literary and political instruction. Austerely furnished with a single fluorescent light, half-broken chairs and a solitary table scarred with overlapping teacup rings, the room defused all expectations of literary glamour. Nevertheless, it offered a frisson of political danger. When the salon was held the previous year, Egyptian intelligence agents so intimidated the owner of the cafe where the meeting was taking place that he screamed at Al Aswany and his audience to go away. He later apologized, explaining that he had done it for the sake of the government spies who were watching him.

This year the weekly salon was being held, more provocatively, in the office of Karama, a center-left political party that is still awaiting full official recognition. (Political parties in Egypt have to be licensed by the government; the most influential "illegal" party is the Islamist Muslim Brotherhood, whose candidates, standing as independents, won 20 percent of the parliamentary seats in 2005 and now form the biggest opposition bloc to the ruling National Democratic Party.) Al Aswany, a barrel-chested giant with a disarmingly genial manner, usually walks to the salon from his office-cum-residence in nearby Garden City, a British-built, elegant Cairo neighborhood, where he combines his decades-long practice of dentistry with an increasingly successful literary career. On the September evening I attended the salon, he was late. It turned out that he had been inquiring into the fate of his friend Ibrahim Eissa, the editor of the antigovernment newspaper Al Dustour, who had been interrogated for nearly seven hours by security agents early in the week for spreading "false" rumors about Mubarak's health.

It was warm inside the unventilated room where cigarette smoke hung in straight sharp columns. From where I sat, I could see a photograph of a handsome man in military uniform. It was Gamal Abdel Nasser, president of Egypt from 1954 to 1970. Grime covered the laminated picture as thickly as it did everything else in the party office, which, surrounded by naked-brick buildings, suggested hard days and nights of often fruitless idealism. But there was an especially forlorn quality to the image of Egypt's greatest postcolonial leader -- the secular nationalist (and dictator) who was the icon of Arab and third-world unity before he lost the Six Day War of 1967 to Israel and was repudiated by his own successors.



## WHERE ALAA AL ASWANY IS WRITING FROM

As though underlining Nasser's failure to build a modern and secular Egypt, there were budding Islamists in the audience that evening: two thin young men, most likely students, wearing piously long beards. Defiantly asserting their faith in a secular setting, they invited curious, even slightly hostile, glances, especially from a woman with dyed blond hair who wore stilettos and a purple T-shirt over tight white pants. A balding middle-aged man, who while we waited for Al Aswany smilingly passed around copies of a book with a glossy green cover (self-published, it was dedicated to "all the oppressed people in the world"), ignored the young men.

Silence fell as Al Aswany, wearing a bright yellow short-sleeved shirt, entered the room. After some brief remarks about the books to be discussed the following week, he began to speak about the evening's topic, "art and religion." Initially slow, he gathered speed until something like passion appeared in his Arabic speech, and he leaned forward on the table and waved his long thick arms.

He described the controversies surrounding Salman Rushdie and the Danish cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad, explaining why the two realms of art and religion, which in the West were typically seen as separate, often clashed. It was a complicated argument, and I could follow only some of it in the translation provided by my interpreter. But the bearded young men diligently took notes and then were the first to raise their hands after Al Aswany, exhausted from his exertions, collapsed back in his chair and invited questions from the audience. "Why," one of them asked, "did Salman Rushdie's novel" -- "The Satanic Verses" -- "which insulted Islam, receive so much prominence in the West?"

It was at just at that moment that Al Aswany's cellphone rang. He glanced at the screen and then briskly excused himself from the room. His listeners, rapt so far, relaxed in his absence, pulling out their own phones. Al Aswany returned to his chair, and beads of sweat broke out on his forehead as he tried to explain, again leaning forward and gesticulating with his hands.

"Rushdie," he began, "is a good writer. I haven't read 'The Satanic Verses,' but whatever was in the novel did not justify Khomeini's fatwa against him. Islam doesn't give anyone the right to kill." He stressed the importance of compassion in Islam by recounting a story of the prophet. One day his grandsons jumped on his back when he was bent in prayer. Such was the prophet's kindness to people weaker than him that he extended his prayer so as not to disturb the children. Indeed, he would often cut short his sermon if he heard a baby crying, and he forbade the cutting of trees even during war. "How can anyone," Al Aswany asked, "use the same prophet's name to kill? You can see clearly there has been a terrible interpretation of Islam."

The bearded young men wrote faster in their notebooks. Al Aswany was just warming to his theme. The Islam, he continued, of Egypt and other large metropolitan civilizations like Baghdad and Damascus had been marked by tolerance and pluralism. It couldn't be more different from the Islam of the desert, such as had developed in Saudi Arabia. Desert nomads did not have much time for art; they hadn't created any. The tragedy for Egypt was that it now had to deal with the philistine and intolerant versions of Islam coming from places like Saudi Arabia. All the battles won in Egypt after the 1919 and 1952 revolutions -- especially the battle for women's rights -- had to be refought.

Looking directly at the bearded young men, he said: "The Muslim Brotherhood says, 'Islam is the solution.' So when you oppose them, they say, 'You are opposing Islam.' It's very dangerous. Very dangerous." He repeated in a louder voice: "In politics, you have to have political solutions. What does it mean to say, 'Islam is the solution'?"

By the end of this speech, Al Aswany was gesticulating furiously. Later, surrounded by reverent fans in the corridor, patiently signing autographs and receiving unsolicited books, he seemed calmer. But some of his exasperated passion of the previous few minutes returned when he looked up and saw me. As the small crowd around him gaped, he said: "Did you see those confused young men? This is the big problem today in Egypt. You have the dictatorship, and then you have the Muslim Brotherhood. People's thinking is limited by these two options. Young people in my time were not so confused. My generation, we of the left, knew where we stood. These young men don't know what is what. So I have to explain everything to them."

The role of the explainer comes easily to Al Aswany, a gregarious, well-read man in his early 50s. For more than 10 years he has hosted his salon, which is democratically open to all. "I have to keep my connection open with

## WHERE ALAA AL ASWANY IS WRITING FROM

normal people," he says. "One bad thing that happens when you get famous is that you lose contact with ordinary people. It is very unhealthy." Since 1993 he has written a monthly column on the political and social issues of the day for *Al Arabi*, a small Nasserite weekly. He is also a member of Kifaya (literally, "Enough"), an umbrella group of political parties, human rights organizations and other N.G.O.'s that frequently stages street protests in Cairo against Mubarak's regime.

After years of political and intellectual stasis, a new opposition has begun to rise among Cairo's middle class in response to an increasingly repressive state. Al Aswany is the most famous member of Cairo's very small but vibrant civil society, which includes moderate Islamists as well as young bloggers and techies who use Facebook, YouTube and text messaging to report human rights violations and organize political campaigns. "A writer," he told me, "is never neutral, and he is always more than a writer. He is also a citizen with responsibility toward the society he lives in." Al Aswany says he believes that his own responsibility has never been greater as Egypt's largely poor 80 million people confront severe unemployment and inflation and as politicians collude with businessmen to sell off public property. "We are in the worst phase of our history," he told me. "Inequality has never been so extreme, and the Egyptian government has failed in all fields -- health, education, democracy, everything."

Egyptian journalists with milder views than those that Al Aswany often airs in his newspaper columns and interviews have invited the malevolence of Mubarak's regime. Last September, three editors were convicted of publishing "false" news about the government and sentenced to a year in prison after writing articles critical of Mubarak and his son and putative heir, Gamal. Al Aswany readily acknowledges that he is now protected by the international fame that he acquired after the publication and phenomenal success of his novel "The Yacoubian Building" in 2002.

There are no reliable sales figures in Arab publishing, where print runs are kept secret and writers rarely receive royalties. Humphrey Davies, the translator of Al Aswany's novel, who lives in Cairo, says that "The Yacoubian Building" sold hundreds of thousands of copies -- a breakthrough in a country with 50 percent illiteracy. Published in more than a dozen foreign languages, it was even, according to Al Aswany, printed in a pirated Hebrew edition in Israel, which is officially boycotted by the Arab Writers Union. Adapted in 2006 into a box-office hit starring Arab cinema's most famous actors, it is still selling and has been joined on the charts by Al Aswany's second novel, "Chicago," which is doing well even though it was serialized in *Al Dustour*.

Al Aswany's obsessive urge to understand and explain the physical and moral rot of contemporary Egypt is what drives "The Yacoubian Building," which was translated into English in 2006. Few Arab novelists published abroad can avoid comparisons to Naguib Mahfouz, and "The Yacoubian Building" brings to mind not so much the pre-1952 city of "The Cairo Trilogy" as the Egyptian master's portrait of Nasser's Egypt in the novel "Miramar," which is set in a diversely populated pensione in Alexandria. But Al Aswany has none of Mahfouz's carefully oblique manner. Written in a blunt expository style, "The Yacoubian Building" depicts a society in which the unequal distribution of wealth and power cruelly distorts all human relations. The novel's most sympathetic character is a young woman who is forced to endure much sexual indignity at work in order to keep her job and feed her family. The son of the building's doorkeeper, who is deeply disadvantaged by his lowly birth and lack of connections, turns to radical Islam after being tortured in police custody. Meanwhile, the gay, half-French editor of a Cairo newspaper seduces a married and desperately poor soldier, only to be murdered by him in one of the novel's more lurid scenes.

Al Aswany expends his greatest scorn on the corruption and hypocrisy of the powerful, like the pious businessman-politician with a sideline in drug trafficking, who recites the Fatiha, the opening verses of the Koran, before striking the most corrupt deals and who kidnaps his second wife and has her drugged in order to abort their child. Presiding over the tableau of oppression and misery is the Big Man, the invisible dictator, and here Al Aswany makes his sole concession to Egypt's censors -- and to symbolism -- by representing him as a disembodied voice echoing in a monstrously large palace.

Remarkably, there is no Big Man in the movie version, which is otherwise faithful to the novel. When I saw Al Aswany in London last fall, he told me that he had not been invited to the movie's premiere in Cairo. Speaking freely one late night, he confirmed Cairo gossip that people involved in the production were close to Gamal Mubarak, who is being groomed to inherit power. He suspected that the authorities backed the film, which is the

## WHERE ALAA AL ASWANY IS WRITING FROM

most expensive Egyptian production ever, because they saw its unflinching depiction of corruption as something that could prepare the public for the emergence of the next Big Man -- who will sweep away everything, including the corrupt old guard. "I don't know if this is true," Al Aswany added, "but anyway, I kept my distance from the film."

We were standing outside a posh restaurant in Soho, Al Aswany chain-smoking with one hand and holding a glass of red wine with another. Fluent in English, French and Spanish (which he says he learned in order to properly savor Latin American writers), Al Aswany initially comes across as a charming and witty cosmopolite. But the urbane manner masks passionately held political opinions. At a literary festival in Toulouse, France, last year, he challenged the Israeli writer Amos Oz on a point of Palestinian history. "I was the only Arab writer there," he recalled. "It was my duty to speak up and correct him. He was sitting next to me. He was very respectful. We shook hands afterwards. But I had to speak the truth."

Earlier in the evening, I saw him at a bookstore in Central London, coolly questioning the assumptions of the predominantly white British audience. Asked about Islamic notions of jihad and martyrdom, he said, "Personally, I prefer sleeping with a woman in this world than going to heaven." Courteously but firmly he dismissed a questioner who asked if he had read a recent book that discussed "the Arab malaise." "You can't make generalizations like that about Arabs," he said. "Egypt, for instance, is a very different place from Saudi Arabia." And he seemed unwilling to let his novel carry the burden of representation that fiction from non-Western countries is often entrusted with in the West. Pressed to make connections between his novel and contemporary Egypt, he said: "My fiction doesn't represent all of Egypt. I am not a sociologist."

Nevertheless, few Egyptians who read "The Yacoubian Building" would fail to recognize their world in it -- torture, for instance, which Al Aswany describes in graphic detail, is routinely used by security forces against suspected Islamists, labor activists and even middle-class bloggers and journalists. In the novel, much of Cairo's 20th-century history is summed up by the vicissitudes of the building itself, the Art Deco original of which stands in Cairo's faded downtown. A colonial bourgeoisie of pashas, cotton millionaires and foreigners live there while the British dominate Egypt. During the revolution of 1952 their apartments are appropriated by military officers, who are, like Nasser, of lower-middle-class or peasant background. In the 1970s, as Anwar Sadat pursues his so-called Open Door economic policies, they depart to gated communities in the suburbs while impoverished migrants from the countryside move into tiny storerooms on the roof.

The Lebanese novelist and critic Elias Khoury has credited Al Aswany's importance to the fact "that he reinvented the popular Egyptian novel, which had died. Literature cannot live without different levels of literary work." The praise seems somewhat pointed. Cairo, I found, has many readers who doubt the literary quality of Al Aswany's work but who, because they share his politics, would not go on record with their criticism. Al Aswany shows a prickly awareness of these discerning critics. "I am writing for ordinary people," he told me. "I want everyone to be able to read my books. The problem with Arab literature has been that it forgot to tell stories and lost its way in experimentation. Too many novels that start with lines like 'I came home to find my wife having sex with a cockroach.' " He names Ernest Hemingway as his main inspiration: "The prose is so cold, but there is so much going on beneath the surface. People think it is easy to write simply. It is not. It is much easier to write in a way no one can understand."

Success may have made Al Aswany only more assured in his populist aesthetic. But much of Al Aswany's confidence and pungency as a writer and cultural critic seem to derive from his belief in Egyptian exceptionalism -- the idea that Egypt, which has such rich cosmopolitan layers of civilization (Pharaonic, Roman, Islamic, Mamluk, Ottoman) and which had begun to modernize as early as the 19th century, has been held back by successive dictatorships from realizing its destiny as one of the world's great nations.

Sitting in his dentistry clinic one afternoon in Cairo, he said: "This country has so much talent. We deserve to be so much better. And I am optimistic that we will be. But, you know, the biggest problem with dictatorship is that a dictator doesn't respect his own citizens. If you seize power and you know that the people can't resist you, there is no way you can respect the people. Our prime minister once said that the Egyptian people are not prepared for democracy, and they need 100 more years. I wrote in my column that we have a P.M. who doesn't know the history

## WHERE ALAA AL ASWANY IS WRITING FROM

of his own country. We had the first Parliament in the Arab world, maybe in the third world. In the '20s we had an election in which the P.M. lost his own seat because the elections were so clean."

Some of Al Aswany's passion about Egypt's unfulfilled promise may have been passed down to him by his father, Abbas Al Aswany, a well-known writer in post-1952 Cairo who was part of the cultural ferment that made the city the virtual capital of the Arab world. "My father," he says, "belonged to the educated generation from the 1940s that had struggled against the British. So there were painters, writers, movie directors in our home, discussing everything about Egypt very passionately, as though they were private problems. And we were all liberals. Whoever wanted to pray, prayed; whoever wanted to drink, drank; whoever wanted to fast, fasted."

Al Aswany's vision of a secular and democratic Egypt seems firmly rooted in his memories of a liberal Muslim upbringing. Born in 1957, a year after Israel briefly occupied the Sinai Peninsula during the Suez conflict, Al Aswany was schooled at the Lycee Francais, which had, he remembers, Jewish students and supervisors. "You have to remember that our struggle for independence was led by a totally secular party, the Wafd," he says. "For them there were no Muslims or Jews, only citizens." But Nasser's regime expelled many non-Muslim Egyptians, confiscating their property; Egypt barely has a Jewish community today. Al Aswany's nostalgia for Egypt's fleeting moment of cultural glory in the '50s and '60s makes him overestimate not only the liberal atmosphere of the country under Nasser but also the strength of non-Islamist opposition today. If free and fair elections were held now, he told me, the liberal-left parties would get the same amount of seats as the Muslim Brotherhood. This is optimistic at best.

Al Aswany claims that the "dynamic" postcolonial culture created by the secular left in Egypt survived until the mid-70s, when Anwar Sadat, overturning Nasser's pro-Soviet socialist policies, began to liberalize the economy and move closer to the United States. "When I went to Cairo University in 1976, the left was very powerful," he told me. "That's why Sadat encouraged the Muslim Brotherhood against us. He banned all the political groups, except the M.B. at the university. This is something that people in America don't understand -- the way the dictatorships use the Islamists against liberals and social democrats. Today we have Mr. Mubarak using the fear of the Muslim Brotherhood to fool the Americans and liberals and maintain himself in power."

In 1981, when Sadat was assassinated by Islamists angered by his peace treaty with Israel, Al Aswany was a resident in the oral surgery department of Cairo University. In Egypt it is a grand job, and when Al Aswany resigned from it, he was considered "crazy" by everyone, he says, including his wife at the time, also a dentistry student. (The marriage broke up in 1987; Al Aswany maintains an old-fashioned reserve about his second marriage to an accountant in 1993.) "I wanted to be a writer, that was my first priority, and I couldn't do it while I was working," he told me. "But people couldn't understand this in Egypt where writing didn't pay and even Naguib Mahfouz worked as a civil servant all his life."

In 1984, Al Aswany traveled to the University of Illinois in Chicago on a fellowship. He says that his three years studying for a master's degree in dentistry in the United States was the most important period in his life. He admits that he had a caricature vision of America, but his travels and discoveries -- of, among other things, a gay church and a black-pride organization -- convinced him that there was more to the United States than what he calls its "imperialism" in the Arab world.

"Most ordinary Arabs see Americans as invaders and occupiers, who are coming here to steal the oil," he says. "For liberals like us in Egypt, who hate these pro-American dictatorships and want democracy, America is a bigger problem. It is the place where democracy as well as imperialism comes from. So how do we take what we want from the West? For me, George Bush is not the West; it is Hemingway and Shakespeare. But I was very lucky. I had the opportunity to study in America, to have American friends, girlfriends. You must have an American experience to know how decent and kind-hearted the people are and also how they don't know much about their government's foreign policy."

One of Al Aswany's most crucial friendships in Chicago was with a professor of dentistry, who had embraced radical politics in the '60s. "Through him," he recalls, "I learned how much American politics was moving to the right in the '80s." The professor appears, mostly undisguised, in "Chicago," a campus novel that, though set in the post-

## WHERE ALAA AL ASWANY IS WRITING FROM

9/11 period, seems largely drawn from Al Aswany's own experience as one of the few politically independent Egyptian students in the city in the mid-80s.

The novel, which was featured on the front page of *Le Monde* last year before becoming an instant best seller in France, will be published by HarperCollins in the United States this fall. "I am very curious to see how an Arab novelist writing about America is received by Americans," Al Aswany told me. He may be disappointed. "Chicago" has the same soap-opera-like structure, deliberate cross section of characters and embedded denunciation of dictatorship as "The Yacoubian Building." Al Aswany drenches some of his Egyptian characters in the visceral hatred he feels for the Egyptian regime and its enforcers, like the intelligence agent at the Egyptian Embassy in Washington who bullies Egyptian students into affirming their loyalty to their supreme leader. His depictions of America promise the bracing perspective of an outsider; he knows well, for instance, the hard-working foreign student's natural bitterness toward his seemingly privileged American peers. But many of the main American characters in "Chicago" more explicitly advertise their author's sociopolitical concerns -- like Carol, the black single mother who is driven by poverty and racial discrimination into having sex with her employer. Sexual sensationalism also enters the novel in the character of Chris, the wife of a liberal Egyptian professor who finally achieves fulfillment with a vibrator.

Al Aswany is refreshingly indifferent, however, to the prospect of fame or fortune in America. Literary agents in New York City plied him with offers after the international success of "The Yacoubian Building," but he remains loyal to the American University of Cairo Press, which serves as his representative outside Egypt. When I met him at his home in Garden City, where the doorbell plays "Jingle Bells" and where he works for three hours every morning on a laptop near a large leather dentist's chair, he appeared to be preoccupied by a deep and abiding anxiety about his country. "I could have gone," he told me, "to any country in the gulf after an American degree and made a lot of money. But I was very clear in my mind when I returned from America. You have to live within your society in order to write about it."

Yet there was a time when Al Aswany considered abandoning Egypt. The state publishing house, which alone makes possible proper distribution and extensive reviews of literary fiction in Egypt, rejected all three books of fiction he wrote after his return from Chicago. They had to be printed privately, in such small quantities that they were more or less invisible to the ordinary reader. In 1997, Al Aswany received a fourth rejection letter. Remembering what he calls "the worst day of my life," he recounted with some lingering bitterness the farce, worthy of a Milan Kundera novel, of state-controlled publishing: "I called the head of the publishing house. I won't name him; he is a well-known writer in Egypt. He told me: 'We are not going to publish your book. The committee has refused.' I asked, 'Who is the committee?' He said, 'It is a secret committee.' I said, 'I would like to have the committee's report.' He said, 'No report; it is secret.' I said: 'It is a government publishing house. You are paid by the taxpayer. You have the right to say no, but I have the right to know why.' He was really terrible. He said: 'We are not going to publish you ever. You do what you want to do.' "

Crushed by this rejection, Al Aswany conceived a desperate scheme to emigrate to New Zealand. Why New Zealand? "Because it was the farthest place from Egypt on the map. You see, I was very frustrated and angry. I had given up so many things in order to write, but I was getting nowhere. I told my wife that I am beginning another novel -- this was 'The Yacoubian Building.' I will finish it, and then we must go away."

"The Yacoubian Building" was published in 2002 by a private publisher in Cairo. "As usual," Al Aswany recalled, "I expected nothing to happen. Then, the publisher called me after two weeks. 'I have never seen this,' he said. 'It is a phenomenon: we have sold out.' Of course, I changed my mind about immigration." Al Aswany recently ran into the literary commissar who had rejected his book: "I have forgiven him. I was struggling then to publish 2,000 copies. I sold 160,000 in France alone in one year."

A fly entered the room as we spoke. Al Aswany reached for a plastic fly swatter he keeps beside his laptop and then, leaping out of his chair, pranced about the room for a while until with one decisive whack he got his prey. He returned, grinning, to his chair. He was again beaming when I saw him later that day at the Garden City Club, a private member's establishment in an Art Deco building near the Nile. He had some good news. His friend Ibrahim,

## WHERE ALAA AL ASWANY IS WRITING FROM

who had printed reports about the president's health, was no longer under pressure from security agents. (A few months later, in March, Ibrahim was sentenced to six months in prison.)

Drinking Johnnie Walker Red and moving swiftly between Arabic, English and French, Al Aswany became more expansive than usual. He recounted a scene from the Egyptian hit movie "The Embassy Is in the Building," set in the building that housed the Israeli Embassy. The lead actor is making love to one of his mistresses in the missionary position when terrorists fire a missile at the embassy. "Ah, that was a missile," he says. His partner retorts, "Don't exaggerate!"

Repeating the words, Al Aswany began to laugh uproariously. But he soon returned to talking about his friend Ibrahim. "Really, Americans need to keep more of an eye on what their government is doing in their name in places like Egypt," he said, "where it talks about democracy but supports dictatorships. The West is obsessed with terrorism, but if it supported democracy here, there would be no terrorism. They say, 'We want democracy in the Middle East,' and then get scared when Hamas or the Muslim Brotherhood wins. They don't understand that even if people in a democracy vote for the Muslim Brotherhood, they have the chance to see that these people in power are no good and then can vote them out. But if you have only dictatorship, there will be more terrorism."

I reminded him that this was the justification the Bush administration used for the invasion of Iraq. "Ah, no," he retorted, "that was what we call 'moral cover.' In 1882 the British never said, 'We are going to occupy Egypt and take its resources.' They said, 'We are here to protect the minorities.' You must cover your imperialism with something beautiful. No, what we want is to be left alone to build our own democracy. It is American support that maintains people like Mubarak in power."

Al Aswany was joined by the English translator of "Chicago," Farouk Mustafa, a professor of Arabic literature at the University of Chicago, and two female friends, one a film producer and the other Egypt's leading documentary filmmaker. It didn't take long for Al Aswany and his friends, who live outside Egypt, to start a passionate debate about the state of the nation. They lamented the high number of veiled women on the streets and the political passivity of ordinary Egyptians. They argued about Nasser: was he a self-serving dictator or a dedicated nation builder?

The expatriates could see nothing going right in Egypt. Briefly, Al Aswany shared their gloom. He said: "Sometimes I wonder what I'll write. I have written everything, and nothing changes. In Egypt we have freedom to talk but no freedom of speech, and you can do nothing by writing." For a poignant moment in that club, where handsome Nubian waiters moved discreetly through the elegant rooms decorated in a '50s modernist style, Al Aswany appeared, together with his friends, part of a secular nationalist elite overtaken by history. A few minutes and a couple of whiskeys later, he had regained the pedagogical vitality he had shown in his salon a few days earlier. Workers across Egypt, he said, had recently erupted in strikes and demonstrations. Egyptian history was full of instances of public anger erupting spontaneously to create revolutions. "And things are so bad now," he said, pausing for dramatic effect, "that they cannot go on like this. They have to change. I think we are in for a big surprise."

<http://www.nytimes.com>

## Graphic

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PHOTOS: Al Aswany cruising by the Grand Hyatt Hotel near Garden City, the upscale Cairo neighborhood where he writes and fills cavities

Al Aswany presiding over his weekly salon, at which literature, culture and Egyptian politics are open to spirited discussion. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY STEPHANIE SINCLAIR/VI I NETWORK, FOR 46 THE NEW YORK TIMES)

WHERE ALAA AL ASWANY IS WRITING FROM

DIAGRAM: HE'S A SECULARIST

HE'S A DENTIST

AND HE'S ONE OF THE ARAB WORLD'S BEST-SELLING NOVELISTS.

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**Newsmakers of 2007; From Her Majesty to Facebook via Google, Bebo, the Government, Channel 4 and adland, Ian Burrell takes a close look at the people who drove the year's top 50 media stories; THE MEDIA 50**

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## **Body**

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### 1. JAMES MURDOCH

The chosen son is appointed heir to the empire

Having proved wrong those critics who cried "Nepotism!" when he was appointed CEO of BSkyB in 2003, James Murdoch was earlier this month dramatically promoted to a position that puts him at his father's shoulder and makes him the most powerful newspaper executive in Britain. He now heads up News Corp's operations in Europe, Asia and the Middle East, giving him responsibility not only for giant broadcasting networks such as Star TV in Asia and Sky Italia, but also for The Times, The Sunday Times, The Sun and the News of the World. Having just turned 35 he has no real experience of the print business, save for being the son of the most powerful press baron on earth. In his first interview after being appointed he claimed that the newspaper titles were in "pole position not simply to react to change but to drive it, to genuinely set the pace". As the News International papers develop their online presence, Murdoch senior has clearly been impressed with his son's efforts at repositioning BSkyB as a multi-platform player. James has spent much of this year at BSkyB jousting with Richard Branson's Virgin Media, but has delivered sound business results and, as non-executive chairman, he will retain a strong interest in the broadcaster. afp/getty

### 2. ERIC SCHMIDT

The King of Search grows in profits and profile

The Google CEO has emerged from the shadow of founders Sergey Brin and Larry Page to become the figurehead of the ubiquitous internet search engine, which turns over more than \$10bn a year. Greater use of mobile phone-based searches helped give Google a 46 per cent lift in profits in the third quarter of this year. In November, Democratic presidential candidate Barack Obama visited the Google headquarters in Mountain View to address staff. Schmidt also has a good relationship with David Cameron, who was flown to California in October to address the Google Zeitgeist conference. "You should be proud of the amazing things you accomplish every single day," said the Tory leader to his hosts. Cameron was accompanied in San Francisco by advisor Steve Hilton, whose partner is Rachel Whetstone, Google's European director of communications and public affairs. The trip followed Schmidt's address to the Conservative party conference at Bournemouth in 2006, a speech which had shadow



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chancellor George Osborne thanking the Google CEO for offering Tories "your extraordinary vision of the future".  
reuters

### 3. MARK THOMPSON

The DG wields the axe

As he celebrated his 50th birthday this year, Mark Thompson had to drive through the painful process of reforms that many of his staff blamed on his own failings in negotiating a better licence fee settlement from the Government. The man who as chief executive of Channel 4 had accused the BBC of having a "Jacuzzi of cash", was left to make cuts at the corporation to meet a £2bn funding shortfall. In October he announced his six-year strategy, cutting 2,500 posts, making 1,800 people redundant and reducing original programming by 10 per cent to make a "smaller but fitter BBC". There were plenty in the television industry who thought such reform at the corporation was long overdue but, as the year ended, Thompson faced the prospect of widespread industrial action by BBC staff. reuters

### 4. THE QUEEN

A right royal disaster

Her Majesty's decision to allow RDF Media to make a landmark fly-on-the-wall documentary about the work of the monarchy was significant in itself. But no one could have foreseen that the venture would lead to the downfall of RDF chief Stephen Lambert, previously one of the most respected figures in Britain's independent production sector, and force the resignation of Peter Fincham, the similarly admired controller of BBC1. The root of the problem was a publicity trailer, edited by Lambert, that falsely suggested that the Queen had a hissy fit while being photographed by Annie Leibovitz. The ensuing uproar became the chief focal point for a much wider crisis in a television industry rocked by phone-vote scandals and other fakery. The programme itself, when it was finally screened last month, was an insightful piece of television. reuters

### 5. ED RICHARDS

Watchdog forced to get tough

After being appointed chief executive of the broadcasting watchdog, Ofcom, in October of last year, Richards - far more than his predecessor Stephen Carter - has been obliged to wield the big stick in 2007 as television has undergone its annus Horribilis of lax standards and fakery. In January he had to react to Ofcom's biggest complaints response, more than 44,000, following the bullying of Indian actress Shilpa Shetty on Channel 4's Celebrity Big Brother. In May, the watchdog forced C4 to undergo the humiliation of three times broadcasting the damning adjudication on its handling of the affair. In June, Channel Five was hit with a £300,000 Ofcom fine for faking winners of a phone-in quiz, and the following month the BBC was fined £50,000 for faking a competition on Blue Peter. Before Christmas, Ofcom fined C4 for duping viewers who phoned in to Richard & Judy and Deal or No Deal.

### 6. RUPERT MURDOCH

The biggest media tycoon of them all finally gets his hands on a coveted prize, The Wall Street Journal

In 2006 Murdoch gave a speech in which the owner of MySpace expressed his belief that newspapers had a place in the future, in spite of the new media revolution. This year he was as good as his word as he skilfully and triumphantly concluded his relentless stalking of Dow Jones, the media company that publishes The Wall Street Journal, following a charm offensive on the Bancroft family, which has owned the company for a century. Murdoch, who paid £2.7bn for Dow Jones in August, promptly angered those who feared for the Journal's future by appointing 27-year-old Natalie Bancroft, an opera singer, to represent the family on the WSJ board. He is expected to use the Journal's name to re-brand the business channel of his Fox television network. This month he reconfigured the News Corp management structure to bring his son James to his right hand as his heir in waiting.

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## 7. SIR MICHAEL LYONS

The first chairman of the BBC Trust

Sir Michael was made chairman of the body that replaces the BBC Board of Governors in May and his appointment was soon being criticised because of his background in Labour politics. He pledged his "absolute independence", even though trade unions were soon criticising the trust's "rubber stamping" of a six-year BBC plan to cut 2,500 posts. Lyons argued last month that "genuine efficiency does not affect quality". In a letter to director general Mark Thompson in December, Sir Michael warned the BBC not to allow big entertainment shows to crowd out other quality offerings that it might offer. He is now working with Ofcom and the other public service broadcasters to establish new "best practices" for the industry.

## 8. MICHAEL GRADE

Not quite zero tolerance

No one expected him to turn this one round overnight and in September, 10 months into his new role as executive chairman of ITV, Grade outlined a five-year strategic plan for the broadcaster, putting entertainment at the heart of its offering. It has been a difficult year for Grade, save for his coup of snatching England and FA Cup football rights from the BBC. In March, amid industry-wide concerns over the duping of viewers who phoned shows to participate, he closed down the ITV Play channel - dedicated to such interactive content. Speaking to MPs in July, Grade talked of a "one strike and you're out" policy for dealing with TV deception. Then in October, the accountant Deloitte uncovered serious failings in ITV shows including Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway. No one was fired.

## 9. JAMES PURNELL

New Culture Secretary

Still only 37, Purnell, who came up with the idea of a converged media and telecoms watchdog (ie, what has become Ofcom) when he was a 24-year-old research fellow at the Institute for Public Policy Research, was made Culture Secretary in June. He and the Ofcom chief executive Ed Richards are friends and former colleagues, having worked together as Downing Street advisors. Purnell impressed the media industry with his grasp of the big issues during an earlier spell in the department as a parliamentary-under-secretary, though his reputation for being media astute was undermined somewhat in September when his superimposed image appeared in a photo released to mark the launch of a hospital in his constituency. It was claimed that he had given permission for the doctored picture, though Purnell, who had arrived late for a photo-call, denied this.

## 10. CHRIS DEWOLFE

Finding new space to network

Ignoring claims that their MySpace operation has lost credibility since it sold out to Rupert Murdoch's News Corp for £332m in 2005, DeWolfe and partner Tom Anderson have concentrated on tailoring their offering to more and more countries around the world. Despite intense competition, MySpace has grown to more than 10 million users in the UK. This year the company set up a new European headquarters off Tottenham Court Road in London, and launched new indigenous sites in countries such as Spain and Sweden. The company made its next big play in June with the launch of MySpace TV, an attempt to wrest away YouTube's claims to be the home of online video content.

## 11. LIONEL BARBER

In the pink

While his predecessor Andrew Gowers departed the editor's chair at the Financial Times with gloomy predictions about a medium produced on "dead trees", Lionel Barber has not only continued to develop the title's presence

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online but actually sold more copies of the newspaper as well. Last month's ABC circulation figures showed the FT sale was up by 12,000 on the same time last year, no mean feat in the current market. The pink 'un has come into its own covering the Northern Rock crisis and the credit crunch. Judges at the What The Papers Say awards this month named it Newspaper of the Year and described it as a "truly 21st-century newspaper" - a triumph for Barber, who became editor of the FT in November 2005.

### 13. ROBERT SENIOR

The man of the moment in

London's adland

Having already built Britain's hottest ad agency in Fallon, Senior this year took up a dual role where he is also head honcho at the London offices of Saatchi & Saatchi, possibly the most famous name in advertising. Fallon had another stupendous year, filling Manhattan with Play-Doh bunnies to complete a memorable trilogy for Sony Bravia and then creating the quirky Gorilla ad for Cadbury (see Juan Cabral).

But Senior's greatest triumph was probably at Saatchi's, where he led the successful "Not Flash, Just Gordon" pitch which saw Baroness Thatcher's favourite advertising agency win the Labour Party account shortly after Gordon Brown became Prime Minister.

### 14. JAY HUNT

Walks out on the BBC to go to Five, then comes right back to take plum role at the corporation

The new controller of BBC 1 was only weeks into her new role as director of programmes at Five, when she found herself being sounded out to take control of the nation's biggest television channel and waving goodbye to her new bosses. The Australian-born former head of BBC Daytime had just started at the Covent Garden offices of the commercial broadcaster when Peter Fincham, her predecessor at BBC1, was advised of the untenable nature of his post in the wake of Will Wyatt's "CrownGate" report, and quit. Hunt, who has a strong journalistic pedigree as a former editor of the One and Six O'Clock News bulletins, had indicated that she was committed to Five but changed her mind to take her "dream job". director of BBC Vision Jana Bennett praised the new controller for her "impeccable credentials".

### 15. JAMES HARDING

Youngest-ever editor of The Times

He speaks Chinese and Japanese, not to mention French and German, and at the age of 38 he is the 21st and most youthful occupant of the editor's chair at The Thunderer. He has been promoted from the role of business editor, meaning he is the latest in a succession of business journalists being named editor (Will Lewis of The Daily Telegraph was another, as was Patience Wheatcroft, though she didn't last at The Sunday Telegraph). Harding appears well-liked by colleagues and is clearly admired by Rupert Murdoch, whom he interviewed over three hours in 2002 when he was media editor of the Financial Times. Like his predecessor Robert Thomson, and indeed Murdoch, Harding has a special interest in China, having been the FT's China correspondent and opened that title's Shanghai bureau in the late Nineties.

### 18. ANDY COULSON

Quits from the News of the World only to reappear as the new spin doctor for David Cameron

The year started disastrously for Coulson, when he was obliged to stand down in January over the phone-hacking scandal that led to the jailing of the News of the World's royal correspondent Clive Goodman. His departure was less unseemly than that of his friend Piers Morgan from the Daily Mirror and some speculated that he would be brought back into the News International fold at a later date. But Basildon boy Coulson, a former editor of The Sun's

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"Bizarre" entertainment column, surprised everyone by landing the role of director of communications for the Conservative Party in May.

So far, his efforts have been largely inconspicuous, though his job has been made much easier by the inability of Gordon Brown and his colleagues to avoid bumbling from one mishap to another.

## 19. LES HINTON

Rupert gives favourite lieutenant a top New York role

Liverpudlian Hinton has come a long way since starting out in newspapers at the age of 15. Having overseen News International during a period of intense competition (pouring £600m into new printing presses, launching the London paper, turning The Times compact, among other bold moves), he crosses the Atlantic to become CEO of Dow Jones, the company that owns The Wall Street Journal. In some ways he will be going home. Though he was born in Bootle, emigrated to Australia and honed his journalistic skills on Murdoch's Adelaide News, he showed his management mettle during two decades working on press, magazines and television in the US. The former Times editor Robert Thomson will be going with him as publisher of the Journal.

## 20. SIMON COWELL

The master of the talent show is never idle

Another big year for Cowell, largely thanks to the Got Talent format, which was a godsend for Fremantle and for ITV1's Saturday schedule. Building on the success of America's Got Talent, which he executive produced for NBC, Cowell, 48, launched the Brit version in June, appearing as a judge alongside Piers Morgan and Amanda Holden. He continues to earn £20m per series as a judge on American Idol, which has made him a coast-to-coast celebrity, and is contracted to ITV for £6.5m a year, giving the broadcaster rights to The X Factor, on which he is also a judge and mentor. Through the vehicle of his television production and music publishing empire Syco, he is one of the richest men in television. When This is Your Life relaunched this June with Sir Trevor McDonald as host, Cowell was chosen as the first subject.

## 21. ANDY DUNCAN

Survives a big party and a year of storms

The 25th anniversary year for Channel 4 was not quite the long celebration that it had hoped for. The broadcaster, which likes to say it exists to provoke, was mired in an endless round of controversies that it could not laugh off. Andy Duncan faced calls for his head over the Celebrity Big Brother racism row, which led to Channel 4 being ordered by Ofcom to make an on-air apology. The channel stood its ground during rows over its undercover investigation of Islamic extremism and its use of photography from the scene of the death of the Princess of Wales. It largely won the argument on both. But by the end of the year it was rapped by Ofcom again, with a £1.5m fine over phone-in fakery on Richard & Judy. Duncan meanwhile pressed ahead with plans to transform C4 into a multi-platform offering.

## 22. FRU HAZLITT

Queen of the airwaves

Having been in charge of SMG radio (which gave her control of a roster of stations that included Virgin Radio) for less than two years, the high-energy Hazlitt was poached as the new managing director of GCap London, giving her the tough task of sorting out the ailing Capital Radio, as well as having responsibility for the black station Choice FM. She took up her post in May and in August dealt a further blow to Virgin Radio by hiring its chief executive Paul Jackson. Then this month Hazlitt, a former UK and Ireland managing director of Yahoo!, was promoted to chief executive of GCap Media.

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### 23. JUAN CABRAL

Young Argentinian creative hotshot behind two of the most talked-about campaigns of the year

Juan Cabral's best advertising draws on the memories of his childhood. Having come up with the wheeze of bouncing rubber balls down San Francisco streets to sell colour tellies, the London-based Cabral followed that this year by flooding Foley Square in Manhattan with 200 primary-coloured rabbits made from Play-Doh. The ad, directed by the great Frank Budgen and set to the music of the Rolling Stones, was the latest in the "Colour Like No Other" series by Fallon for Sony Bravia. Not only that, Cabral developed the surreal notion of using a man in a gorilla suit, drumming along to Phil Collins's "In the Air Tonight", to sell Cadbury's Dairy Milk - without so much as a mouthful of chocolate in sight.

### 24. BOB SHENNAN

Radio boss goes from Five to Four

The biggest transfer in the radio world this year was of the Liverpool-supporting former BBC Sport executive, who caused a considerable stir earlier this month by quitting Radio Five Live, which he had run for the past seven years, and heading off to run Channel 4's planned radio operation. Shennan, who also had responsibility for the BBC's Asian Network, had increased the Five Live audience to more than seven million, though recent ratings had been disappointing. Nevertheless, the launch of C4's three radio stations, starting with E4 Radio in July, is expected to lift the entire commercial radio sector and represent a serious challenge to the BBC. Nathalie Schwarz, originally appointed to head up the operation, was promoted to the C4 board.

### 25. JULIE ETCHINGHAM

Shoulder to shoulder with Sir Trevor

In the frenzy of musical chairs that has gone on among Britain's community of newscasters this year, Etchingham has been one of the big winners, landing the plum role of presenting the soon-to-be-relaunched News at Ten on ITV alongside Sir Trevor McDonald. But the Cambridge graduate and former BBC Holiday programme and Newsround presenter does not leave her post at Sky News with her record completely unblemished. In October this year Etchingham left her microphone on while she was listening to David Cameron outlining Conservative Party proposals on immigration. She was clearly heard muttering the word "extermination". Sky described the comment as "regrettable".

### 26. BLAKE CHANDLEE

The new face of Facebook

The undoubted social networking phenomenon of the year was the brainchild of Mark Zuckerberg, 23, back in 2004 but the task for maintaining its position in the UK, where it has taken an extraordinary hold, falls to Blake Chandlee, an American marketer who was recruited this year from Yahoo! Facebook has amassed 12 million active users in the UK and in spite of fears over identity theft, Vodafone ads appearing on a page linked to the BNP and the frustration of British bosses at social networking costing them millions of pounds in lost office time, it looks set to continue to expand, with 200,000 signing up around the world every day. London is now Facebook's largest city network globally.

### 28. EVAN DAVIS

The host of Dragons' Den lands a prized berth as a presenter of the Today programme

Rumours of tattooed arms and multiple body-piercings have not hindered the career path of the shaven headed BBC economics editor, who has used the platform of a difficult subject to build a reputation as one of the corporation's most-accomplished news communicators. A former economist at the Institute of Fiscal Studies, Davis,

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45, combines an acute ability to detect the salient points in complex stories with an engaging presentational style that bears comparison with that of Andrew Marr. The popularity of Dragons' Den, which has driven a new vogue in business-based television since its launch in 2005, has given him a much broader profile. Davis, who will take up his new position in the spring, replacing Carolyn Quinn, is expected to bring a fresh perspective to the Radio 4 breakfast flagship.

### 31. CILLA SNOWBALL

The first woman of British advertising shows how to run a big and successful agency

Thirty years after the launch of the now legendary Abbott Mead Vickers by creative titan David Abbott and account men Peter Mead and Adrian Vickers, Cilla Snowball, group CEO and chairman of AMV, presides over the biggest agency in Britain, with a client portfolio that includes Sainsbury's, Guinness and The Economist. The agency is responsible for some of Britain's longest-running campaigns, including Jamie Oliver's work for Sainsbury's, Gary Lineker's with Walkers crisps and the multi award-winning Guinness work "Good Things Come to Those Who Wait", which continued this year with Nicolai Fuglsig's epic film of domino toppling in a South American mountain village. It's also a successful business. Snowball, assisted by AMV CEO Farah Ramzan Golant, has grown the agency to the point where billings have topped £400m this year, which is £100m more than any other agency.

### 32. ADRIAN CHILES

The bloke next door becomes the BBC's number One

The year didn't start well for Chiles when he was one of a number of BBC presenters targeted with parcels of soiled toilet paper, but he has gone from strength to strength presenting The One Show, which has proved surprisingly successful in reviving the magazine-style format formerly associated with Nationwide. After a four-week trial last year, a revamped version of the show launched in July, broadcast every weekday at 7pm, and became one of the highlights of Peter Fincham's tenure as controller of BBC1. Chiles, who this year published a book on the dubious pleasures of following West Bromwich Albion, also continues to present Match of the Day 2 on BBC2.

### 33. MICHAEL BIRCH

Cashing in on social service

Having set up Bebo with his wife Xochi in 2005, British-born Birch has built a global community of 40 million users. Aimed at a younger demographic than rivals such as MySpace and Facebook, it has been particularly successful in the UK (it is visited by 12 per cent of Britons online, compared with 1 per cent of Americans). Bebo's advertising revenues are threatened by concerns that junk food manufacturers are using such sites to target children. But Birch has had an active year, hiring senior Google executive Joanna Shields to run Bebo's operations in the UK and Australia, launching the Bebo Bands downloading service and enjoying success with KateModern, the British version of American web drama Lonely Girl 15. Launched on Bebo in June, KateModern has had more than 25 million views.

### 34. JEREMY PAXMAN

Directs his wrath at his own

BBC bosses

Though occasionally compared to a pantomime dame for the theatrical facial expressions he adopts to express astonishment at the response of Newsnight interviewees, Paxo tends to keep a comparatively low profile away from that BBC2 show. This year, however, he agreed to deliver the James MacTaggart Memorial Lecture at the Edinburgh International Television Festival in August and used that occasion to speak out in defence of his colleagues, saying Newsnight could not withstand further reductions in its staffing levels as Mark Thompson

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prepared to reveal his plans for delivering the efficiencies that would allow the BBC to cope with a £2bn shortfall in licence-fee income. The intervention seemed to work, as Newsnight escaped pretty much unscathed.

### 37. JONATHAN ROSS

Wisecracking for all he's worth

The man whose £18m-over-three years salary deal helped to fuel the notion that the BBC was awash with cash and not worthy of a more favourable licence fee settlement became a target of criticism as the director general Mark Thompson wielded the axe on the corporation's news operation and other departments. An article in The Daily Telegraph in October, which claimed that Middle England had turned against the presenter, described him as a "sleazy, self-indulgent, foul-mouthed, middle-aged doppelgänger of a man". Wossy chose to laugh it all off, joking at the British Comedy Awards in December that he was "worth 1,000 BBC journalists".

This year he presented Comic Relief and Live Earth, made a show for BBC4 reflecting his love for comics and picked up a fourth Bafta for Friday Night With Jonathan Ross. And with Parky stepping down, he now has no obvious rival for the chat show throne.

### 38. TESSA ROSS

No fainthearted film chief

Despite its sometimes troubled past, Film4 marked its 25th anniversary along with Channel 4 this year and Tessa Ross, the C4 controller of film and drama had plenty to celebrate.

Film4's Last King of Scotland picked up an Oscar in February and the releases of This is England, Hallam Foe and a Julien Temple film documentary on the life of Joe Strummer were further successes. Film4 is also backing the extraordinary MySpace internet movie project Faintheart, which is being made by the director Vito Rocco, with the help of the film's own online community.

Ross also revealed plans for a five-year Michael Winterbottom drama project to reflect the long-term experiences of a UK prison inmate and a film about the death in Gaza of the British peace activist Tom Hurndall.

### 39. MARTHA KEARNEY

Newsnight's political editor switches media to take centre stage as the new presenter of The World at One

Although her supporters had been outraged that she was overlooked in favour of Nick Robinson as the new BBC political editor, Kearney was happy enough to be given "a show of my own", she told these pages on taking up her new post in April.

As she pointed out, The World at One - known within the corporation as WATO ("what-oh") - is one of "the BBC's big brands" and often commands audiences of a size that Newsnight would dearly love.

Kearney, who faces the great challenge of inheriting a programme that is closely associated with the late Nick Clarke, was replaced as Newsnight political editor by the irreverent maverick Michael Crick.

### 40. DARREN HENLEY

Conductor in chief

Henley lives and breaths Classic FM, having worked at the station since its launch in 1992, starting as an overnight newsreader while still a student at Hull University. Last year he was made managing director of Classic FM and its sister station The Jazz. This year Classic FM won the Sony Gold as the national station of the year. He has written more than a dozen books on music, many of them branded to the station. He is known for being self-effacing but has assembled a schedule with names such as Simon Bates, Myleene Klass and Lesley Garrett, and regular

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appearances from Richard E Grant. Henley also knows his audience and has built up the Classic empire to include a strong online offering, a TV channel, books, DVDs and CDs.

#### 41. DAVID HILL

Blair's comms chief gets back to business

When Tony Blair finally stood down from office this summer, it was time for his Downing Street communications head to move on too. David Hill, a lifelong Labour activist, chose to go and work for Lord Bell, the marcomms supremo behind the Bell Pottinger group and diehard Tory. The pair get along famously, enjoy debating politics with each other and have worked together before. Hill, who was regarded as the straightest bat in the world of political spin and is a skilled mediator, began his new role by PRing an historic appeal in October from Muslim scholars calling for closer relations with Christians.

#### 42. MICHAEL PARKINSON

The king of chat abdicates his throne, probably for the last time

After 35 years spent mastering the art of the television interview, Parky put together his wish list for his two-hour farewell show - and every one of those guests agreed to appear. What a line-up it was: Sir Michael Caine, Sir David Attenborough, Dame Judi Dench, David Beckham, Billy Connolly, Peter Kay (who used to be the warm-up man for the show) and Jamie Cullum on piano. More than 8 million tuned in to watch. Parkinson, 72, the son of a miner, was given a standing ovation by his star-studded audience and will spend this year working on his autobiography.

#### 43. CAROLINE LAW

The Week goes from strength to strength

It has been a difficult year for the magazine sector, as hopes have dimmed that it is less vulnerable than newspapers to the challenge of digital media because modern consumers are happy to pay for their glossy treats.

One title that increasing numbers of consumers happily shell out for is The Week. This dinner-party briefing document, a digest of some of the best journalism of the previous seven days, is overseen by the editor Caroline Law and her husband Jeremy O'Grady, with a guiding hand from founder Jolyon Connell. Circulation has risen for 18 consecutive bi-annual audits and currently stands at 143,700, up by 19 per cent on the year before: a clear vindication of publisher Felix Dennis's decision to rescue the project from financial oblivion when it was struggling to get established.

#### 45. PAUL WATSON

Documentary veteran caught up in "fakery" row - ends the year with a batch of awards

Watson pioneered fly-on-the-wall television with 1974's The Family, back when the term "reality TV" didn't even exist. But he found himself in the eye of the faking storm that engulfed the television industry this year after it emerged that a shot which purported to capture the dying moments of subject Malcolm Pointon, an Alzheimer's sufferer, had in fact been the moment when he slipped into a coma. Watson argued his corner but felt he had been let down by an ITV legal inquiry, which ruled against him. Last month Watson was given a lifetime achievement honour at the Grierson documentary awards, only days after picking up awards in Berlin and Leipzig for his BBC documentary on alcoholism, Rain in My Heart.

#### 46. CHRIS MOYLES

The "Saviour" finds things a little more difficult

For radio's Mr Big, this year probably wasn't as big as last year. His standing was reflected by his being chosen to present Live Earth from Wembley Stadium in July and he followed up last year's autobiography with Chris Moyles:



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The Difficult Second Book in October. His radio show broke the seven million listeners barrier in the spring Rajars and he was nominated for a Sony, even though he failed to match last year's Gold Award. His audience dipped slightly in the autumn but remains close to overhauling that of his breakfast rival on Radio2, Terry Wogan. Nonetheless, Moyles was generous enough this year to comment that Wogan is "doing the best he's ever done", having previously threatened to "tear that wig off his head and shove it up his arse".

#### 47. MAURICE BREEN

Drink up thy cider!

One of the marketing success stories of the year was alcoholic apple juice being repositioned from the insalubrious surroundings of the urban park bench to the picnic hampers of the young and upwardly mobile. Presented as a fashionable drink to be taken over ice, Magners was at the forefront of this trend, moving rapidly to capture 75 per cent of the UK bottled cider market and driving up profits by 77 per cent. In London it became the top bottled alcohol brand, overtaking such names as Stella Artois and Budweiser. As a consequence, Maurice Breen, the Magners marketing director, picked up the best new brand prize at the Marketing Society's Awards for Excellence. The company's advertising was also heralded by Marketing Week.

#### 48. NEIL FOX

The one-time doctor gets ahead of the pack

Snubbed by Capital radio as the successor to long-time breakfast presenter Chris Tarrant, the motormouth Foxy has managed to have the last word, even after moving to a station with the slogan "more music, less talk". Now less chatty, he has gone to the top of the London commercial breakfast ratings, beating rivals such as Jamie Theakston, Christian O'Connell and Capital's own Johnny Vaughan. The Harley Davidson-riding presenter, who no longer refers to himself as "Dr Fox", also runs a television production company and is working on the production of two feature films.

#### 50. PATIENCE WHEATCROFT

Editor quits Barclays to join Barclays

The much-admired business journalist began the year as editor of The Sunday Telegraph and finished it working for Barclays Bank, whilst watching James Harding, who succeeded her as business editor of The Times rise to become editor of that title, a role for which she had once been tipped. Wheatcroft parted company with the Barclay brothers' Telegraph Group apparently because she did not share Daily Telegraph editor Will Lewis's enthusiasm for digital integration. She starts on 1 January as a board director of Barclays Bank, earning £65,000 a year for five weeks' work as a non-executive. She will no doubt take up other opportunities in business but has sadly ruled out any freelance journalism.

#### 12. TONY BLAIR

How could you all be so beastly?

A Prime Minister would not normally be on a list of media movers and shakers, but Tony Blair, ahead of leaving Downing Street, took it on himself to take a parting shot at what he termed "the feral beast" that was damaging the democratic process by "just tearing people and reputations to bits". In the speech delivered in June at Reuters' offices in Canary Wharf, Blair complained of the pressure of having to cope with the "sheer scale, weight and constant hyperactivity" of the modern media. But having hinted at the need for external regulation of the press, and complained that the hunting-in-packs mentality was driving down media standards, he then picked out The Independent, a paper that tries to take a different approach from its rivals, as his only named target. epa

#### 16. TREVOR MCDONALD

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The Bongs are coming back where they belong, and so is Sir Trevor

Nine years after making the calamitous move to drop its late evening bulletin from its appointment-to-view slot - throwing the audience into the confusion of "News at When?", and sending ratings through the floor - ITN has admitted its error. As it turns back the clock, it has called upon the presenter most closely associated with the programme, Sir Trevor McDonald. Often cited as the most trusted journalist in Britain, Sir Trevor, 68, left ITN in 2005 to concentrate on his current-affairs show Tonight, which he has anchored since 1999. ITV's executive chairman Michael Grade admitted that moving News at Ten had been "a shocking mistake" that had "damaged ITV more than anything". Sir Trevor will present alongside Julie Etchingham, a recruit from Sky, which is tough on the current host, Mark Austin. The new bulletin launches early in the new year. PA

#### 17. ALAN JOHNSTON

Kidnapped correspondent emerges with astonishing dignity from 114 days in captivity

Having won admiration from his peers for defiantly remaining in Gaza as the BBC's correspondent, Johnston was abducted by militants in March, days before his three-year stint in the region was due to finish, and held at gunpoint for more than three months. His colleagues at the BBC campaigned ceaselessly for his release, leading a protest that was taken up by fellow journalists and supporters around the world, including in the Palestinian territories. During his ordeal, Johnston was buoyed by having access to a radio, from which he learnt of the attempts to secure his release. He was finally set free in July, whisked through crowds in the company of gunmen soon after Hamas had seized control of Gaza following a brief civil war. He has since published a book, Kidnapped and Other Dispatches. reuters

#### 27. DAWN AIREY

Returns to top role with commercial broadcaster after a failed business adventure

lostar was to be a brave new experiment in "multi-faceted, multi-media" production, embracing television, theatre and film and including a model agency and a talent management division. For Dawn Airey it represented a fresh challenge after heading up Sky Networks for James Murdoch. But in May, lostar was heading into liquidation after failing to raise the £30m it needed for acquisitions. Airey, who quickly realised lostar was not what she'd hoped, and left, was promptly snapped up by ITV executive chairman Michael Grade and unveiled as ITV's director of global content. "It's an incredibly exciting time to be joining ITV and I'm looking forward to working with some of the UK's best production talent," said the former chief executive of Channel Five. channel 5

#### 29. NATASHA KAPLINSKY

Golden girl of Middle England wins lucrative new job at Five

Kaplinsky departs the BBC after a five-year spell in which she has become a familiar face on the Six O'Clock News, to where she graduated from BBC Breakfast last year. But it was her twinkle-toed efforts on Strictly Come Dancing that marked her out as the new Angela Rippon. Her role at the BBC also included being one of the presenters for the Children In Need appeal. Kaplinsky, 35, who grew up in South Africa, formerly worked at Sky News. She was lured to Five - reputedly on a £1m- a-year contract - by the director of programmes, Jay Hunt, who promptly quit the channel to take up post as the new controller of BBC1. Kaplinsky's task will be to match Kirsty Young's record in helping Five to punch above its weight in news coverage. joel ryan/pa

#### 30. PETER WRIGHT

The low-profile editor of the Rottweiler of the Sunday newspaper market

With its crack political team of Simon Walters and Jonathan Oliver (who has now jumped ship to The Sunday Times), Wright's Mail on Sunday became the place to look for exclusives in 2007. Oliver's revelation of the web of donations made to the Labour Party by David Abrahams was reckoned by many to be the scoop of the year. On the

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commercial side, the MoS also pulled off the marketing ruse of the year by giving away three million copies of Prince's latest album Planet Earth with the newspaper, to coincide with the musician's multiple appearances at London's O2. The stunt lifted sales for the week by 600,000. Controversially, an MoS investigation into Lord Browne's private life led to the BP chief executive's resignation, when he lied to the court after bringing an action against the paper. The MoS was also obliged to publish an embarrassing apology after making false claims about the personal life of the Channel 4 News presenter Jon Snow. LES WILSON

### 35. LUCY YEOMANS

Yet another Harper's re-launch, but this time the rest of the industry is applauding

One of the most glamorous and best-connected women in magazine publishing, Yeomans has completed a long journey to reposition her title, Harper's Bazaar, taking it step by step from society handbook to a fashion bible for aspirational young women. Two years ago, Yeomans's magazine dropped the name "Queen", which was synonymous with the well-born of Sixties London. This latest relaunch, in August, saw the name "Bazaar" take centre stage to bring the title into line with its famous American cousin. The launch issue glittered with Swarovski crystals and drew envious comments within the industry. Last month, the British Society of Magazine Editors rewarded Yeomans's efforts by naming her as its Editors' Editor of the Year. Jonathan Evans

### 36. DERMOTMURNAGHAN

Mr new at Sky

After five years on the BBC Breakfast sofa, Murnaghan was poached by the Sky News head John Ryley, who had admired him since the pair worked together at ITN, where he anchored coverage of the death of Diana, Princess of Wales. The switch, soon after the announcement that Murnaghan's former Breakfast colleague Natasha Kaplinsky had been snapped up by Five, prompted speculation that BBC News was losing presenting talent as a consequence of shrinking budgets.

For the award-winning Murnaghan, however, who will host Sky News between 9am and 1pm every weekday, the move represents an opportunity for him to show that he can translate his bulletin-presenting skills to a rolling-news format. He starts there in January. Justin Downing/Sky News

### 44. ROGER ALTON

Observer editor wins top honour but then announces his resignation

Rumours had been circulating that Roger Alton was on his way out, long before the news emerged in October that he was stepping down after a decade at the helm of the world's oldest Sunday newspaper. Although Alton's departure was presented as a graceful stepping down to coincide with his 60th birthday, the tensions between him and senior figures at the paper's proprietor, Guardian Media Group - including the Guardian editor Alan Rusbridger - were an open secret in the industry. The Observer's support of military action in Iraq had angered some on its sister paper. Under pressure to bring The Observer within The Guardian's plan for 24-7 publishing, Alton, despite having won the accolade of Newspaper of the Year in March and having increased circulation, chose to quit. He is replaced by John

Mulholland. David Sandison

### 49. HELEN CALCRAFT

It's not all about expense accounts

Although it was her Miles Calcraft Briginshaw Duffy colleague Jonathan Durden who had adland transfixed by his appearance in Channel 4's Big Brother, Helen Calcraft, the agency's managing director, led the way in proving that the business of advertising could have a higher purpose than just flogging stuff. Most notably, MCB's Stop The

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Guns campaign for the Metropolitan Police, featured the music of grime collective Roll Deep and the directing talent of Jake Nava in making the "Badman" viral ad that scored 363,000 views on YouTube and drove traffic to the anti-gun crime Operation Trident site at 10 times the normal rate. MTV named "Badman" its video of the year. Marketing Week gave the agency's campaign an award for effectiveness. Calcraft and her do-gooding colleagues have also been working to help teenagers to find suitable vocational training, assisting smokers to quit the habit and improving the benefits system.

**Load-Date:** December 31, 2007

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## **IDF arrests seven Hamas associates in Nablus**

The Jerusalem Post

July 16, 2008 Wednesday

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 5

**Length:** 165 words

**Byline:** Jerusalem Post staff, Khaled Abu Toameh and AP contributed to this report.

### **Body**

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The IDF arrested seven **Hamas** members in Nablus before dawn on Tuesday, including two municipal council members, in an ongoing crackdown on the terrorist group in the city, residents said.

The army confirmed that it had arrested seven people in Nablus, without elaborating.

Residents said the soldiers arrested the council members, a senior **Hamas** member and others with close ties to the Islamist group, including Hanin Darwazi, the head of a local **women's** organization.

**Hamas** has a large, active **women's** section. However, arrests of **Hamas women** are infrequent.

Last week the IDF closed an allegedly **Hamas**-owned shopping mall, a TV station and a newspaper in the city.

The raids have prompted complaints from Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas that Israel is damaging his standing in the West Bank.

Chief PA negotiator Saeb Erekat announced this week that Abbas and Prime Minister Ehud Olmert are scheduled to meet in Jerusalem in 10 days to continue discussions over final-status issues.

**Load-Date:** October 4, 2011

**Gaza crowds mark Hamas anniversary**

Sunday Tribune (Ireland)

December 16, 2007

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. N10

**Length:** 54 words

**Body**

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Tens of thousands of people turned out in Gaza City for a rally to mark 20 years since **Hamas** was founded.

Waving green flags and banners, crowds of Palestinian men, **women** and children filled a large square for the event.

In a defiant statement, **Hamas**'s leader in exile, Khaled Mashaal, vowed the group would not renounce violence.

**Load-Date:** December 18, 2007

## **Israeli troops kill two Hamas gunmen**

Windsor Star (Ontario)

January 5, 2008 Saturday

Final Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. D1 ; World Briefs

**Length:** 199 words

**Byline:** Star News Services

**Dateline:** GAZA CITY

### **Body**

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GAZA CITY - Two **Hamas** gunmen were killed in a shootout with Israeli troops in Gaza early on Friday, hours after U.S. President George W. Bush insisted peace efforts were to continue despite the violence.

Ahead of his landmark visit to the region next week, Bush called on Israel to dismantle wildcat settlement outposts in occupied Palestinian territory, in an interview with Israel's top-selling newspaper.

In the latest Israel-Palestinian violence, two members of **Hamas**'s armed wing, the Ezzedine Al-Qassam Brigades, died in the firefight with troops near the northern town of Beit Hanun, the group and Palestinian medics said.

An army spokesman said troops operating near the border fence opened fire on two armed Palestinians who were approaching the barrier between Gaza and Israel and reported hitting them.

The fighting came a day after heavy Israeli ground and air strikes killed nine Palestinians, including two **women**, in the territory where the Islamist movement **Hamas** violently seized control in mid-June.

It was the deadliest day in Gaza since Dec. 18, when Israeli strikes killed 12 militants across the territory, including the chief of the armed wing of the radical Islamic Jihad group.

**Load-Date:** January 5, 2008

## *World - Israeli troops raid medical clinic in the West Bank*

Morning Star

July 11, 2008 Friday

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**Length:** 147 words

### **Body**

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Israeli troops raided and closed a medical clinic and other offices in the West Bank city of Nablus yesterday.

The latest assaults were on the fourth day of raids against Palestinian civilian institutions accused by Israel of links to the elected **Hamas** government.

Witnesses said that 100 military Jeeps had entered Nablus before dawn. Troops closed the A Rahma clinic, taking computers and documents from the premises.

The soldiers also raided a local TV station, newspaper, mosque and a **women**'s organisation and some were closed. They also confiscated five school buses.

The Israeli army confirmed that an operation against **Hamas** was ongoing in Nablus.

Israeli security forces later shot and killed a **Hamas** member who tried to escape capture near the occupied West Bank town of Jenin.

Another Palestinian was shot dead along the border in the southern Gaza Strip yesterday, officials said.

**Load-Date:** July 11, 2008



## *Israelis kill 61 in air blitz*

Sunday Territorian (Australia)

March 3, 2008 Monday

1 - Edition

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**Section:** WORLD; Pg. 11

**Length:** 175 words

### **Body**

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GAZA CITY: Israeli forces killed 61 Palestinians in a land and air blitz in the **Hamas**-held Gaza Strip yesterday, medics said, amid warnings the violence had ``buried" the peace process.

It was the deadliest day since Israel's withdrawal from Gaza in September 2005 and one of the most lethal Israeli operations since the Palestinian uprising erupted in 2000.

Fifty-four Palestinians were killed in northern Gaza, and two others in an air strike in the south of the territory which is ruled by the Islamist movement **Hamas**, medics said.

At least 13 civilians, including seven of them **women** and some children, were among the dead and more than 150 people were wounded, Dr Muawiya Hassanein, the head of Gaza emergency services, told reporters.

Five members of the **Hamas** ``police" were killed in an Israeli air strike in the Rafah sector as they took shelter in a mosque that was hit by a missile, witnesses and medical sources in southern Gaza said.

Two Israeli soldiers were also killed yesterday in Gaza, and another seven wounded, including one officer.

**Load-Date:** March 3, 2008

**Letter: You say - Terror attacks**

Liverpool Daily Echo  
March 28, 2008, Friday  
1ST Edition

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**Section:** LETTERS; Pg. 12

**Length:** 134 words

**Byline:** Edward Denmark

**Body**

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DOES Alex McFadden (ECHO letters, March 14) really expect that Louise Ellman would sit down and debate the constant attacks by Hamas terrorists against Israel?

What would be the point? Mr McFadden says: "The word terrorist is used more often than not as a form of abuse and to cloud the issues."

I can assure you Mr McFadden when the Hamas terrorists fire their rockets into the homes of innocent people including women and children the only clouding is one of death and injury.

So what do you suggest Mr McFadden, that Israel should not respond because perhaps these terrorists may one day become respected statesmen?

I suggest Mr McFadden goes and spends some time in Israel, then hopefully the issue of why Israel responds to these terrorist attacks might become crystal clear.

Edward Denmark, address supplied

**Load-Date:** March 28, 2008

**Kuwaiti newspaper criticizes 'barbaric' Mercaz Harav attack**

The Jerusalem Post

March 12, 2008 Wednesday

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 19

**Length:** 199 words

**Byline:** Jerusalem Post staff

## **Body**

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A Kuwaiti newspaper published unprecedentedly harsh criticism of the terror attack in which eight students at Mercaz Harav Yeshiva were killed last week.

"The attack at the yeshiva was a barbaric murder of eight children who were engaged in religious study," read a Tuesday op-ed in the daily Al-Watan. "This odious and inhuman terror attack exemplifies the extremist and inhuman path of the terror organizations Hamas and Hizbullah."

The writer goes on to assert that "the terror attack must prompt the free world to comprehend the magnitude of terrorism and its threats and to realize that a clear and unequivocal stance must be assumed against it. There can be no negotiations with terrorism that indiscriminately aims itself at students, women and babies without any consideration for the means and the targets."

Contrasting the terror attack with the IDF's operations in the Gaza Strip, the writer explains that "there is no link between a murderous terrorist act and the inadvertent killing of civilians in response to the firing of rockets by Hamas."

The piece presented a stark contrast to the main current in the Arab press, which published almost sweeping praise for the "heroic operation."

**Load-Date:** October 4, 2011

## **A BLOODY DISGRACE**

Daily News (New York)

March 8, 2008 Saturday

SPORTS FINAL EDITION

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**Section:** EDITORIAL; Pg. 22

**Length:** 192 words

### **Body**

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Ever-dependable, the UN Security Council, veritable Old Faithful itself, refused to sign off on a condemnation of the shockingly cold-blooded murders at a Jerusalem religious school.

Led by Libya, noted solomonic arbiter of global goodwill, the council decided the resolution was altogether insufficiently severe in condemning Israel, as is customary.

As if it's Israel that sends gunmen into school libraries to shoot down young scholars at study.

As if it's the Israelis who routinely hide behind the skirts of women and in the playgrounds of children to lob rockets endlessly and indiscriminately into civilian neighborhoods.

As if it's Israel that violates every truce with its neighbors as something approximating fragile accord in the Mideast is sought.

Hard to say just yet who was behind the Merkaz Harav slaughter. Over in Gaza, Hamas was pleased to claim responsibility. Then it withdrew the claim. Then it withdrew the withdrawal.

In any case, Hamas did say, "We bless the operation. It will not be the last." And wild in the streets went the people of Gaza, cheering in celebration.

But the Security Council finds no reason to condemn. Needless to say.

**Load-Date:** March 8, 2008

## UNDER ROBE AND VEIL, CROSSING BOUNDARIES AS POLICEWOMEN

NEW YORK TIMES

January 18, 2008 Friday

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Information Bank Abstracts

**Section:** Section A; Column 3; Pg. 4

**Length:** 68 words

### **Body**

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Gaza City Journal: Hamas is recruiting Islamic women to become members of police force to help restore internal security to lawless Gaza Strip; women are working on cases that deal mostly with women, like drugs and prostitution, and helping out at police headquarters and central jail; many religious women refuse to do police work because it involves working closely with men and requires working nights; photo.

### **Graphic**

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Photograph

**Load-Date:** October 23, 2008

## UNDER ROBE AND VEIL, CROSSING BOUNDARIES AS POLICEWOMEN

NEW YORK TIMES

January 18, 2008 Friday

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Information Bank Abstracts

**Section:** Section A; Column 3; Pg. 4

**Length:** 68 words

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Gaza City Journal: Hamas is recruiting Islamic women to become members of police force to help restore internal security to lawless Gaza Strip; women are working on cases that deal mostly with women, like drugs and prostitution, and helping out at police headquarters and central jail; many religious women refuse to do police work because it involves working closely with men and requires working nights; photo.

### **Graphic**

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Photograph

**Load-Date:** October 23, 2008

**Israel fears bid to breach border; World News IN BRIEF**

The Independent (London)

February 25, 2008 Monday

First Edition

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**The  INDEPENDENT**

**Section:** WORLD; Pg. 22

**Length:** 64 words

## **Body**

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n jerusalem Israel has put its forces on alert along the border with Gaza in case Palestinians try to break through into Israel as they did in Egypt last month. A pro-Hamas group said it would hold a peaceful protest today in which it estimated that up to 50,000 women and children would form a "human chain" the length of the Gaza Strip. Organisers said they would not breach the border.

**Load-Date:** February 25, 2008

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End of Document

**Israel prepares for Gaza human chain protesters; NEWS IN BRIEF**

The Evening Standard (London)

February 25, 2008 Monday

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London  
**Evening  
Standard**

**Section:** A; Pg. 29

**Length:** 71 words

**Body**

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THE Israeli army today strengthened positions along its frontier with Gaza ahead of a protest against Israel's month-long blockade of the territory.

In a demonstration organised by Palestinian group Hamas, tens of thousands of women and children were expected to form a human chain around the territory. Israel warned protesters to stay in Gaza. An Israeli security source said: "If gunmen start shooting we will have to respond."

**Load-Date:** February 25, 2008



## *Mideast solution in 'jeopardy'*

Irish Independent

October 25, 2007 Thursday

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**Independent.ie** 

**Section:** WORLD NEWS; Middle East

**Length:** 116 words

### **Body**

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A "TWO-STATE solution" in the Middle East is in jeopardy after a slide of events, including Iran's recent efforts to support Palestinian **Hamas** militants, US secretary of state Condoleezza Rice has told a US House panel.

Accordingly, the Bush administration decided to convene an upcoming peace conference near Washington, she said.

Rice's testimony was punctuated by angry anti-war protesters, including one **female** protester who rushed Rice as she entered the room and waved her hands -- painted red to look like blood -- in front of the secretary's face.

She shouted that Rice was a "war criminal" and should be taken to the Hague, a reference to the setting for international war tribunals.

**Load-Date:** October 25, 2007

## *Letters - God save Israel*

Irish News

February 6, 2008 Wednesday

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**Section:** Pg. 24

**Length:** 132 words

### **Body**

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Alex Benjamin's pro-Israeli letter (January 26) states: "That's why there is a blockade on Gaza and the fuel supply has been cut to the power plant. It is designed as a form of collective punishment on the residents of Gaza to get **Hamas** to stop the rocket attacks."

Israel doesn't need enemies - Mr Benjamin highlights the use by Israel of "collective punishment" which is an internationally accepted war crime.

But I am saddened that anyone should think it is OK to kill innocent **women** and children to stop rocket attacks.

It's about time Israel, the Americans and well-meaning misinformed folk like Mr Benjamin accepted the democratic will of the Palestinian people to choose their own leaders and ended the evil manufactured humanitarian crisis in the Gaza 'concentration camp'.

M NELSON, Belfast.

**Load-Date:** February 6, 2008

## Israeli occupation

The Salt Lake Tribune

May 27, 2008 Tuesday

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**Section:** PUBLIC FORUM; Opinion

**Length:** 198 words

**Byline:** Public Forum Letter

### **Body**

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Talk about myopic!

Stan Rosenzweig's response to Hans Roelof's column is sheer demagoguery, and his blanketed view of Palestinians over the last 60 years is one-eyed bigotry ("Israel and Hamas," Forum, May 20).

His claim that Palestinians reject education, growth, women's rights, dissent, freedom, etc., is ridiculous. They are denied those rights in large part because of Israel's policies toward them.

Education? The endless checkpoints and roadblocks stifle the educational opportunities of Palestinians by preventing them from getting to schools. Women's rights? These structures also prevent pregnant women from bearing children in hospitals.

Growth? The strangulation, oops, "separation" wall, settlements and Palestinian home demolitions - illegal all - choke out growth. Dissent? Peaceful protests against these policies by Palestinians, Israelis or internationals are quelled by excessive Israeli military force.

Freedom? Collective punishment by extensive curfews over entire communities and the "separation" wall imprisons whole towns, like Bethlehem.

You see, Israel has its own brand of killing, fighting, hating and destroying. It's called occupation.

Preston Ericksen

West Valley City

**Load-Date:** June 2, 2008

## *Hole in the wall gang stock up*

Irish Independent

January 26, 2008 Saturday

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**Independent.ie** 

**Section:** WORLD NEWS; Middle East

**Length:** 173 words

### **Body**

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Cranes lifted camels, cows and motorcycles into the Gaza Strip from Egypt on Friday as thousands of Palestinians scrambled to buy supplies in fear that breaches blown in the border would soon be sealed.

Gazan men heaved sheep and mattresses over a concrete wall at one border point. Young men helped women and the elderly scale the wall to buy food or medicine.

"They said on TV that Egyptian security is going to start kicking people out, so I wanted to come as soon as possible," said teacher Atta Darwish (47) as he entered Egypt to buy blood pressure tablets for his mother and tyres for his car.

Camouflaged Egyptian forces in riot gear leaned on plastic shields nearby, taking no action to stop Gazans crossing from the Hamas-controlled coastal strip. One Palestinian youth brought a ladder and was offering passers-by a chance to use it, for a fee.

Mahmoud Hamed al-Masri (23) said he entered Egypt to search for his parents in the coastal city of el-Arish. He feared the border would close before they could return home again.

**Load-Date:** January 26, 2008

## Cities making news in the global village

The Gazette (Montreal)

November 25, 2007 Sunday

Final Edition

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**Section:** INSIGHT: GLOBAL VILLAGE; Pg. A15

**Length:** 1 words

**Byline:** Reuters; Getty Images; AFP Via Getty Images

### **Body**

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NO TEXT

### **Graphic**

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Colour Photo: REUTERS; KARACHI, PAKISTAN - Plain-clothed police detain a man who was shouting slogans against emergency rule during a protest in Karachi on Friday. ;

Colour Photo: GETTY IMAGES; GAZA STRIP - Palestinian women shout Friday during a rally organized by Hamas at Khan Younis refugee camp in southern Gaza Strip. They were protesting against a peace conference being hosted by the United States on Tuesday in Annapolis, Md., aiming to launch formal negotiations to create a Palestinian state.

Colour Photo: AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE VIA GETTY IMAGES; KYIV, UKRAINE - Ukrainian reformist Yulia Tymoshenko smiles as she greets deputies from her bloc after the opening ceremony of the newly elected Ukrainian Parliament in Kyiv Friday.

Colour Photo: AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE VIA GETTY IMAGES; BAGHDAD, IRAQ - A U.S. soldier with an Iraqi flag attached to his chest gestures as he secures Baghdad's Abu-Nawas St. ahead of its reopening ceremony yesterday, following an improved security situation in the Iraqi capital. ;

**Load-Date:** November 29, 2007

## *Irish women in Gaza refused re-entry to Egypt*

Irish Examiner

February 8, 2008 Friday

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**Irish Examiner.com**  
a Thomas Crosbie Holdings company

**Section:** WORLD

**Length:** 185 words

### **Body**

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Treasa Ní Cheannabháin said she and her daughter, an Egyptian national, entered Gaza on Saturday, more than a week after **Hamas** militants knocked down the border wall.

Both **women** are members of the Galway branch of the Ireland Palestine Solidarity Campaign.

As hundreds of thousands of Palestinians flooded into Egypt, Ms Ní Cheannabháin, 56, said she sneaked into Gaza with her 19-year-old daughter, Naisrin el-Safty, to distribute money to needy Gazans.

Egyptian guards resealed the border on Sunday, ending the 12-day breach. Ms Ní Cheannabháin said she had not heard warnings that the crossing would close.

The pair tried to return to Egypt late Tuesday, but were stopped by Egyptian border guards.

The Department of Foreign Affairs is trying to help but only Egypt can authorise the pair's return, a ministry spokesman said.

Meanwhile, at least 29 people have been killed and 16 injured when nine cars and lorries slammed into each other on a fog-choked rural highway in Upper Egypt.

Reports quoting police sources said a bus collided with a minibus and at least six other vehicles then rammed into them in the fog.

**Load-Date:** February 8, 2008

## **Bush rallies Gulf against Iran 'terror'**

The Evening Standard (London)

January 14, 2008 Monday

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# London Evening Standard

**Section:** A; Pg. 25

**Length:** 198 words

**Byline:** ED HARRIS

## **Body**

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PRESIDENT George W Bush urged Gulf allies to back his campaign against Iran, branding it "the world's leading statesponsor of terror".

Speaking in Abu Dhabi before today's visit to Saudi Arabia, Mr Bush said the capital Tehran threatens countries everywhere and that America is "rallying friends around the world to confront this danger before it is too late".

"One cause of instability is the extremists supported and embodied by the regime that sits in Tehran. Iran is today the world's leading state sponsor of terror," he said, adding that Iran funded militant groups such as Hamas, Hezbollah and Islamic Jihad and sent arms to the Taliban in Afghanistan and Shia extremists in Iraq.

But his comments were dismissed by Iran's foreign minister, Manouchehr Mottaki, who said: "Mr Bush has tried unsuccessfully to undermine our relations with the countries of the region. We believe his mission has totally failed. It would be much better if the Americans stopped intervening in the region's affairs." Mr Bush also came under pressure to tackle Saudi Arabia's human rights record where its ruler King Abdullah has cautiously tried to institute some reforms on education and women's rights..

**Load-Date:** January 14, 2008

*cities making news in the global village; the week in images*

The Gazette (Montreal)

August 31, 2008 Sunday

Final Edition

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**Section:** INSIGHT: GLOBAL VILLAGE; Pg. A13

**Length:** 1 words

**Byline:** The Gazette

## Body

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NO TEXT

## Graphic

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Colour Photo: Reuters; HAMM, GERMANY - German Chancellor Angela Merkel makes a toast at the laying of a foundation stone for a power plant in the city of Hamm on Friday. Merkel was named the world's most powerful woman for a third year, topping Forbes magazine's 2008 list of the top 100 women based on career, economic impact and media coverage. ;

Colour Photo: GETTY IMAGES; RAFAH, GAZA STRIP- A Palestinian boy shows his passport as he sits in a bus waiting to cross into Egypt yesterday. Hundreds of sick Gazans seeking medical care crossed into Egypt after Hamas and Egyptian authorities temporarily opened the crossing for the first time in weeks.

Colour Photo: Reuters; GLASGOW, SCOTLAND - A Zoom aircraft, named City of Montreal, sits at Glasgow, Scotland on Friday. The Canadian discount transatlantic carrier, stung by high fuel costs, cancelled flights and began bankruptcy proceedings, stranding passengers at several airports.

Colour Photo: Reuters; ORISSA, INDIA - An Indian Christian villager comforts a 20-day-old baby at a refugee camp after an attack, allegedly by Hindu fundamentalists, at a village in Orissa's Kandhamal district, southwest of state capital Bhubaneswar on Friday. At least 10 people have died and thousands have fled their homes as a result of the violence in the coastal state of Orissa, with the Catholic church accusing police of failing to protect priests and nuns.

Colour Photo: Reuters; The week in images: Rails to nowhere - A flood-damaged rail track disappears into a river at Saharsa in India's eastern state of Bihar Friday. Villagers ate uncooked rice and flour mixed with polluted water as hunger and diseases accompanied the worst floods in 50 years.

Colour Photo: Reuters; Palatial show - Folkloric group members perform outside La Moneda presidential palace during an exhibition in Santiago, Chile, on Tuesday.



cities making news in the global village; the week in images

Colour Photo: Reuters; Scans for sheep - A shepherd holds a sheep to be examined by ultrasound at the El Alfalfal agricultural facility, about 80 kilometres southeast of Santiago, Chile on Friday. About 1,500 sheep were scanned as part of a program to optimize breeding on small farms.

Colour Photo: AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES; Getting ready for Ramadan - Yemeni women shop for food in preparation for the holy fasting month of Ramadan in Sanaa's Salt Market on Friday. Muslims around the world are gearing up for Ramadan next week. For the month, believers are required to abstain from food, drink and sex from dusk till dawn. ;

**Load-Date:** September 2, 2008

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End of Document

## *No Headline In Original*

The Bismarck Tribune

April 22, 2008 Tuesday

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**Section:** WIRE

**Length:** 1277 words

**Byline:** KARIN LAUB Associated Press Writer

## **Body**

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JERUSALEM - Former President Carter said Monday that the Islamic group **Hamas** was willing to accept the Jewish state as a "neighbor next door," but the militants did not match their upbeat words with concrete steps to halt violence.

**Hamas**, which advocates Israel's destruction, instead recycled previous offers, including a 10-year truce if Israel takes the unlikely step of withdrawing from the West Bank and Jerusalem first.

**Hamas** has repeatedly confounded observers with its conflicting messages. Actions on the ground - seven rockets were fired on Israel from **Hamas**-ruled Gaza Monday, including one that wounded a 4-year-old boy - contradicted the Islamic militant group's positive words about coexistence and a truce.

And a leader of the **Hamas** military wing, which carried out a twin suicide bombing on the Gaza border Saturday, said his group would step up attacks against Israel in coming days.

The salvo of rockets came despite a last-minute phone call from Carter, urging a one-month halt to attacks on Israel, to gain some international goodwill and defuse tensions.

"I did the best I could," Carter said of his conversation with **Hamas** supreme leader, Khaled Mashaal, pressing him to declare a one-month truce. "They turned me down, and I think they're wrong."

Carter, who delivered a speech in Jerusalem Monday summing up his visit, said top **Hamas** leaders told him during seven hours of talks in Damascus over the weekend that they are willing to live next to Israel.

Hours later, however, Mashaal sent mixed messages. He stressed that while the militants would accept a state in the 1967 borders, meaning alongside Israel, the group would never outright recognize the Jewish state.

The Bush administration and Israel, which shun **Hamas** as a terrorist group, have criticized the Carter mission as misguided. In Washington, a State Department official said Monday that it does not appear **Hamas** has changed its positions.

In Jerusalem, Carter defended his trip, saying peace in the region will be possible only if Israel and the U.S. start talking to **Hamas** and Syria, which supports several militant groups. He also called on the Bush administration to push harder to renew Israeli-Syrian peace talks.

## No Headline In Original

"The present strategy of excluding Hamas and excluding Syria is just not working," said Carter, who brokered a historic 1979 peace treaty between Israel and Egypt.

Analysts said Hamas apparently decided to send Carter off largely empty-handed, despite the possibility he might have paved an opening to a hostile West, because it prefers doing business with leaders in the region who can deliver concrete achievements. Egypt has been shuttling between Israel and Hamas for nearly two years trying to broker a cease-fire, a prisoner swap and an opening of Gaza's border crossings.

Over the weekend, Carter met twice with Hamas' five-member politburo, headed by Mashaal. Carter said he won a written pledge from Hamas to accept any peace deal with Israel, even if Hamas disagrees with some of the terms, as long as it's approved in a Palestinian referendum.

Carter said Hamas leaders told him they're also ready to accept the Jewish state's right to "live as a neighbor next door in peace" one day. Since its founding 21 years ago, Hamas has carried out scores of suicide attacks in Israel and has fired hundreds of rockets from Gaza at Israeli border towns.

The pledge did not reflect a new Hamas position, though it's significant that it was made in writing. Hamas leaders have said in the past they would establish "peace in stages" if Israel were to withdraw to the borders it held before the 1967 Mideast War. Hamas has been evasive about how it sees the final borders of a Palestinian state, and has not abandoned its official call for Israel's destruction.

The Hamas promise does not say who would participate in a peace referendum. Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza would be far more likely to approve a deal than exiles in camps in Lebanon and Syria, especially if a treaty does not affirm the "right of return" of refugees to homes in what is now Israel.

A vast majority of Israelis see the repatriation of millions of Palestinians as a threat to the Jewish state's survival, because Jews eventually could be outnumbered.

Mashaal praised Carter for ignoring the broad international boycott of Hamas, which is viewed by Israel and the West as a terrorist organization. "That doesn't mean we agree on all things," the Hamas leader said of Carter. "But we appreciate this brave voice, coming from the West, and coming from America."

Despite the warm words, Hamas rejected Carter's appeal to halt rocket fire on Israel for a month and to speed up the release of a captured Israeli soldier, as a show of good faith.

Mashaal wouldn't budge on the rockets, even during the last-minute phone call by Carter Monday morning.

Carter said that in that call, Mashaal insisted on a reciprocal cease-fire.

"I told them (Hamas), 'Don't wait for reciprocation, just do it unilaterally,'" Carter said. "'This would bring a lot of credit to you around the world, doing a humane thing.'"

Seven rockets hit Israel on Monday, but other militant groups claimed responsibility not Hamas. In one strike, a 4-year-old boy was hurt in the shoulder in the town of Sderot on Gaza's border.

Also, a leader of the Hamas military wing said attacks on Israel would intensify.

The leader, identified as Abu Jandal, told the Hamas-linked newspaper Al Risala that a suicide bombing at an Israeli position on the Gaza border on Saturday was just a warmup. In the attack, Hamas militants blew up two jeeps carrying hundreds of kilograms (pounds) of explosives, wounding 13 soldiers.

"The previous attacks were just a walk in the park," he told the newspaper.

Concerning a prisoner swap, Carter said the current indirect talks between Israel and Hamas, via Egypt, were making only very slow progress. He said Israel is willing, in principle, to free 1,000 prisoners for Cpl. Gilad Shalit,

captured by **Hamas**-allied militants in 2006. However, so far Israel has only approved 71 names from a list of 450 prisoners suggested by **Hamas**.

At this pace, Carter said, the negotiations could drag on for years.

He proposed that **Hamas** agree to a release of **women**, minors and **Hamas** legislators in the first phase, in order to speed up the swap, but was turned down.

Mouin Rabbani, an independent analyst, said **Hamas** used Carter to convey the message that, under certain conditions, it is willing to accept a two-state solution. "Where he demanded specific actions, they didn't respond because he wasn't in a position to deliver anything in return," Rabbani said.

In Washington, the State Department said there is no indication that **Hamas** wants peace with Israel. "It is pretty clear to us that there is no acceptance on the part of **Hamas** of any kind of negotiated settlement," said deputy spokesman Tom Casey.

Casey said there had been contradictory statements from **Hamas** officials over whether they would accept the result of a referendum on a peace deal. Earlier Monday, a senior **Hamas** official in Gaza, Sami Abu Zuhri, said **Hamas** would not necessarily accept the outcome of a referendum.

Casey also refuted Carter's insistence that no one in the State Department had advised him against meeting with **Hamas** officials, saying that Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs David Welch had specifically done so in a telephone conversation in late March.

Still, the State Department is open to hearing from Carter about the talks, Casey said.

Carter said he would write a report on his trip and send it to the Bush administration.

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Associated Press correspondent Diaa Hadid contributed to this report from Gaza City.

**Load-Date:** April 23, 2008

**Bedroht in "Hamastan" ; Wie lebt es sich in Gaza? Unsere  
Korrespondentin Inge Günther hat drei palästinensische Familien besucht**

Frankfurter Rundschau

10. Oktober 2007

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## Frankfurter Rundschau

**Section:** Reportage; 14

**Length:** 1233 words

**Byline:** PDFGEINSMANN

### Body

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Asis Asis,

ein Fabrikant ohne Kunden

Asis Asis fährt mit dem Zeigefinger über die Staubschicht auf der Nähmaschine. Seitdem die Jeansfabrik in Tal al-Sata, nördlich von Gaza-City, Mitte Juni schließen musste, war er nur zweimal in der Fertigungshalle im ersten Stock. Asis Asis erträgt es nicht, zusehen zu müssen, wie das Familienunternehmen verkommt. In den fünfzig Maschinen sammeln sich Schmutzflocken. 5000 genietete Hosen und Mini-Röcke warten, in Säcken verpackt, auf den Versand nach Israel. Doch Karni, die Grenzkontrollstelle für den Warenverkehr zwischen Gaza und Israel, ist seit vier Monaten dicht; Ende und Aus zugleich für 964 palästinensische Textil-Manufakturen.

Asis Asis und seine fünf Brüder, denen die Jeansfabrik gemeinsam gehört, wussten es sofort. Am Tag, als die **Hamas** die Macht in Gaza an sich riss, stellten sie die Produktion ein. "Wenn Israel Karni schließt, kann man einpacken", sagt der 36-Jährige und klopft sich die Hände ab. Nur haben sie alle gehofft, dass die Krise spätestens in zwei Monaten vorbei ist, die Gebrüder Asis genauso wie ihre achtzig Arbeiter und die israelischen Partner. In ihrer Verzweiflung haben Asis und seine Brüder sogar riesige Koffer mit Jeans vollgepackt, um sie über den Grenzübergang Eres rauszuschleppen. Als palästinensische Handelstreibende besitzen sie eine Einreiseerlaubnis nach Israel. Aber die Grenzkontrolleure gaben sich unerbittlich. In Eres werden höchstens Personen, keine Güter übergelassen.

Jetzt versucht der älteste Bruder, Abed Rabbo, in der Westbank sein Glück, in Tulkarem, das nahe an Israel liegt. Dort hat schon ein anderer Textilproduzent aus Gaza eine Werkstatt aufgemacht. Abed Rabbo will es ihm nachtun. "Natürlich wird er klein anfangen müssen", sagt Asis. Doch sobald wieder Geld verdient werde, wolle der Bruder die Seinen in Gaza unterstützen.

Das Problem ist, dass Abed Rabbos Aufenthaltsgenehmigung für die Westbank inzwischen abgelaufen ist. Asis Asis will sich trotzdem nicht unterkriegen lassen. Rasch zieht er einen Packen mit Mustere Exemplaren heran, den er mit den Zähnen aufknüpft. Darin: Jeansmode in allen Größen und Schattierungen, gebleicht und mit bunten Ziernähten versehen. Grinsend hält er sich sexy Shorts vor den Bauchansatz. "So was trägt man nicht in Gaza",

## Bedroht in "Hamastan" Wie lebt es sich in Gaza? Unsere Korrespondentin Inge Günther hat drei palästinensische Familien besucht

lacht er. Er produziert nach jedem Schnittmuster, das die Israelis wünschen. Etwa 2,60 Euro kostet das Nähen einer Jeans in Gaza. "Lass sie wieder Karni öffnen", sagt Asis Asis, alles andere interessiert ihn wenig. Er will die Nähmaschinen wieder rattern hören, aber nichts von Hamas und Fatah. "Wir zahlen den Preis, weil die ihre Probleme nicht lösen können."

Samira Abu Nahil,

eine Mutter unter Beobachtung

Besuch steht ins Haus. Blitzschnell wirft sich Samira Abu Nahil, 46, den buntgeblühten Schleier über. Ihre ältere Tochter Lumin, 19, die an der säkularen AlAshar-Universität Jura studiert, bleibt wie sie ist. Zumindest daheim läuft sie rum, wie es ihr passt, und versteckt ihren prächtigen Haarzopf nicht. Vor dem Hamas-Putsch ist Lumin vom Flüchtlingslager Schati aus auch an den Strand ohne Kopftuch gegangen. Inzwischen macht sie das nicht mehr. "Die soziale Kontrolle wächst", klagt sie.

Palästinenserinnen in Gaza erleben den Druck, sich "islamischer zu verhalten". Samira und Lumin sind zu nichts gezwungen worden, aber sie haben das Gefühl, auf dem Rückzug zu sein. Früher hat Samira oft das Women's Affair Center in Gaza-City besucht, eine palästinensische Frauenorganisation. "Wir waren gewöhnt, zu Konferenzen oder zu Demos zu gehen", sagt Samira Abu Nahil. "Jetzt trauen wir uns nicht mal zu reden. Selbst in den Frauenklub kommt keine mehr."

In ihrem Wohnzimmer nimmt Samira kein Blatt vor den Mund: "Jede Menge ist schlechter geworden seit Juni." Man muss dazu wissen, dass die Familie der Fatah nahesteht. Zwei der Söhne, 22 und 26 Jahre alt, die bei den alten Autonomiebehörden beschäftigt waren, sind aus Furcht vor der Rache der Hamas nach Ägypten geflüchtet. Samira lässt denn auch nichts aus, wenn sie das islamistische Regime anprangert. Dass deren Polizei Bußgelder gegen Demonstranten verhängt - "das hat sonst nur die israelische Armee gemacht" -, empört sie genauso wie die gestiegenen Preise.

Infolge der strikten Abriegelung des Gazastreifens kostet ein Sack Mehl fünfzig Prozent mehr als vor einem Jahr. Weißen Käse, der zum Fastenmonat Ramadan gehört wie Gebäck zu Weihnachten, leistet sich die Familie nicht mehr.

Das Leben in "Hamastan" ist in vieler Hinsicht eingeschränkt. Lumin, die sich von einem Film über Bill Clinton zu ihrer Studienwahl inspirieren ließ, träumt davon, nach Amerika zu gehen. Das Sofakissen an die Brust gedrückt, spricht sie von der Angst unter den Studenten und dem Überdruß, nur noch zu Hause zu hocken.

Ein Zeichen der Hoffnung allerdings sieht sie: Es ist gelb und flattert auf den Hausdächern über Gaza. Aus Protest gegen die Hamas wird derzeit gerne die Fahne der Fatah gehisst. "Mich macht das optimistisch", sagt Lumin. Ihre Mutter nickt. Nur, hier im Schati-Camp hängt sie keine gelbe Flagge raus: "Alle Nachbarn ums uns herum gehören zur Hamas."

Mussa Abu Rasal,

ein Vater in Angst

Neulich hat sein jüngster Sohn wissen wollen, wie man Jehije aus dem Himmel herunter bekomme. Auch dass Jehije nur als Foto auf dem Handy des Vaters erscheint, aber nicht mehr beim Spiel, geht dem Knirps nicht in den Kopf. Auf die Fragen seines Vierjährigen weiß der Vater keine Antwort. "Inschallah", sagt er dann und wendet sich ab. Sechs Wochen ist es her, dass der zwölfjährige Jehije starb. Am Nachmittag des 29. August traf eine israelische Rakete ihn, den jüngeren Vetter Mahmoud und die neunjährige Cousine Sara. Die drei Kinder waren wie jeden Tag in den Sommerferien mit den Schafen unterwegs gewesen. "Dort bei der Palme geschah es", sagt Mussa Abu Rasal, 36, und weist auf ein 500 Meter entferntes Gelände. Er ist auf das Geschrei der Nachbarn hin sofort hingerauscht, hat den von Schrapnellwunden übersäten Körper seines Jungen zur Ambulanz getragen. Rettung gab es nicht.

Bedroht in "Hamastan" Wie lebt es sich in Gaza? Unsere Korrespondentin Inge Günther hat drei palästinensische Familien besucht

Hier bei Beit Hanoun, im Norden des Gazastreifens, befindet sich das Gebiet, von dem militante Palästinenser bevorzugt Kassam-Raketen auf Israel abschießen. Die Kombattanten sind in der Regel vermummt. Zu welcher Organisation sie gehören, "weiß man nicht", sagt Abu Rasal. Aber wenn sie den Häusern nahe kommen, "schicken wir sie weg".

An jenem Tag ließ sich keiner blicken. Nach israelischer Darstellung hielten die Soldaten die Kinder im Gebüsch aber für "Terrorgehilfen", die womöglich eine Abschussrampe wegschaffen wollten. Der Irrtum sei fünf Sekunden zu spät bemerkt worden. Er war keine Ausnahme. Laut der Menschenrechtsorganisation B'Tselem sind in zwölf Monaten 92 palästinensische Kinder bei Armeeaktionen ums Leben gekommen.

Abu Rasal hat jetzt einen Anwalt beauftragt, Israels Militär zu verklagen. "Sie sollen den Verantwortlichen bestrafen und Entschädigung bezahlen." Was er gegenüber Israelis empfinde? "Was denkt Ihr? So ein Vorfall schafft Hass."

Abu Rasal hockt an einem Betonpfeiler, sein Blick geht ins Nirgendwo, neben ihm spielen Kinder. "Wir haben täglich um sie Angst", sagt er. "Hier ist Grenzgebiet, sobald wir Verdächtiges bemerken, müssen sie rein." Abends trauen sich selbst Erwachsene nicht aus dem Haus. Nach einer Pause sagt Abu Rasal noch etwas: "Ich will in Frieden leben. Aber erzähl mir keiner, dass Militärvorstöße und Frieden einhergehen."

**Load-Date:** October 10, 2007

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## Keine Arbeit, keine Freiheit, keine Sicherheit; Vom Leben im abgeriegelten Gazastreifen

Stuttgarter Zeitung

05. Oktober 2007

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# STUTTGARTER ZEITUNG

**Section:** SEITE DREI; 3

**Length:** 1282 words

**Byline:** Günther, Inge

**Highlight:** Ein normales Leben ist für Palästinenser im Gazastreifen nicht mehr möglich. Drei Beispiele: ein Textilfabrikant, der sein kleines Unternehmen schließen musste, eine Mutter, die mit ihren Töchtern im Flüchtlingslager lebt, ein Mann, dessen zwölfjähriger Sohn getötet wurde.

## Body

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Von Inge Günther, Gaza-City

Asis Asis fährt mit dem Zeigefinger über die Staubschicht auf der Nähmaschine. Seit die Jeansfabrik, ein Familienunternehmen in Tal al-Sata, nördlich von Gaza-City, am 14. Juni schließen musste, war er nur zweimal in der Fertigungshalle. Asis Asis erträgt es nicht, zusehen zu müssen, wie alles verkommt: die 50 Maschinen mit eingespannten Garnen, in die sich immer mehr Schmutzflocken einnisten. Die in Säcken verpackten Hosen und genieteten Miniröcke, 5000 Stück. Fix und fertig, um auf die israelischen Märkte zu kommen - wenn da ein Weg wäre. Doch Karni, die Grenzkontrollstelle für den Warenverkehr zwischen Gaza und Israel, ist seit bald vier Monaten geschlossen.

Asis Asis und seine fünf Brüder stellten am Tag, als die Hamas die Macht in Gaza an sich riss, die Produktion ein. "Wenn Israel Karni schließt, kann man einpacken", sagt der 36-Jährige. Nur haben sie alle gehofft, die Brüder Asis genauso wie ihre achtzig Arbeiter und die israelischen Partner, dass die Krise spätestens in zwei Monaten vorbei wäre. Nichts haben sie unversucht gelassen, um etwas von ihrem Geschäft zu retten. In ihrer Verzweiflung haben Asis und seine Brüder sogar riesige Koffer mit Jeans vollgepackt, um sie über den Grenzübergang Eres rauszuschleppen. Als palästinensische Handeltreibende besitzen sie eine Einreiseerlaubnis nach Israel. Aber die Grenzkontrolleure waren unbittlich. In Eres werden nur Personen, keine Güter übergelassen.

Jetzt versucht der älteste Bruder, Abed-Rabbo, in der Westbank sein Glück. Und zwar in Tulkarem, das besonders nahe an Israel liegt. Dort hat auch ein anderer Textilproduzent aus Gaza eine Werkstatt aufgemacht. "Natürlich wird er klein anfangen müssen", meint Asis. Doch sobald wieder Geld verdient werde, wolle der Bruder die Seinen in Gaza unterstützen. Das Problem ist, dass Abed-Rabbos Aufenthaltsgenehmigung für die Westbank inzwischen abgelaufen ist.



## Keine Arbeit, keine Freiheit, keine Sicherheit Vom Leben im abgeriegelten Gazastreifen

Asis Asis zieht einen Packen mit Musterexemplaren heran - Jeans in allen Größen und Schattierungen, gebleicht und mit Ziernähten versehen. Grinsend hält er sich Shorts vor den Bauchansatz. "So was trägt man nicht in Gaza", lacht er. Egal, er produziert nach jedem Schnittmuster, das die Israeli wünschen. 15 Schekel (2,60 Euro) kostet das Nähen einer Jeans in Gaza. "Lass sie wieder Karni öffnen", sagt Asis Asis, alles andere interessiert ihn wenig. Er will die Nähmaschinen rattern hören. Aber er will nichts hören von Hamas und Fatah. "Wir zahlen den Preis, weil die ihre Probleme nicht lösen können."

Besuch steht ins Haus. Schnell wirft sich Samira Abu Nahil (46) den bunt geblühten Schleier über. Ihre Tochter Lumin, die an der säkularen Al-Ashar-Universität Jura studiert, bleibt wie sie ist. Zumindest daheim läuft sie rum, wie es ihr passt. Sie versteckt ihren Haarzopf nicht, als sie neben der Mutter auf dem Sofa Platz nimmt. Vor dem Hamas-Putsch ist Lumin vom Flüchtlingslager Schati aus auch an den Strand ohne Kopftuch gegangen. Das tut sie nicht mehr. "Die soziale Kontrolle wächst", klagt sie.

Es ist kein leicht zu fassendes Phänomen, dieser von Palästinenserinnen in Gaza erlebte Druck, sich "islamischer zu verhalten". Samira und Lumin sind zu nichts gezwungen worden, aber die Erwartung ist da. Und das Gefühl, auf dem Rückzug zu sein. Früher hat Samira oft das Women's Affair Center in Gaza-City besucht. Das ist eine palästinensische Frauenorganisation, die sich um sozialpolitische Probleme aus weiblicher Sicht kümmert. "Wir waren gewöhnt, zu Konferenzen oder zu Demos zu gehen", sagt Samira Abu Nahil. "Jetzt trauen wir uns nicht mal zu reden. Selbst in den Frauenclub kommt keine mehr." In ihrem Wohnzimmer nimmt Samira dennoch kein Blatt vor den Mund. Sie hat einen generellen Befund zur Lage, und der lautet: "Jede Menge ist schlechter geworden seit Juni." Man muss dazu wissen, dass die Familie der Fatah nahesteht. Zwei der Söhne, 22 und 26 Jahre alt, die bei der Autonomiebehörde beschäftigt waren, sind aus Furcht vor der Rache der Hamas nach Ägypten geflohen.

Samira lässt denn auch nichts aus, wenn sie das islamistische Regime anprangert. Dass deren Polizei Bußgelder gegen Demonstranten verhängt - "das hat sonst nur die israelische Armee gemacht" -, empört sie genauso wie die gestiegenen Preise. Infolge der Abriegelung des Gazastreifens ist ein Sack Mehl um fünfzig Prozent teurer als vor einem Jahr. Weißen Käse, der zum Fastenmonat Ramadan gehört wie Gebäck zu Weihnachten, leistet sich die Familie nicht mehr.

Das Leben in "Hamastan" ist in vieler Hinsicht eingeschränkt. Kein Wunder, dass die 19-jährige Lumin, die sich von einem Film über Bill Clinton zu ihrer Studienwahl inspirieren ließ, davon träumt, nach Amerika zu gehen. Das Sofakissen an die Brust gedrückt, spricht sie von der Angst unter den Studenten und dem Überdruß, immer zu Hause zu hocken. Ein Zeichen der Hoffnung aber sieht sie. Das ist gelb und flattert auf den Hausdächern über Gaza. Aus Protest gegen die Hamas wird die Fahne der Fatah gehisst. "Mich macht das optimistisch", sagt Lumin. Ihre Mutter nickt. Im Schati-Camp hängt sie keine gelbe Flagge raus. "Alle Nachbarn ums uns herum gehören zur Hamas."

Neulich hat Mussa Abu Rasals jüngster Sohn wissen wollen, wie man Jehije aus dem Himmel herunterbekomme. Auch dass Jehije nur als Foto auf dem Handy des Vaters erscheint, aber nicht mehr beim Spiel, geht dem Knirps nicht in den Kopf. Auf die Fragen seines Vierjährigen weiß der Vater keine Antwort. "Inschallah", sagt er dann und wendet das Gesicht ab. Fast fünf Wochen ist es her, dass der zwölfjährige Jehije tot ist. Es war am Nachmittag des 29. August, als eine israelische Rakete ihn, den jüngeren Vetter Mahmoud und die neunjährige Kusine Sara tödlich traf. Drei Kinder, die wie jeden Tag in den Sommerferien mit den Schafen unterwegs gewesen waren. "Dort bei der Palme", sagt der 36-Jährige und weist auf ein 500 Meter entferntes Gelände, wo es geschah. Er ist gleich losgerannt, als die Nachbarn geschrien haben. Er hat den von Schusswunden übersäten Körper seines Jungen zur Ambulanz getragen. Es gab keine Rettung mehr.

Hier bei Beit Hanoun, im Norden des Gazastreifens, befindet sich das Gebiet, von dem militante Palästinenser bevorzugt Kassam-Raketen auf Israel abschießen. Die Kombattanten sind in der Regel verumumt. "Zu welcher Organisation sie gehören, weiß man nicht", sagt Abu Rasal. "Aber wenn sie den Häusern nahekomen, schicken wir sie weg." An jenem Tag ließ sich keiner blicken.

Dennoch hielten nach israelischer Darstellung die Soldaten die Kinder im Gebüsch für Terrorgehilfen, die womöglich eine Abschussrampe wegschaffen wollten. Der Irrtum sei fünf Sekunden zu spät bemerkt worden. Um

## Keine Arbeit, keine Freiheit, keine Sicherheit Vom Leben im abgeriegelten Gazastreifen

einen Ausnahmefall handelte es sich nicht. Laut der Menschenrechtsorganisation B'Tselem sind in einem Jahr 92 palästinensische Kinder bei Armeeaktionen getötet worden.

Mussa Abu Rasal hat jetzt einen Anwalt beauftragt, Israels Militär zu verklagen. "Sie sollen den Verantwortlichen bestrafen und Entschädigung bezahlen." Er ist kein Mann vieler Worte. Was er gegenüber den Israeli empfinde? "Was denkt ihr?" erwidert er, "so ein Vorfall schafft Hass." Abu Rasal hockt an einen Betonpfeiler gelehnt, neben ihm spielende Kinder. "Wir haben täglich Angst um sie", sagt er. "Hier ist Grenzgebiet, sobald wir Verdächtiges bemerken, müssen sie rein." Abends trauen sich selbst die Erwachsenen nicht aus dem Haus. Nach einer Pause sagt Mussa Abu Rasal: "Ich will in Frieden leben. Aber erzähle mir keiner, dass Militärvorstöße und Frieden zusammenpassen."

Die Nähmaschinen in der Jeansfabrik von Asis Asis stehen still; Samira Abu Nahil lebt mit ihren Töchtern im Flüchtlingslager; Mussa Abu Rasals Sohn ist versehentlich getötet worden. Fotos Günther

**Load-Date:** October 4, 2007

## *No Headline In Original*

The Bismarck Tribune

March 7, 2008 Friday

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**Section:** WIRE

**Length:** 1298 words

**Byline:** ARON HELLER and STEVEN GUTKIN Associated Press Writers

### **Body**

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JERUSALEM - A gunman entered the library of a rabbinical seminary and opened fire on a crowded nighttime study session Thursday, killing eight people and wounding nine before he was slain, police and rescue workers said. It was the first major militant attack in Jerusalem in more than four years.

**Hamas** militants in the Gaza Strip praised the operation in a statement, and thousands of Palestinians took to the streets of Gaza to celebrate.

The day's violence, which also included a deadly ambush of an army patrol near Israel's border with Gaza, was likely to complicate attempts by Egypt to arrange a truce between Israel and Palestinian militants. The U.S. is backing the Egyptian effort.

Israeli government spokesman Mark Regev and moderate Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas condemned the shooting. But Regev said the Palestinian government must take steps against the extremists - not just denounce their attacks.

"Tonight's massacre in Jerusalem is a defining moment," he told The Associated Press. "It is clear that those people celebrating this bloodshed have shown themselves to be not only the enemies of Israel but of all of humanity."

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, who only on Wednesday persuaded Abbas to return to peace talks with Israel, called the attack an "act of terror and depravity."

Israeli defense officials said the attacker came from east Jerusalem, the predominantly Palestinian section of the city. Jerusalem's Palestinians have Israeli ID cards that give them freedom of movement in Israel, unlike Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza.

Police spokesman Micky Rosenfeld said the attacker walked through the seminary's main gate and entered the library, where witnesses said some 80 people were gathered. He carried an assault rifle and pistol, and used both weapons in the attack. Rosenfeld said at least six empty bullet clips were found on the floor.

Two hours after the shooting, police found the body of the eighth victim. Rescue workers said nine people were wounded, three seriously.

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David Simchon, head of the seminary, said the students had been preparing a celebration for the new month on the Jewish calendar, which includes the holiday of Purim. "We were planning to have a Purim party here tonight and instead we had a massacre," he told Channel 2 TV.

Yehuda Meshi Zahav, head of the Zaka rescue service, entered the library after the attack. "The whole building looked like a slaughterhouse. The floor was covered in blood. The students were in class at the time of the attack," he said. "The floors are littered with holy books covered in blood."

Witnesses described a terrifying scene during the shooting, with students jumping out windows to escape.

One of the students, Yitzhak Dadon, said he shot the attacker twice in the head. "I laid on the roof of the study hall, cocked my gun and waited for him. He came out of the library spraying automatic fire," he said.

Police said an Israeli soldier in the area then shot the man dead. After the shooting, hundreds of seminary students demonstrated outside the building, screaming for revenge and chanting, "Death to Arabs."

The seminary is the Mercaz Harav yeshiva in the Kiryat Moshe quarter at the entrance to Jerusalem, a prestigious center of Jewish studies identified with the leadership of the Jewish settlement movement in the West Bank.

It was founded by the late Rabbi Tzvi Yehuda Hacohen Kook, the movement's spiritual founder, and serves some 400 high school students and young Israeli soldiers, and many of them carry arms.

"It's very sad tonight in Jerusalem," Mayor Uri Lupolianski told Channel 2 TV. "Many people were killed in the heart of Jerusalem."

Rabbi Shlomo Amar, one of Israel's two chief rabbis, led a prayer session at the seminary after the shooting. Students huddled together, and many sobbed uncontrollably.

In Lebanon, Hezbollah's Al-Manar satellite TV station said a previously unknown group called the Martyrs of Imad Mughniyeh and Gaza was responsible for the attack. The claim could not immediately be verified. Mughniyeh, a Hezbollah commander, was killed in a car bomb in Syria last month. Hezbollah has blamed Israel for the assassination.

**Hamas** stopped just short of claiming responsibility for the Jerusalem shootings. "We bless the operation. It will not be the last," **Hamas** said in a statement sent to reporters by text message.

At mosques in Gaza City and the northern Gaza Strip, many residents performed prayers of thanksgiving - only performed in cases of great victory to thank God.

About 7,000 Gazans marched in the streets of Jebaliya, firing in the air in celebration, and visited homes of those killed and wounded in the last Israeli incursion. In the southern town of Rafah, residents distributed sweets to moving cars, and militants fired mortars in celebration.

Rice said she spoke with Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni to express U.S. condolences to the people of Israel and the families of the victims.

"This barbarous act has no place among civilized peoples and shocks the conscience of all peace loving nations. There is no cause that could ever justify this action," she said.

Israel's Foreign Ministry condemned the "abominable" attack and urged the world to rally with it against terrorism. "Israel expects the nations of the world to support it in its war against those who murder students, **women** and children, by any means and with respect for neither place nor target," it said.

At his West Bank headquarters, Abbas condemned the attack. "The president condemned all attacks that target civilians, whether they are Palestinian or Israeli," a statement said.

Abbas had briefly suspended talks to protest an Israeli offensive in Gaza that killed more than 120 Palestinians.

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The attack came on the same day Egyptian officials were trying to mediate a truce between Palestinian militants and Israel. The proposal, backed by the U.S., would stop rocket fire on Israel in exchange for an end to Israeli attacks on militants and the resumption of trade and travel from Gaza.

An Israeli official confirmed that Israel is open to the idea of letting guards from Abbas' moderate Fatah movement oversee Gaza's borders - one of the main tenets of the truce idea. But the Israeli spoke before the shooting, and it was not immediately known whether his country's position would change.

The Egyptian proposal reflected a growing realization that Israel's current policy of blockade and military action has failed to weaken Hamas, which has proven its ability to disrupt a U.S.-sponsored drive to forge an Israeli-Palestinian peace deal by the end of the year.

Still, a deal between Hamas and Israel was far from certain, with Israel fearing the militants will use any lull to rearm and Hamas raising tough conditions, such as a demand for Israel to stop targeting militants in the West Bank as well as Gaza.

Other militant groups are also likely to disrupt any attempts to restore calm. Early Thursday, Palestinian militants set off a bomb on the Gaza border, blowing up an Israeli army jeep and killing a soldier. Late Thursday, Israel said it shot a group of militants trying to plant a bomb in the same area. Palestinian officials said three militants were killed.

The seminary shooting was the first major attack by Palestinian militants in Jerusalem since a suicide bomber killed eight people on Feb. 22, 2004. There have been several attacks since then, and police and the military say they have foiled many other attempts. Militants have also hit other targets in Israel. Thursday's shooting was the deadliest incident in Israel since a suicide bomber killed 11 people in Tel Aviv on April 17, 2006.

Between 2001 and 2004, at the height of Palestinian-Israeli fighting, Jerusalem was a frequent target of Palestinian attacks, including suicide bombings on buses.

**Load-Date:** March 7, 2008

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## *No Headline In Original*

Canberra Times (Australia)

January 29, 2008 Tuesday

Final Edition

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**Section:** A; Pg. 10

**Length:** 1097 words

**Byline:** The Canberra Times

### **Body**

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Save the valley Two Dreamtimes (for Kath Walker) by Judith Wright: "We the robbers robbed in turn,/Selling this land on hire- purchase;/What's stolen once is stolen again/Even before we know it."

The dead usually can't speak for themselves, but Wright, through her words and poetry, can. I suspect she'd be deeply saddened to know that after the destruction of the lower Molonglo Valley for development, a suburb will be named after her. After spending so much of her life working to protect this environment and heritage, we have not learnt a thing. Perhaps it is not too late to stop the valley's destruction?

G.W. Bot, Cook Garbage on grunts The "grunt" in female tennis is a breathing technique that is not new. It goes back to Monica Seles 10 years ago and is now part of the game of most female tennis players in one form or another, and most of us accept it.

What compels commentators like Michael Ruffles to ignore the magnificent tennis played by Maria Sharapova because they are so upset by the sound she makes when she hits the ball?

I am not sure what makes it so distressing but I am sure any good psychiatrist could explain it.

She is a great ambassador for the game which Ruffles, in his anxiety, also failed to acknowledge. As a journalist, he should have concentrated on the tennis and the magnificent tournament, not on irrelevant garbage.

Michael Coghlan, Campbell Palestine restraint I have always respected Crispin Hull as a serious and thoughtful contributor, but his advocacy of Palestinian capitulation ("One-state solution to end Israel-Palestine conflict", January 26, pB7) calls for comment.

The people of Palestine have shown remarkable restraint in their response to about 60 years of dispossession and brutal occupation. Should they now seriously be asked to forget this and to throw in their lot with the oppressor?

Entire national entities would have been submerged, if such an approach had been forced upon the people of Occupied France in 1941, or the people of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania between 1940 and 1989, or, more recently, the people of East Timor.

Peter Downie, Greenway The beginning of Crispin Hull's piece read quite optimistically, I thought.

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But then it turned into a recipe for Islamic saturation tactics, a fifth- column, parasitic wasp-type operation for the Arab population to swallow the state of Israel.

The last thing Israel should do is to "become more secular and a society which embraced religious tolerance".

The Arab-Israeli conflict dates from Abraham's two sons and the whole point of Israel as a nation is to remain purely Jehovah worshipping Hebrew and not "mix" with people of any other religion. That's the way they historically got into trouble.

Mrs J. Halgren, Latham Crispin Hull advocates a "one-state solution to end Israel-Palestine conflict" and challenges Palestinians to "take up Israeli citizenship".

Presumably, taking up citizenship means adopting the values of the country itself, in this case Israel's.

Presumably, those values are enshrined in the country's laws.

We Westerners would identify and embrace many Israeli laws, and so would many Palestinians.

Tragically, many Israeli laws discriminate harshly against non-Jews.

Jobs, immigration, education, welfare, health even citizenship laws themselves favour Jews over non-Jews.

A Jew like myself can be awarded Israeli citizenship in a few days after arriving. However, Palestinians who lived in now-Israel for generations and who fled in 1948 (for many reasons, including fear of being killed by armies on all sides) are not allowed back into Israel. Most non-resident Palestinians who marry Israeli citizens are not allowed to live in Israel with their spouses and children, but I would be because I'm Jewish.

What self-respecting Palestinian would adopt voluntarily citizenship in a country that discriminates so harshly against Palestinians? One-state solution? Adopt Israeli citizenship? By all means once the laws treat Palestinians with the same dignity as they treat Jews.

I long for peace in Israel/Palestine, as do my Israeli and Palestinian friends. We work toward the day when Israelis and Palestinians; Muslims, Christians, and Jews; old and young, black, white, and everything else when all those who choose to live in Israel/Palestine find a safe and secure place among multicultural neighbours. When borders and number of states matter no longer.

Judy Bamberger, O'Connor Gaza terrorism Roy Darling has asked that I explain how Israel's cutting of fuel to Gaza is not "a form of terrorism".

First, the effect of the restrictions have been exaggerated by **Hamas** for PR purposes, possibly so Egypt would feel pressured to react leniently to **Hamas** demolishing the border fence.

The effected power plant supplies only 20 per cent of Gaza's power, with the rest coming from Israel, and the plant was closed down a day after the fuel stopped, even though there were reserves in Gaza. Electricity to **Hamas** TV and to rocket factories were somehow unaffected by the blackout. As Dutch Foreign Minister Maxime Verhagen stated, "**Hamas** is deliberately intensifying the crisis in the Gaza Strip in order to create pressure from the international community on Israel."

Israel is probably the only country in the world that would be expected to supply a territory from which its civilians are attacked by rocket fire every day, and whose government is committed to its destruction.

It is certainly not legally required to provide energy to territory occupied by its enemy, and yet when it temporarily cuts that flow to apply pressure on those responsible for the rocket attacks, it is widely condemned.

Terrorism is the constant rocket fire deliberately targeting civilians, not what Israel is doing in trying to stop it.

## No Headline In Original

Jamie Hyams, Australia/Israel & Jewish Affairs Council Reduce tax cuts With underlying inflation at 3.6 per cent, the obvious move is to reduce the magnitude of the tax cuts to be given in the next budget. This will go against Kevin Rudd's strategy for re-election, which is to deliver on every election promise.

However, the hallmark of a good government is that it governs in the best interests of the country, not of the party. While there may be sound economic reasons for some cuts, the magnitude of the proposed cuts was not determined by Labor based on sound economic reasons. Rather, it was forced, for political reasons, to accept the cuts proposed by the previous government. An announcement now of a decision to reduce the magnitude of the cuts may mean that the Reserve Bank does not feel it has to increase interest rates.

Allan Doobov, Griffith

**Load-Date:** January 28, 2008

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End of Document



## *No Headline In Original*

The Bismarck Tribune

July 28, 2008 Monday

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 5A

**Length:** 897 words

**Byline:** KARIN LAUB and DALIA NAMMARI Associated Press Writers

### **Body**

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RAMALLAH, West Bank - Every evening for the past four months, a tall young man with soulful blue eyes has been stealing hearts across the Middle East, from the refugee camps of the Gaza Strip to the gated mansions of Riyadh.

But it's not just the striking good looks of Mohannad, hero of the hugely popular Turkish TV soap "Noor," that appeal to female viewers. He's romantic, attentive to his wife, Noor, supportive of her independence and ambitions as a fashion designer - in short, a rare gem for women in conservative, male-dominated surroundings.

"Noor" delivers an idealized portrayal of modern married life as equal partnership - clashing with the norms of traditional Middle Eastern societies where elders often have the final word on whom a woman should marry and many are still confined to the role of wife and mother.

Some Muslim preachers in the West Bank and Saudi Arabia have taken notice, saying the show is un-Islamic and urging the faithful to change channels. But all the same, the show may be planting seeds of change.

"I told my husband, 'learn from him (Mohannad) how he treats her, how he loves her, how he cares about her,'" said Heba Hamdan, 24, a housewife visiting the West Bank from Amman, Jordan. Married straight out of college, she said the show inspired her to go out and look for a job.

"Noor" seems particularly effective in changing attitudes because it offers new content in a familiar setting: Turkey is a Muslim country, inviting stronger viewer identification than Western TV imports. The characters in "Noor" observe the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan, and Mohannad and Noor were married in a match arranged by his grandfather.

But it also upholds secular liberties: Protagonists have a drink with dinner and sex outside marriage. Mohannad, while faithful to Noor, had a child with a former girlfriend, and a cousin underwent an abortion.

The nightly soap opera "shows that there are Muslims who live differently," said Islah Jad, a professor of women's studies at the West Bank's Bir Zeit University.

The show's Turkish producer, Kemal Uzun, added: "We are a little more open, not as conservative as some of these countries, and I think this might have some appeal for the audience."

Even though some of the racier scenes are sanitized for Arab consumption, clerics have been sermonizing against "Noor." "This series collides with our Islamic religion, values and traditions," warned Hamed Bitawi, a lawmaker of the Islamic militant Hamas and preacher in the West Bank city of Nablus.

## No Headline In Original

But the purists seem powerless to halt the "Noor" craze.

In Saudi Arabia, the only country with ratings, about 3 million to 4 million people watch daily, out of a population of nearly 28 million, according to MBC, the Saudi-owned satellite channel that airs the show dubbed into Arabic for Middle East audiences.

In the West Bank and Gaza, streets are deserted during show time and socializing is timed around it. In Riyadh, the Saudi capital, and in Hebron, the West Bank's most conservative city, maternity wards report a rise in babies named Noor and Mohannad. A West Bank poster vendor has ditched Yasser Arafat and Saddam Hussein for Noor and Mohannad.

Jaro's Clothing Store in Gaza City is doing brisk business in copies of blouses seen on the show, including a sleeveless metallic number adapted to Gaza standards by being worn over a long-sleeved leotard.

Producer Uzun said the Istanbul villa on the Bosphorus, fictional home of Mohannad's upper-class clan, has been rented by tour operators and turned into a temporary museum for Arab visitors.

A recent cartoon in the Saudi paper Al-Riyadh showed a plain-looking man marching into a plastic surgeon's office with a picture of Mohannad with his designer stubble. (Kivanc Tatlitug, who plays Mohannad, is an ex-basketball player who won the 2002 "Best Model of the World" award.)

In the West Bank city of Nablus, civil servant Mohammed Daraghmeh said he had MBC blocked at home so his kids couldn't watch, but the family vowed to watch it at an uncle's house and he backed down.

In Hamas-ruled Gaza, keeping up with "Noor" is a challenge.

Power goes out frequently because of a yearlong blockade imposed by Israel and Egypt after the violent Hamas takeover. When a blackout disrupts viewing, many set their alarms to catch the pre-dawn repeat.

In the Shati refugee camp, several teenage girls huddled around an old TV set recently, trying to follow the action despite overflights by pilotless Israeli aircraft that can scramble reception.

Ala Hamami, 17, wearing a black robe and head scarf, said she looks up to Noor because she is independent.

"This series gives strength to women in the future," said Hamami, although she was set on a very traditional path - she had just gotten engaged in an arranged match.

The cultural divide between modern Turkey and traditional Gaza became apparent in a scene where Mohannad and Noor, played by Songul Oden, both end up hospitalized. The girls giggled and Hamami quickly changed channels when Mohannad entered his wife's room and lay beside her to comfort her. The display of physical contact clearly made her uncomfortable.

Whether the "Noor" effect will be lasting is not known. The season finale falls Aug. 30, the day before Ramadan begins and religious fervor intensifies. Next up on MBC will be "Bab al-Hara," a Ramadan favorite that looks nostalgically at traditional Arab life.

**Load-Date:** July 28, 2008

## *No Headline In Original*

The Advertiser (Australia)

May 6, 2008 Tuesday

1 - State Edition

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**Section:** OPINION; Pg. 17

**Length:** 232 words

### **Body**

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Hard to believe

I FIND it difficult to believe that special legislation for a particular group of people, be they bikies or terrorists (The Advertiser, yesterday), will not lead to the abuse of power against members of those groups.

\* RICHARD BENNETT, McLaren Vale.

Fight for survival

**HAMAS** is the children of three generations of people who have continued to suffer and die under Israel's iron-fisted occupation. They are not apart from their people, Sergei Savenkoff (The Advertiser, 3/5/08), they are the people of Palestine fighting for their existence.

\* JOYCE SCOTT, Urrbrae.

Power upsurge

I WONDER what all the Port Adelaide detractors are saying now. Teams in the top eight are looking over their shoulders as the resurgent Power is poised to rocket up the ladder and into the top eight in the second half of the season.

\* NICK KOSSATCH, Renmark.

What the Bible says

STUART JARDINE (The Advertiser, 3/5/08) stated that he could not find any prohibition of **female** homosexuality in the Bible. He must have overlooked Romans chapter 1, verses 24 to 26, where homosexuality is condemned, not condoned.

\* A.D. JOHNSTON, Aldinga Beach.

Welcome change

HOW pleasing it was to read Graham Cornes's article about "inspirational courage" in the fight against cancer (The Advertiser, 3/5/08). Such a welcome change from reports about carnage, car chases, child abuse and alcopops.

No Headline In Original

\* AVERIL AGARS, Wattle Park.

**Load-Date:** May 5, 2008

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## *No Headline In Original*

The Bismarck Tribune

June 1, 2008 Sunday

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**Section:** WIRE; Pg. 4A

**Length:** 939 words

**Byline:** LAUREN FRAYER Associated Press Writer

### **Body**

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CAIRO, Egypt - Muslim extremist women are challenging al-Qaida's refusal to include - or at least acknowledge - women in its ranks, in an emotional debate that gives rare insight into the gender conflicts lurking beneath one of the strictest strains of Islam.

In response to a female questioner, al-Qaida No. 2 leader Ayman Al-Zawahri said in April that the terrorist group does not have women. A woman's role, he said on the Internet audio recording, is limited to caring for the homes and children of al-Qaida fighters.

His remarks have since prompted an outcry from fundamentalist women, who are fighting or pleading for the right to be terrorists. The statements have also created some confusion, because in fact suicide bombings by women seem to be on the rise, at least within the Iraq branch of al-Qaida.

A'eeda Dabsheh is a Palestinian mother of four in Lebanon who said she supports al-Zawahri and has chosen to raise children at home as her form of jihad. However, she said, she also supports any woman who chooses instead to take part in terror attacks.

Another woman signed a more than 2,000-word essay of protest online as Rabeebat al-Silah, Arabic for "Companion of Weapons."

"How many times have I wished I were a man. ... When Sheikh Ayman al-Zawahri said there are no women in al-Qaida, he saddened and hurt me," wrote "Companion of Weapons," who said she listened to the speech 10 times. "I felt that my heart was about to explode in my chest...I am powerless."

Such postings have appeared anonymously on discussion forums of Web sites that host videos from top al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden. While the most popular site requires names and passwords, many people use only nicknames, making their identities and locations impossible to verify.

However, groups that monitor such sites say the postings appear credible because of the knowledge and passion they betray. Many appear to represent computer-literate women arguing in the most modern of venues - the Internet - for rights within a feudal version of Islam.

"Women were very disappointed because what al-Zawahri said is not what's happening today in the Middle East, especially in Iraq or in Palestinian groups," said Rita Katz, director of the SITE Intelligence Group, an organization that monitors militant Web sites. "Suicide operations are being carried out by women, who play an important role in jihad."

## No Headline In Original

It's not clear how far women play a role in al-Qaida because of the group's amorphous nature.

Terrorism experts believe there are no women in the core leadership ranks around bin Laden and al-Zawahri. But beyond that core, al-Qaida is really a movement with loosely linked offshoots in various countries and sympathizers who may not play a direct role. Women are clearly among these sympathizers, and some are part of the offshoot groups.

In the Iraq branch, for example, women have carried out or attempted at least 20 suicide bombings since 2003. Al-Qaida members suspected of training women to use suicide belts were captured in Iraq at least three times last year, the U.S. military has said.

Hamas, another militant group, is open about using women fighters and disagrees with al-Qaida's stated stance. At least 11 Palestinian women have launched suicide attacks in recent years.

"A lot of the girls I speak to ... want to carry weapons. They live with this great frustration and oppression," said Huda Naim, a prominent women's leader, Hamas member and Palestinian lawmaker in Gaza. "We don't have a special militant wing for women ... but that doesn't mean that we strip women of the right to go to jihad."

Al-Zawahri's remarks show the fine line al-Qaida walks in terms of public relations. In a modern Arab world where women work even in some conservative countries, al-Qaida's attitude could hurt its efforts to win over the public at large. On the other hand, noted SITE director Katz, al-Zawahri has to consider that many al-Qaida supporters, such as the Taliban, do not believe women should play a military role in jihad.

Al-Zawahri's comments came in a two-hour audio recording posted on an Islamic militant Web site, where he answered hundreds of questions sent in by al-Qaida sympathizers. He praised the wives of mujahedeen, or holy warriors. He also said a Muslim woman should "be ready for any service the mujahedeen need from her," but advised against traveling to a war front like Afghanistan without a male guardian.

Al-Zawahri's stance might stem from personal history, as well as religious beliefs. His first wife and at least two of their six children were killed in a U.S. airstrike in the southern Afghan city of Kandahar in 2001. He later accused the U.S. of intentionally targeting women and children in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"I say to you ... (I have) tasted the bitterness of American brutality: my favorite wife's chest was crushed by a concrete ceiling," he wrote in a 2005 letter.

Al-Zawahri's question-and-answer campaign is one sign of al-Qaida's sophistication in using the Web to keep in touch with its popular base, even while its leaders remain in hiding. However, the Internet has also given those disenfranchised by al-Qaida - in this case, women - a voice they never had before.

The Internet is the only "breathing space" for women who are often shrouded in black veils and confined to their homes, "Ossama2001" wrote. She said al-Zawahri's words "opened old wounds" and pleaded with God to liberate women so they can participate in holy war.

Another woman, Umm Farouq, or mother of Farouq, wrote: "I use my pen and words, my honest emotions. ... Jihad is not exclusive to men."

Al-Qaida's stance on women sparks extremist debate

**Load-Date:** June 2, 2008

## *No Headline In Original*

The Bismarck Tribune

March 14, 2008 Friday

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**Section:** WIRE; Pg. 2A

**Length:** 457 words

**Byline:** HEIDI VOGT Associated Press Writer

### **Body**

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DAKAR, Senegal - Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas accused Israel of implementing policies he claimed were part of an "ethnic cleansing" campaign in the Palestinian areas of Jerusalem.

Speaking at a summit of Islamic countries in the Senegalese capital Dakar, Abbas said Israel had carried out policies designed to force Palestinians out of the city.

"Our people in Jerusalem are under an ethnic cleansing campaign," Abbas said in a speech. "They are suffering from a series of decisions like tax hikes and construction prohibitions."

Abbas said Palestinians "are facing a campaign of annihilation" by the Israeli state.

In Washington, U.S. State Department spokesman Sean McCormack said that "we would not use that term to describe the situation. I think it's probably an example of some overheated political rhetoric."

"We would urge both sides, both the Israelis and the Palestinians, to keep their focus on the political process," McCormack said.

At the summit of the 57-member Organization of the Islamic Conference, the world's largest Muslim organization, Abbas appealed to Muslim leaders for support during a difficult junction in the Mideast peace process.

Iran's hard-line President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad told the conference that recent unrest in Gaza showed that Israel "just kills innocent women and children, but the U.N. Security Council stays silent."

Senegalese President Abdoulaye Wade, who is chairing the OCI, condemned Israeli attacks but also called for unity among feuding Palestinian factions.

U.S.-backed peace talks between Israel and the Palestinians have been strained by a recent surge in fighting. On Thursday, the militant Islamic Jihad group in Gaza fired dozen of rockets at southern Israel after Israeli undercover forces killed one of its West Bank leaders.

Abbas said Palestinians expect Israel to meet "commitments to put an end to its aggressions and settlements expansion ... Yet what is taking place on the ground today is totally in violation of that."

Palestinians are split between the moderate government led by Abbas in the West Bank and the militant Hamas group that has ruled Gaza since seizing the coastal strip by force last year.

## No Headline In Original

"I should like to tell our brothers and sisters of Palestine that your unity is the first priority of success ... Please unite," Wade said. He also called Israel "an occupying power" and urged its government to "immediately stop its disproportionate use of force."

The Middle East has long been a core issue for the conference, which was founded in 1969 in response to an arson attack on the al-Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem. The group aims to promote Islamic unity and serve as a voice for the Muslim world.

Palestinian leader accuses Israel of 'ethnic cleansing' campaign in Jerusalem

**Load-Date:** March 14, 2008

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**"Verhandlungen mit Israel schwächen nur Abbas" ; Die palästinensische Politikerin und Frauenrechtlerin Hanan Ashrawi über Nahost-Friedensgespräche und die Lage der Frauen im Gazastreifen**

Frankfurter Rundschau

31. Januar 2008

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## Frankfurter Rundschau

**Section:** Politik; 7

**Length:** 580 words

**Byline:** SACHULZE

### Body

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Frau Ashrawi, hat das Treffen von Israels Premier Ehud Olmert mit Palästinenserpräsident Mahmud Abbas etwas bewirkt?

Nein, denn es gab keine Resultate. Mit diesen Treffen wird nur Mahmud Abbas' Position in der palästinensischen Öffentlichkeit geschwächt. Er trifft sich weiter mit den Israelis, während Olmert und Barak weiter die Belagerung von Gaza unterstützen, die Morde weiter rechtfertigen und nichts tun, um eine Friedenslösung zu finden. Die Leute fragen sich, warum sie überhaupt verhandeln. Olmert nutzt diese Treffen, um seine Position in der Koalition und in seiner eigenen Partei zu wahren.

Was wären denn für das Volk wahre Erfolge?

Die israelischen Straßensperren und Checkpoints müssen abgebaut werden. Die Belagerung und die Bombardements müssen ein Ende haben. Dann erst sehen die Menschen eine Veränderung in ihrem Leben. Aber solange sie andauern, die Wirtschaft am Boden ist, die Menschen jeden Tag erniedrigt werden und sich nicht frei bewegen können, wird die Besatzung systematisch weiter alles zerstören. In Paris gab es viele finanzielle Zugeständnisse, aber wenn Israel seine Angriffe nicht stoppt, war dieses Geld umsonst.

Mitarbeiter von Hilfsorganisationen bezeichnen den Gazastreifen als Gefängnis.

Ja, denn die Menschen können nirgendwo hingehen. Gaza ist komplett dicht - von der Landseite, von der Seeseite, aus der Luft und es ist abgeschnitten von Lebensmittel- und Medikamentenlieferungen. Vor einer Weile wurde verboten, Treibstoff nach Gaza zu verkaufen. Die Stromversorgung wurde abgeschaltet, darunter litten auch die Krankenhäuser. Rund 80 palästinensische Frauen starben in den letzten Wochen, weil sie eine nötige medizinische Spezialversorgung nirgends bekommen konnten.

Halten die Frauen durch die schlechte Versorgungslage mehr zusammen oder kämpfen sie gegen einander?

"Verhandlungen mit Israel schwächen nur Abbas " Die palästinensische Politikerin und Frauenrechtlerin Hanan Ashrawi über Nahost-Friedensgespräche und die Lage d....

Um in der palästinensischen Gesellschaft zu überleben, half man sich schon immer innerhalb der Familie, der Community, des Clans. Nur weil sich die Frauen gegenseitig helfen, können sie dem Druck von außen standhalten. Sie sind aktiv, sie handeln. Als beispielsweise die Hamas die Vormacht in Gaza gewonnen hatte, zogen sie los, um die Einschüchterung von Frauen zu verhindern. Und sie organisieren sich, etwa in Bürgerrechts- oder in Frauengruppen.

Können die politischen Frauengruppen denn etwas bewegen?

Palästina hat eine lange Geschichte der Frauenbewegung und eine starke, ziemlich offene Gender-Forschung. Die Frauenbewegung hat sehr hart gearbeitet: Zunächst war sie vor allem eine politische Kraft und dann hat sie sich auch in der Zivilgesellschaft für Menschenrechte eingesetzt. Das Problem ist, dass die Ehemänner versuchen, die Frauen auszuschließen. Das politische System, das von Männern dominiert ist und dem Islam folgt, tut wenig dafür, Frauen aufsteigen zu lassen - auch wenn sie sehr aktiv sind und ihre Stimme gegen Diskriminierung erheben.

Was muss sich denn ändern?

Ich denke, auch wenn wir zurzeit drei Frauen in der Regierung haben - was die höchste Zahl aller Zeiten ist - müssen es mehr werden. Außerdem sind sie nicht am politischen Entscheidungsprozess beteiligt, denn alle Verhandlungen sind in der Verantwortung von Abbas. Wir fordern ein Higher Council for Women (Obersten Frauenrat, Anm. d. Red.), der alle öffentlichen und Regierungsinstitutionen, inklusive des Präsidenten, überwacht. Präsident Abbas muss verstehen, dass er kein politisches System ohne Frauen aufbauen kann - was er bislang tut.

Interview: Jana Schulze

**Load-Date:** January 31, 2008

**No Headline In Original**

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (Pennsylvania)

June 11, 2008 Wednesday

SOONER EDITION

Copyright 2008 P.G. Publishing Co.

**Section:** ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT; THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE BEAUTIFUL; Pg. C-2

**Length:** 529 words

**Byline:** This was compiled by wire and Web reports.

## **Body**

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Gennifer Flowers and Paula Jones are offering Internet viewers the lurid details of encounters they claim they had with former President Clinton -- for \$1.99 a pop.

The women, who gained notoriety in the early 1990s after claiming to have had sexual encounters with Clinton when he was governor of Arkansas, have created a Web site offering videos of their thoughts on Clinton, his wife, Hillary, and other matters. Each video segment is available for \$1.99.

"It's a way we can get our story out there in our own words, without someone making their own interpretations or corrections," Jones said.

Earlier this week, both walked down a manicured avenue to the Clinton Presidential Library in Little Rock and chatted with an interviewer from the syndicated television program "Extra."

\*

New York state officials are investigating the charitable foundation of Anne Hathaway's boyfriend, a spokesman for the attorney general said Monday.

Italian businessman Raffaello Follieri, 29, who dates the "Devil Wears Prada" star, heads the Follieri Foundation, a charity whose work includes vaccinating children in Third World countries.

New York Attorney General Andrew Cuomo is heading the probe. The foundation has not filed IRS tax disclosure forms required from charities, according to a review of records by the Associated Press.

The New York Post, which first reported the investigation, said Hathaway was previously on the foundation's board of directors, but it was unclear when or for how long.

"There is an investigation going on that does not involve Anne," said Stephen Huvane, Hathaway's publicist, in an e-mail. "She is no longer a board member of the Follieri Foundation. Other than that we will not be commenting."

The number for Follieri at his Manhattan apartment was disconnected.

\*

## No Headline In Original

Alan Dershowitz is taking on former President Jimmy Carter in his upcoming book, "The Case Against Israel's Enemies," out in September, according to the New York Post. The Harvard law prof rips the ex-president as a "critical threat" to the existence of Israel, arguing that he wants to "delegitimize Israel as an apartheid regime subject to the same fate as white South Africans." The book calls the views of Carter and other like-minded Western leaders a bigger threat than Hamas and Palestinian terrorists.

\*

Prosecutors have decided not to pursue charges against rapper Warren G, who was arrested a day earlier for being in a car with marijuana.

A spokeswoman for Los Angeles County District Attorney Steve Cooley said there was insufficient evidence to prove the rapper, whose real name is Warren Griffin III, knew about the drugs.

\*

Tori Spelling and husband Dean McDermott are parents again.

The "Beverly Hills, 90210" alumna and McDermott welcomed their second child -- 6-pound, 8-ounce Stella Doreen McDermott -- at a Los Angeles hospital Monday.

It's the second child for the 35-year-old actress and the third for McDermott, who has a son from a previous marriage.

\*

Speaking of babies, Mark Wahlberg and his longtime girlfriend are expecting a third. The 37-year-old actor who stars in "The Happening," which opens Friday, has a daughter, Ella, 4, and a son, Michael, 2, with Rhea Durham, 29.

## Graphic

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PHOTO: These Russian nesting dolls with images of former President Bill Clinton, Paula Jones, right, and Gennifer Flowers, below, were sold in Moscow at the time of their alleged liaisons.

**Load-Date:** June 12, 2008

***No Headline In Original***

Wyoming Tribune-Eagle (Cheyenne)

January 16, 2008 Wednesday

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**Section:** LOCAL NEWS; Briefs; Pg. A4

**Length:** 1624 words

**Byline:** Staff

## **Body**

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Blotter briefs A5

Wamsutter landfill A7

No fake cops trying to get into homes

CHEYENNE (WTE) - City police say they have had no reports of men posing as police officers trying to get into homes.

Correcting information the department released Monday, police spokesman Lt. Mark Munari said the men who knocked on the door of an elderly woman's south Cheyenne home were legitimate officers, but their police cruiser was hidden from view.

Munari said the officers were responding to a complaint in the area, but they knocked on the wrong door. He added the incident happened some time ago, not over the weekend. He blamed the mix-up on miscommunication within the department.

"We don't have any impostors walking around," he said.

Woman wanted in mall robbery to face charges

CHEYENNE (WTE) - A woman wanted for allegedly pulling a knife this summer on a worker at JCPenney in Frontier Mall is back in Cheyenne to face charges.

Priscilla D. Enriquez, 20, of York, Neb., was transferred Monday from the Nebraska Correctional Center for **Women** to the Laramie County Detention Center. She is charged with aggravated robbery and larceny.

Around 9 p.m. July 29, city police say, Enriquez and another woman grabbed \$2,000 worth of clothes from the store and ran toward the exit. Enrique then flashed a 4- or 5-inch knife at a clerk before getting away with the merchandise, police said in court documents.

According to police, Enriquez said during an interview that she was in town for Cheyenne Frontier Days but did not remember much from that night because she was intoxicated.

Enriquez was in jail in Nebraska on charges related to a July 30 armed robbery at the Wal-Mart in Scottsbluff, Neb.

## No Headline In Original

She has an initial appearance scheduled today in Laramie County Circuit Court.

Mrs. Wyoming Pageant seeking applicants

CHEYENNE - The Mrs. Wyoming-America Pageant is seeking applicants for the title of Mrs. Cheyenne.

Once selected, the winner will advance to represent her community in the 2008 Mrs. Wyoming Pageant May 31 at the Cheyenne Civic Center.

Local titleholders will compete to win a prize package valued at more than \$8,000, including an all-expenses-paid trip to the nationally televised Mrs. America Pageant.

Applicants must be at least 18 years old (no age limit), married at the time of competition and a Wyoming resident. No performing talent is required.

Celebrating its 32nd year, the Mrs. America Pageant is the only competition to recognize America's married woman.

To request the official application or for more information, call Sheree at 631-4447 or visit [mrswyomingamerica.com](http://mrswyomingamerica.com).

Vandals cause extensive damage to work site

ROCK SPRINGS (AP) - Vandals caused an estimated \$4 million in damage to heavy construction equipment last weekend at a pipeline project outside of the city.

Police say that during the night Saturday or early morning Sunday, nine bulldozers and a large track hoe excavator owned by Sheehan Pipeline Construction of Tulsa, Okla., were heavily damaged or destroyed.

The vandalism occurred at a gas pipeline project site about 7 1/2 miles south of Rock Springs.

Sweetwater County Sheriff Rich Haskell said in a release that the vandals were able to start several pieces of the equipment, which they used to ram and do extensive damage to other equipment.

Haskell said a \$10,000 reward is being offered in the case.

Avalanche victims in wrong place, wrong time

JACKSON (AP) - Three snowmobilers killed in an avalanche near Afton last weekend did not trigger the massive slide that traveled about a half-mile, authorities said.

Alan Jensen, 55, Kim Steed, 51, and Scott Bennett, 42, all of Smoot, died in the avalanche Saturday in the North Fork of the Cottonwood Creek drainage, about eight miles southeast of Afton in Bridger-Teton National Forest. All three victims were buried and asphyxiated, according to Lincoln County Coroner Mike Richens.

Lincoln County Search and Rescue director Dusty Skinner said he believed the men were in a meadow below and not on the slope when the avalanche released naturally, a conclusion also reached by avalanche forecasters.

"My assessment is that this was one of those fast, quick-moving slides that just wipes everything out," Skinner said. "The trees along the path had the snow stripped out of them - they were just clean, and there were some bigger trees that were taken down with this. Those men had all rode all their lives, they were just in the wrong place at the wrong time in the wrong snow conditions."

Region

Brothel owner asks evidence suppress

## No Headline In Original

CHEYENNE (AP) - The owner of a Nevada brothel who's charged with possessing and transporting child pornography in Wyoming has asked a federal judge to suppress the evidence against him.

A lawyer for David Burgess, 55, says the government's search of his laptop computer following a traffic stop last summer violated his constitutional rights.

Burgess is owner of the Old Bridge Ranch, a legal brothel east of Reno, Nev. He's also a leader of the Hells Angels motorcycle gang in Nevada.

James H. Barrett, assistant federal public defender in Cheyenne, represents Burgess. Barrett on Monday asked U.S. District Judge Alan B. Johnson to block prosecutors from using the seized computer materials in court.

In his suppression request, Barrett states that Burgess was a passenger in a motor home that a Wyoming Highway Patrol trooper pulled over last July near Evanston. The trooper stopped the motor home because it was pulling a trailer with expired tags.

Teen gets 40 years for stabbing women to death

BOULDER, Colo. (AP) - Eighteen-year-old Bryan Grove was sentenced to 40 years in prison Tuesday for stabbing his girlfriend's mother to death, and he apologized to her family for causing "pain and tears and grief."

Grove pleaded guilty to second-degree murder in the death of 52-year-old Linda Damm of Lafayette last February. Authorities say she was stabbed 18 times and then left in the trunk of her car for weeks.

Prosecutors say Damm's daughter, Tess, told Grove to kill her mother. Tess Damm, now 16, has pleaded not guilty to first-degree murder and is scheduled to go on trial in May.

Grove had also been charged with first-degree murder, but prosecutors reduced the charge in exchange for his guilty plea last November. He would be eligible for parole after 30 years.

Colorado House panel to investigate kick

DENVER (AP) - The Colorado Legislature launched an investigation Tuesday into whether a state lawmaker should be disciplined for kicking a newspaper photographer.

House Speaker Andrew Romanoff said he will form a special committee with powers similar to an ethics committee, which can recommend discipline ranging from a reprimand to expulsion, against Rep. Douglas Bruce.

House leaders said they were looking into the specific authority they could give the panel, including subpoena power, and whether the meetings would be public.

Nation

Senator seeks to impeach Bush

OLYMPIA, Wash. (AP) - State Sen. Eric Oemig, D-Kirkland, has introduced a resolution to ask Congress to impeach President Bush and Vice President Cheney.

A hearing on the measure is scheduled for Thursday.

Oemig had little support last year for a similar resolution.

FDA says cloned animals are safe for food

WASHINGTON (AP) - Just over a decade after scientists cloned the first animal, the last major barrier to selling meat and milk from clones has fallen: The U.S. government declared this food safe Tuesday.

Now, will people buy it?

## No Headline In Original

Consumer anxiety about cloning is serious enough that several major food companies, including the big dairy producer Dean Foods Co. and Smithfield Foods Inc., say they aren't planning to sell products from cloned animals.

And the industry says most Americans would never eat a cloned animal for sheer economic reasons: At \$10,000 to \$20,000 per cloned cow - compared with \$1,000 for an ordinary steer - they're too valuable. They would be used primarily for breeding, to produce a steady supply of cattle that are particularly tender, for instance, or for prize dairy cows. It would be offspring of clones that consumers would eat.

Third child's body found off coastal Ala. bridge

BAYOU LA BATRE, Ala. (AP) - The body of one of four children allegedly tossed from a coastal Alabama bridge by their father was found Tuesday in a Mississippi bayou, authorities said.

Kate Johnson, a spokeswoman for the Mobile County Sheriff's Department, said the body was found by a Mississippi marine resources crew in an inlet near Pascagoula.

The identity of the child was not immediately confirmed but was believed to be one of four young children allegedly thrown from the Dauphin Island bridge by their father, 37-year-old Lam Luong.

The bodies of 3-year-old Ryan Phan and his 4-month-old brother, Danny Luong, were recovered over the weekend in waters a few miles west of the 80-foot-tall coastal bridge, where authorities said the father tossed all four children Jan. 7 after a fight with his wife, 23-year-old Kieu Phan.

world

19 killed in Israeli-Palestinian clashes

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip (AP) - Israeli troops killed a son of Gaza's most powerful leader along with 18 other Palestinians on Tuesday in the bloodiest day of fighting in the coastal area since **Hamas** militants seized control last summer.

As fighting raged in Gaza, a **Hamas** sniper shot and killed an Ecuadorean volunteer working in the potato fields of an Israeli border farm. That killing, and Tuesday's high death toll, stoked the flames of violence at a time when Israel and Palestinian moderates are making halting attempts to talk peace.

Tuesday's bloodshed began before dawn when Israeli infantry, tanks and helicopters pushed into northern Gaza in what the military said was a routine operation aimed at Palestinian militants who launch rocket barrages at Israeli towns near Gaza almost every day.

**Load-Date:** January 16, 2008



## *No Headline In Original*

The Bismarck Tribune

April 23, 2008 Wednesday

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**Section:** OPINION; Pg. 10a

**Length:** 748 words

### **Body**

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You jaded citizens may be bored silly by these seemingly endless candidate debates. But last week's encounter between the two Democrats was an entertainment milestone. I say give me more.

Who has ever seen a politician admit to lying before? Asked yet again about the corkscrew landing, Hillary Clinton introduced her mea culpa with this odd formulation: "I can tell you that I may be a lot of things, but I'm not dumb." She then proceeded to admit that she said things that "weren't in keeping with what I knew to be the case and what I had written about in my book." So by stressing that she isn't dumb, she was suggesting what? That she flat-out lied with no excuse? Perhaps what she meant to say was "I'm not dumb, but I really did a brainless thing this time. Heck, I even wrote the truth in the book. Don't know what I was thinking."

For someone else, that tack might have been acceptable. But this is the woman who told us that she converted a \$1,000 stock investment into a \$100,000 windfall by "reading The Wall Street Journal" and who miraculously "found" the missing Rose Law Firm billing records on an East Wing credenza after being unable to locate them for two years.

From one point of view, it's a shame that she is so tainted, because she delivered some body blows to his serene highness. She reminded viewers that Obama's church had offered its bulletin as a forum for a message from Hamas, and cheerfully piled on when George Stephanopoulos raised the troublesome matter of Obama's connection to William Ayers.

Bill Ayers is no run-of-the-mill lefty. Along with his wife, Bernadine Dohrn, Ayers was a founding member of the Weather Underground, a radical spin-off of the SDS that "declared war" on "Amerikkka" in 1970 and planned a terrorist attack on Fort Dix, N.J., that the group anticipated would be "the most horrific hit the United States government has ever suffered on its soil." Alas for them, three of the Weathermen were blown up in a Greenwich Village apartment while mixing the ingredients for the bomb. The Weathermen had more success on other outings, planting bombs in a New York City police precinct house, the U.S. Capitol building, and, this was a nice touch, on Ho Chi Minh's birthday in a women's bathroom at the Pentagon. The group claimed credit for a total of 25 bombings and assorted other acts of incitement and mayhem. Reflecting on his life as a revolutionary, Ayers told The New York Times that he didn't regret setting bombs. In fact, he found "a certain eloquence to bombs, a poetry and a pattern from a safe distance." The New York Times profile was published on Sept. 11, 2001.

Other than zinging Sen. Clinton by pointing out that Bill Clinton had pardoned two members of the Weather Underground (there's that taint again), Obama's response was lame and deceptive. " ... The notion that somehow as a consequence of me knowing somebody who engaged in detestable acts 40 years ago when I was 8 years old, somehow reflects on me and my values, doesn't make much sense, George." Doesn't it? Obama and Ayers served

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together on the eight-person board of directors of the Wood Fund. An early organizing meeting about Obama's political career was held in Ayers' living room. This isn't just "somebody he knows." Some of us wouldn't even shake hands with Ayers, far less accept a \$200 donation and his hospitality. Suppose John McCain had a similar relationship with abortion clinic bomber Eric Rudolph?

With every peel of the onion, Barack Obama is revealed to have hard-left friends and allies. The list of questionable friends extends not just to Ayers, Rezko and Wright, but also to Rashid Khalidi, professor at Columbia and another fundraising host for Obama. Khalidi, whose heroes include the late Edward Said and Noam Chomsky, is a cheerleader for the PLO who spits contempt for Israel.

In his memoir, Obama recalls that in his college days, he sat up late with friends discussing "neocolonialism, Franz Fanon, Eurocentrism and patriarchy." To "avoid being mistaken for a sellout," he selected his friends carefully. "The more politically active black students. The foreign students. The Chicanos. The Marxist professors and structural feminists and punk-rock performance artists." On first reading, I thought that he'd achieved ironic distance from this jejune leftism. But maybe not.

And now, to paraphrase his pastor and mentor, the chickens are coming home to roost.

(Mona Charen's syndicated column appears Wednesdays.)

Candidate baggage worrisome

**Load-Date:** April 23, 2008

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## *No Headline In Original*

Canberra Times (Australia)

January 31, 2008 Thursday

Final Edition

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**Section:** A; Pg. 18

**Length:** 937 words

**Byline:** The Canberra Times

### **Body**

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Bridge cost query When I came to Canberra in the early 1960s every single bridge in the ACT was of the Allan truss type even Commonwealth Avenue Bridge (which was a magnificent example). Now only the Tharwa Bridge remains. It is of great historical and heritage significance and should be preserved.

I am concerned, however, that a figure of \$14.7million is being bandied about. I would be most interested to know what Engineers Australia thinks about this estimate as I have little confidence that those serving John Hargreaves would get it right.

J.F. Bishop, Flynn Cruelty to fish Today, my partner and I were paddling our kayaks on Lake Burley Griffin and noticed a plastic bottle moving in and out of the reeds by the shore. On further inspection we discovered that some delightful person had tied a string through the gills of a European Carp, attached it to the bottle and put it back in the water. I agree we should be doing all we can to rid our waterways of these fish, but this is blatant cruelty.

One wonders what else this type of person does for fun and how sad for our society.

Penny Cook, Torrens Coast road fears Jennifer Saunders tells it the way it is (Letters, January 29). My wife and I have ceased travelling to the coast during the insane periods such as the start and end of long weekends and major holidays.

This is because the road, which can comfortably carry a never-ending stream of cars travelling in a reasonable manner, becomes a death trap simply because idiots insist on overtaking in dangerous ways.

Perhaps it is time drivers had to pass a sanity test before getting a licence.

In the meantime, I believe the lack of police presence stems from a lack of police in the force. Therefore we need more police so that we can have a reasonable presence.

John Evans, Macgregor Defence worries Defence Minister Joel Fitzgibbon has used his first major speech of the year in Sydney to send a stern warning to Defence ("Defence faces 'hard decisions'", January 30, p1). His message: be afraid, be very afraid.

Labor's social experimentation with Defence looks set to continue in the failed wake of the last Labor government, which established an ill-advised ethnicity study of our defence force.

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That study, which cost taxpayers millions, fortunately led to no significant change.

This time, it is women in uniform who will bear the brunt of Labor's meddling. Defence is changing, and many more opportunities are now available for women, but promotions are currently based on the same skill- set and training as men; the same process is used and favours are not granted on the basis of genitalia.

For an organisation that recruits privates and lieutenants, not sergeants and majors, on initial entry, the pace of change will be slow.

Political meddling in the promotion process will only cast a pall of questions over women who do rise to the top. Did they make it because they were the best or was it because they were a woman?

The army does have its first female major-general and there are a bunch of women not far behind who want to be assessed on their professional merits and performance, not their gender.

Fitzgibbon needs to understand that social experimentation and glib media grabs are not a substitute for coherent defence policy.

Name and address withheld by request Tuckey disbelief Wilson Tuckey's comments condemning a possible Aboriginal dance ceremony to accompany a "sorry" pronouncement defy belief.

His words about turning Parliament into a "dance parlour" reveal the depth of his ignorance of, and hostility for, Aboriginal traditional culture.

I'm so shocked by what he said that I find it hard to believe he found anyone to vote to re-elect him.

As a member of the (immigrant) Canberra community, I well remember Tuckey's hostile and unsympathetic attitude towards the many of us traumatised and damaged by the firestorm. It seems like Tuckey is short on compassion for anyone, whether old or new Australian.

M.A. Smith, Kambah Palestine ruin I have always found your edited extracts from the overseas daily press most informative, and today's extract from The Daily Star of Beirut ("Ruin of Palestine dreams", January 29, p10) is another quality choice.

Commenting on the anarchy and chaos that have befallen the people of Gaza, The Daily Star speaks for the majority of the people in the Middle East when it directs its anger at the Palestinian leadership, both Fatah and Hamas, as having done the greatest damage in denying their people the opportunity to realise their dreams.

When will these leaders realise that their personal feud and lasting state of hostilities are augmenting, as well as prolonging, the punishment that the Israeli siege has inflicted upon the already desperate Palestinian refugees?

Sam Nona, Burradoo, NSW Double standard The current prosecution in San Diego of two Australian sailors for an alleged bashing appears to reveal the continuation of a double standard that always favours United States citizens.

On many past occasions when US naval personnel on shore leave in Australia have been charged with assault in its disparate forms or with various other offences, the US Navy has successfully sought to have them surrendered to its jurisdiction and dealt with in accordance with the military procedures.

Too often they have been found not guilty or, at most, given a slap on the wrist with no appeal process available to their victims.

Why could not Australia request that its two sailors be treated in the same manner and released into our navy's custody rather than be remanded to stand trial in a Californian civilian court some time in March?

John Murray, Fadden

No Headline In Original

**Load-Date:** January 30, 2008

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## *No Headline In Original*

Canberra Times (Australia)

June 9, 2008 Monday

Final Edition

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**Section:** A; Pg. 8

**Length:** 970 words

**Byline:** The Canberra Times

### **Body**

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Money-go-round Inflation is caused by too much money chasing too few goods.

This means inflation can be caused because there is either too much money or too few goods.

Over the past few years Australia has created too much money mainly through the issuing of loans to purchase overpriced houses.

Homes are overpriced because people buy them in the expectation that the price will continue to increase.

Sooner or later this has to stop.

We reduce the amount of money in the economy by increasing the price of loans and we allow the extra money we have created to reduce in value and so "disappear" through inflation.

This could have been avoided if the housing bubble had never been allowed to start.

This could also be done by the Reserve Bank being smarter in the way it allows money to be created.

The scarcity in petroleum (and other resources) is causing prices to increase.

The solution to this problem and to stop general inflation compounding is to take the money from the increased price of petroleum and to use it to invest in ways of reducing the demand for petroleum. This can be done by the Government directing investment to renewables and ways of saving petroleum.

If the Government is clever it can be done in ways that do not harm "working families".

Unfortunately, instead of increasing the price of petroleum to pay for alternatives, the Government seems bent on reducing the price.

This inevitably increases inflation.

Kevin Cox, Ngunnawal Overstepping mark With all the brouhaha over Bill Henson's photographs of young girls and media coverage being careful to censor any images shown, it seems to me that The Canberra Times overstepped

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the mark in its reporting of one of the images found on the computer of Richard Llewellyn, one of those arrested in the recent raid on internet paedophiles ("Warning of more child sex arrests", June 6, pp1-2).

As was the case with Bill Henson's images, individuals' reactions to the written word can vary enormously according to each individual's world view and/or psychopathology.

Anne Macdonald, Kambah God's good work While I agree with Dr Penelope Mathew (Letters, June 6) concerning the rights of women, or anyone for that matter, not having to put up with offensive material in a work environment, the breasts under examination by the writer, in my opinion, are not really offensive. This opinion may well derive from having spent most of my working days on construction sites.

If I may speak for most construction workers, a women's mind is not the first thing we dwell on when looking for a partner. The way I ratify this concept is through religion and a belief that breasts, like all body parts, were made, by God, for a purpose.

Had God not wanted men to look at women's breasts he/she would have made them less attractive. Now some readers may disagree with my view, but women's breast are one of God's better creations.

David Cavill, Kambah Aged left wanting From reading letters such as Mary Dean's (Letter, June 6) and from a limited personal experience with the old age/disability pension application procedures, it does seem that old age support in this country is being left entirely up to the partner of the infirmed or aged.

For example, after 40+ years of hard work, that included paying tax/ GST, parking/speeding fines and whatever they threw at you, one would expect a small remuneration for service to his/ her country in the form of a small pension and maybe a health card.

This is not the case, as (in my case) my good wife of almost 40 years earns a meagre wage.

This means retired workers, like myself, must rely on their partner for all their medical, food and general needs.

As women live longer than men this burden, and we are a burden, will become part and parcel of a woman's retirement plan, and yes they will have to draw on their personal savings to have medical procedures carried out on their loved ones.

This pension procedure I must admit caught me unaware as my late mother, who worked hard during and before the war years as a machinist in a munitions factory, was able to receive a British pension based on the years that she worked and payed into a pension fund.

I would encourage people like Mary to write to the federal minister for health and aging (Nicola Roxon) to give her the opportunity to correct this trend before women are further disfranchised, and left holding the baby, again.

David Cavill, Kambah Little assistance The small print of Labor's budget has now been read and we find that not only did the old aged pensioners receive little assistance, but that self- funded retirees and others have had their few benefits removed. Wayne Swan has decreed that "income" from account based pensions (formerly allocated pensions), will count towards assessable income in determining eligibility for the Commonwealth Seniors Health Card.

This retrograde step is aimed at depriving this group of the card's benefits. I, like many of my contemporaries, worked, saved and paid taxes until 70 years old to see the only recognition of our contribution taken away. Unfortunately for us, after some 50 years as "Australian Working Families" we no longer fall into that favoured category. Mr. Swan has attacked the aged and stashed away a 20 billion dollar surplus.

Comrades rise up! Give your MPs an ear full about his injustice. It may be the thin edge of the wedge with the taxation review about to commence.

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Ron Goodwin, Tuross Head, NSW The real Obama Barack Obama is the new found friend of Israel! I gather his earlier comments about talking to Iran had upset Jewish Americans (as Iran's President has threatened to wipe Israel off the map) and harmed his chances of election?

Now **Hamas** is criticising him, having earlier endorsed him. As his speeches are vacuous and his website no clearer, could the real Barack Obama stand up?

M. Gordon, Flynn

**Load-Date:** June 8, 2008

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## *No Headline In Original*

Canberra Times (Australia)

June 14, 2008 Saturday

Final Edition

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**Section:** A; Pg. B06

**Length:** 971 words

**Byline:** The Canberra Times

### **Body**

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Tibetan puzzle Anyone who knows about Tibetan Buddhism and its kind and compassionate message must be amazed at the latest accusations against the Dalai Lama ("Dalai Lama drops in, but Rudd's not home", June 12, p7).

Sorry to be cynical, but we saw how the Chinese Government orchestrated the pro-Olympic Games rally in Canberra to the detriment of genuine protesters, wrapping large Chinese flags around them and intimidating them. Previously it was reported that, in Tibet, Chinese soldiers dressed up as monks to create havoc and blame Tibetans. What lengths can a dictatorial government go to? So what is this so-called Western Shugden Society and who sponsors it?

Susan MacDougall, Scullin Attack graffiti As Tom Waring (Letters, June 10) pointed out, neurotics obsessed with (a bit of) noise and (modest) vandalism over a weekend shouldn't justify destroying the considerable enjoyment Canberra's children derive from cracker night.

But lazy, populist government prefers a nice ban. It may cost wider, dispersed enjoyment, but it's so seductively cheap and easy.

If our MLAs feel an overwhelming need to ban something to reduce vandalism and prove they're still awake, they should look elsewhere.

It costs us \$550,000 each year to remove graffiti here ("Attack on shrine costs taxpayers \$5000", June 12, p10).

Leave cracker night alone (perhaps move it to Australia Day?) and work towards a national ban on paint spray cans. People with a spray job to do would just have to use the better (more cumbersome) tools available.

David Lonsdale, Aranda Carter confusion I found the article on Jimmy Carter ("United States' fall, divided in stands", Times2, June 12, pp4-5) curious.

Carter has always intrigued me.

His work for all manner of causes shows his religious conviction was probably always better than his political judgment. His attack on John McCain was bizarre, and actually makes McCain look better. And Carter's praise of Hamas again demonstrates the naivety which was a hallmark of his presidency.

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All luck to Carter in his humanitarian work, but it's probably best he stay away from politics.

M. Gordon, Flynn Drinking facts There is more alco-schlock to the Government's "ready to drink" (RTD) tax hike than there is alco-fact.

The simple facts follow.

Drinks targeting adult males constitute 75 per cent of sales in the RTD market.

The alleged "explosion" in young women binge drinking is not credible.

In fact, the percentage of young women in the heavy-drinker category dropped from 5.8 per cent in 2004, to just 3.1 per cent in 2007.

The tax hike has simply directed drinkers away from RTD, where alcohol concentrations are known, into the unfathomed depths of mix it as you go which is an unacceptably risky proposition for the young and inexperienced party-goer.

If the Government wants to preserve any credibility, it needs to stop pushing this furphy and admit it got it wrong.

This policy is just plain stupid.

Sticking with it, ignoring the evidence to the contrary from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, and the Australian Medical Association, is just plain arrogant and stupid.

Even the term "alcopop" is deliberately misleading, inflammatory and wrong.

Kevin Rudd needs to remember that the Australian public dumped the Howard government last year because of its arrogant and foolish policies.

Jamie Geysen, Aranda All about faith Sam Nona (Letters, June 12) asks how could someone who until recently asserted that we don't do God in Downing Street for fear of being branded a nutter now be trusted to bring faiths together?

There may be several reasons for that volte-face. Tony Blair may have had a genuine conversion experience.

Paul of Tarsus, persecutor par excellence of Christians, had one. Why not a former British PM? Miracles do happen still.

Another explanation of Blair's tardiness in "coming out" may have been no more than common sense: with so many British secularists in the wings it would have been silly to ally himself to any particular faith while he was still residing at No10; ignoramuses would have accused him of marrying church and state, God and Caesar.

That Blair launched his Faith Foundation in New York fits in with the foundation's aims which are inclusive rather than insular. And a reminder that it's an exaggeration to refer to Britain as the "country that gave him their trust for more than a decade": many Brits did, many did not.

Henk Verhoeven, Beacon Hill, NSW Unit-title changes The nonchalant incompetence of the Stanhope Government is brilliantly illustrated in the fact that notification of imminent changes to the Unit Titles Act, changes affecting many Canberra residents, has come from a private citizen (Letters, June 12).

Anyone wanting to provide an input had one day left to do so.

One notable clause in the existing text is not scheduled for revision. It reads, "Annual financial statements must cover the period from the period for which the last statements were prepared (or, for the first annual general meeting, since the registration of the units plan) to a date no later than [three] months before the date of the annual

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general meeting at which they are to be presented." It's a tribute to the linguistic opacity of the legal fraternity together with their detachment from actually running something.

Put simply, the AGM must not be conducted earlier than three months after the end of the preceding financial year, an obviously silly constraint since passage of a budget and setting of levies need to be effected as early as practicable in a new financial year, taking account of the financial papers from the previous year.

It is quite astonishing how many take this masterly statement as requiring that the AGM be held no later than three months after the preceding financial year, which is pragmatically sensible but breaks the law.

Jack Lonergan, Isaacs

**Load-Date:** June 13, 2008

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*No Headline In Original*

Chicago Daily Herald  
February 6, 2008 Wednesday  
Cook Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 24; Fence Post

**Length:** 1279 words

## **Body**

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County gun sales measure misguided

I read with interest Don Bekelski's letter and let me provide you with some information. The ordinance by Larry Suffredin and William Beavers can't close gun dealers in other counties.

Also Cabela's generates \$675,000 to Cook County, \$1.8 million to Hoffman Estates and more than \$3 million to the state of Illinois.

Cabela's provides more than 300 jobs. Two thirds are Cook County residents. Nearly \$4 million in wages are injected into the local economy and may be lost.

What commissioners Suffredin and Beavers don't tell you is most illegal handguns come to Illinois from out of state.

If this bill succeeds, I'll be forced to cross the county line for any hunting equipment I need.

Thomas Carras

Elk Grove Village

America is being 'dashed' to bits

On Dec. 16, the Daily Herald published a Fence Post letter under my name. But because of a change the Daily Herald made to my letter, what was published did not reflect my opinion.

Not only was my opinion misrepresented, but due to the change, the Daily Herald also ascribed a title to my Fence Post letter that bore no relation to the opinion I had tried to express.

My letter was published under the title, "Take pride in our American ethnicity." I ascribe to the philosophy that "pride goeth before the fall." The appropriate title, as submitted, should have been, "America is being 'dashed' to bits." I believe the old adage is going to prove itself true in America: United we stood, hyphenated we will fail.

Look around the world. How much strife and civil unrest is caused by ethnicity? Yet "ethnic pride" is now the cause celebre in America. Is our nationwide celebration of cultural diversity bringing us closer together as Americans or only dividing us more?

Is cultural divisivity really something to be celebrated in America?

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In submitting my original letter, I included this 1915 quote from Woodrow Wilson:

"A man who thinks of himself as belonging to a particular national group in America has not yet become an American. And the man who goes among you to trade upon your nationality is no worthy son to live under the Stars and Stripes."

There are many individuals, organizations and institutions today that need to examine their worthiness to march under the Stars and Stripes.

Richard H. Skiba Jr.

Palatine

Home rule power and racetrack slots

To the Arlington Heights village board:

Many of us continue to believe that "casino slots" would be a huge negative for our community.

When addressing the board, I mentioned that two of the AP casino proponents who spoke before me were businessmen residing in the affluent suburbs of Deer Park and Hinsdale.

My short comments were then followed by those of Arlington Park's president (Roy Arnold), who is a resident of Barrington.

If we consider how quickly the boards of Barrington, Hinsdale and Deer Park would line up against casino-style gambling in their communities, we gain the clearest understanding as to why so many residents of Arlington Heights don't want that type of activity in our home town.

Providing reasonable support for the interests of our local business leaders is very important, but is it reasonable for these leaders to request accommodations from Arlington Heights residents that we well know would not be supported in the communities in which they reside?

Many hold the strong opinion that casino slots are not required to support thoroughbred racing. Arlington Park's owner, Churchill Downs, Inc., has yet to convince government authorities for its flagship facility in Louisville that slot machines are the right approach.

Even if casino slots were horse racing's solution, they would not be the right choice for Arlington Heights. A community so properly conservative that it frowns on drinking bars operating independently of a food restaurant already knows why a slot-machine facility makes a bad neighbor.

For many of us, the issue has never been about gambling, however, but rather casino-slots style gambling.

I visit Arlington Park several times each summer as a matter of family tradition. Horse racing with its many aspects other than gambling is for the most part favorably regarded and a rich part of Arlington Heights history.

The rather bad reputation of casino slots is well deserved and also based on experience.

Just as I have no doubt the "sky will not fall" if Arlington Park becomes a de facto casino, I also have no doubt that such a shift would make Arlington Heights a less desirable address and place to live.

The exercise of discretion over the types of business activities to allow in a given area is "bread and butter" local governance. This is especially true for gambling.

Steven Weseman

Arlington Heights

## No Headline In Original

Gauge candidates on their records

Presidential candidates are not stupid, but we as voters can be.

Rather than just looking at what our politicians are promising, shouldn't we have been checking on what they have done in the past, both in public and private?

Calvin Lindstrom

Rolling Meadows

Israel only acts in defense of itself

At the risk of starting a debate in Fence Post, John November's letter (Jan. 11) has confirmed my opinion that there are, unfortunately, people who don't want to be bothered with facts.

He obviously did not take my suggestion and look up the time line for the Middle East. And yes, Israel may have nukes, warheads, tanks and bombs, and yes, they did use some of those weapons on Lebanese civilians.

Israel bombed Lebanon only after being pushed to the point whereby they had to do something.

Many Lebanese civilians were storing weapons for Israel's enemies and protecting those terrorists who are out to destroy Israel.

Palestinians, on the other hand, make a habit of bombing civilians for no reason whatsoever except for the fact that they live in Israel.

Furthermore, with the bombing of Lebanon, it is the very first time in the history of Israel that it was the aggressor in any attack.

Yet Mr. November insists on calling Israel a "bully." If Israel is such a bully, why has it not used nukes and warheads to destroy its enemies once and for all so that the citizens of Israel could finally live in peace?

As to the comment that the Palestinians have only "hand grenades and homemade rockets," that is not true.

They have the weapons given by the United States to aid the P.L.O. in its fight against **Hamas**; Egypt and Jordan supply the Palestinians with arms through Gaza; Russia has supplied Palestinians with arms; missiles are shipped from Iran through Syria into Hezbollah hands.

History is very clear on the fact that Israel did not steal any Palestinian land. And any so-called Palestinian land that Israel ever possessed was won in wars in which Israel successfully defended itself against all odds and then Israel gave most of that land back in the hopes for peace.

Judith A. Carlson

Des Plaines

Evolution is only a flawed theory

Mr. Michel Lee of Wheeling has a problem with my statement that most Christian, Moslems and Jews believe that man descended from a man called Adam and his, and all other souls did not evolve, but are created unique by God.

Atheistic evolutionists believe the source of human DNA was a hydrogen atom that some how mutated into a man. But the atheistic evolutionists fail to explain the spiritual part of man and how man got his soul.

G. K. Chesterton stated the theory of evolution pre-supposes a long chain of mutations from the beginning of time that has led to all human and animal life we see to day. But evolutionists can't prove the theory: because so many links are missing.

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Geneticists have traced human DNA to a single **female** human source (Adam's wife Eve?). How does that fit in the evolutionary chain of events?

Ed Smetana

Arlington Heights

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## **Body**

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In Texas, late summer, the sun clings to you like a second skin, baking the day and all those who venture into it. The Lone Star State is vast, the size of Germany, Italy and Denmark combined, and coping with the heat is one of the few things that unites everyone who lives here. On a sweltering Friday, Carl Rising-Moore and three others stand next to a ditch by the Broken Spoke ranch in Crawford, Texas, and wait for President George Bush to arrive home for a barbecue.

Rising-Moore holds a banner saying "TraitorImpeach". The secret service tell him to move to the other side of the gate. He refuses. They arrest him and send him to jail.

More than 150km away in Fort Worth, Lance Corporal Patrick Myers returns home to streets lined with American flags and an escort of "Patriot Guard Riders" on motorcycles. Myers, 23, used to ride a motorcycle, but rolls home this day in a wheelchair. Two years ago he was driving his Humvee near the Syrian border in Iraq when it struck a wayside bomb and he lost both his legs.

In a New York courtroom, Texas oilman David Chalmers pleads guilty to conspiracy in a scheme to pay illegal kickbacks to Saddam Hussein's regime in return for the right to buy oil.

And in Austin that same day, Will Martin, 19, stands in the shadow of the State Capitol at the head of a youth demonstration to announce the end of the war. "A lot of young people lack the confidence to challenge authority," Martin says. "We want to tell them that things can change if you want them to. The first step is to declare the war over."

While the war does not dominate daily conversation in America, it nags at people's consciousness. "It is kind of like a low-grade fever," a Democratic congressman told The New York Times recently. "It worries them, but they are so used to the drumbeat of death, destruction and confusion, they don't know how to react." Nowhere more so than in Texas, home to nearly 200,000 military personnel as well as the president who deployed them. According to a recent Lyceum poll, Texans believe the war is by far the single most important issue facing the nation. Almost everyone here, including me, seems to have a relative or friend in the military or to have served themselves my cousin from Houston has fought in the war.

In any average week, the body of one Texan soldier will be flown home from Iraq and 10 others will return wounded. In that sense, this random Friday was the beginning of a very regular week.



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FRIDAY, AUSTIN Martin had hoped for 1000, but only around 150 show up. Most I speak to are disappointed with the turnout.

"We haven't had a good demonstration here since March," David Morris says. "It's hard to tell why people aren't more motivated." Austin, a university town, has a reputation, as a liberal island marooned in a sea of Texan conservatism, that is not entirely deserved. Texas isn't that conservative and Austin isn't that liberal. The last time Bush's approval ratings were above 50 per cent here was January 2006 he's more popular in 20 other states. In 2004, the year Republicans took the state with 68 per cent of the vote, Dallas elected a lesbian, Hispanic, Democratic sheriff. Most of the border counties are also Democrat. It may be the home state of the leader of the War on Terror, but it was also the native land of the leader of the war on poverty, President Lyndon Johnson.

"Texas is unfairly characterised as homogenous and monolithic," says Daron Shaw, the director of the Lyceum poll. "On some issues, like gun culture, it's almost impossible to be too conservative. But on others, like immigration, it's a moving target and much more diverse than people give it credit for. When I conducted the recent poll, I was shocked by how polarised and disparate attitudes to the war were."

Back at the State Capitol, what the demonstrators lack in numbers they make up for in spirit. Six older women, one bare-breasted, spell out "I-M-P-E-A-C-H" on human billboards, while another man carries a banner rallying "Girlie men against imperialism". Most messages involve permutations of "oil", "troops", "impeach", "war", "Bush" and "Cheney".

The demonstration began as a re-enactment. In 1967, guitarist and activist Phil Ochs declared that the Vietnam War was over to a crowd of around 100,000 (eight years before the White House recognised the end had come). Forty years later, Martin and the other teenage organisers some of whose parents had demonstrated against the Vietnam War replicate Ochs' message for a smaller crowd and a different war.

Psychologically, it seems as if America has not yet finished with the Vietnam War, let alone this one. Throughout the week, Vietnam keeps coming up, stalking the debate.

By the end of the week even Bush will be drawing his own idiosyncratic parallels between Iraq and Vietnam.

SATURDAY, DALLAS AIRPORT At Dallas Fort Worth airport, Connie Carmen waits with red, white and blue pompoms and lungs full of patriotic fervour. It's before 7am and the "huggin', kissin' grandma" is ready, as she is most mornings, to welcome home the troops from the front in Afghanistan and Iraq. "They're my heroes," she says. "They're fighting for my freedom."

At international arrivals, a few hundred others wait with flags and banners. Almost every morning it's the same. They consult a hotline the night before, which tells them what time the plane is landing from Prestwick or Shannon airports, and the word goes out. On an average day 150 people will show up; at the weekend it goes up to around 350. As well as friends and families, there are church and veterans' groups, boy scouts and even a girls' soccer team decked out in stars and stripes.

At the arrivals gate, it's like July 4. The soldiers make their way out of customs and into a crowd reaching out to touch them.

Donna Cranston, of Defenders Of Freedom, which supports returning troops, stands with a clipboard directing the soldiers to their connecting flights.

Supporting the troops has become an unconditional part of the American political and public discourse. On many planes, the flight attendant will announce if there are soldiers on board and, to great applause, thank them for their service. Quite how this support for the troops relates to support for the war is far less obvious. War protesters have bumper stickers saying, "Support the troops, bring them home."

SUNDAY, SHERMAN At the entrance to the sanctuary of the Faith Church at Sherman, a picture of Braden Long as a boy stands alongside a quotation from President Bush's address the night the bombing of Afghanistan started: "We will not waver; we will not tire; we will not falter; and we will not fail. Peace and freedom will prevail."

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Inside, Long, a gunner with the First Infantry Division, lies in a flag-covered casket. Two weeks earlier, just three days from his 20th birthday, his Humvee came under grenade attack in Baghdad and he was killed. White boys from small towns are overrepresented among the military casualties returning from Iraq, but their deaths seem to make little impact on national public opinion about the war.

"The American public is partly casualty-phobic," says Christopher Gelpi, associate professor of political science at Duke University, "but it is primarily defeat-phobic. You can muster support for just about any military operation in the US so long as you can get enough of the defeat-phobic people on board."

Long had wanted to join the military since he was eight. He reported for basic training a month after he graduated from high school. A few months later, he married Teresa, who this day sits clutching his medals and wiping her eyes. "I met him August 18, 2004," she told the Hays Daily News.

"The first day of school, I heard about him. The second day of school, I saw him.

The third day of school, I met him, and the fourth day of school, I started dating him."

Compared with other military funerals, Long's is a well-attended, if low-key, affair.

We learn that in his short life he had acquired a love of cars, family and country.

With a Stars and Stripes shimmering on a screen overhead, the military chaplain, Ken Sorenson, says, "Freedom is never free...

This death serves as a reminder of the cost."

Seven uniformed men march down the aisle in formation, towards the casket to carry away Long. On their way out, an older veteran stands and salutes while others sob.

At the Cedar Lawn Memorial park, six soldiers meticulously fold into a triangle the flag that had draped the coffin and hand it to Teresa a widow and not yet 21.

MONDAY, DALLAS In the overflow room at the Earl Cabell federal courthouse in downtown Dallas, around a dozen people are watching lawyers shuffle papers and listening in on a terse judicial exchange. "Do you see the memo?" asks one lawyer.

"I see it," comes the reply. "It's not fact.

But I see it's written." "Just answer the question. Do you see it?" "Yes." The lawyer is representing the Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development, a charity accused of funnelling at least \$12US.4m (\$13A.6m) to Hamas.

President Bush closed the foundation and froze \$4USm (\$4A.4m) of its assets shortly after September 11. The witness is an Israeli secret service agent, which is why the court has been cleared and we cannot see his face.

"The whole thing is a charade," Mustafaa Carroll says. He is the executive director of the Dallas chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR). Earlier this year, CAIR was named as an "unindicted co-conspirator" in the case. "The trial is strictly political. It's not about terrorism. It's about the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. The American public don't have a clue about what is going on in the world, which is why it's difficult for them to make a fair assessment. We have no love for people who blow themselves and others up indiscriminately that's not our thing," says Carroll.

"But we don't see a Palestinian mother's pain as being any different from an Israeli mother's pain."

Carroll is a convert. Raised in a Christian family, he was destined for the ministry; his brother is a chaplain in the navy. "People were always somewhat sceptical [about his being a Muslim]. But unless they saw you with a kufi on or 'covered funny', as they put it, then they really didn't pay much attention." When he came to Texas from Gary,

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Indiana, in the late 70s, he had other worries. "Before people saw me as a Muslim, they would see me as a black person," he says. "And since I was coming to the south, that was my main concern."

September 11 changed all that. "People started driving by mosques and shooting inside with high-calibre guns. Since then there's been a culture of fear."

But Carroll doesn't think the Muslim experience in Texas is worse than anywhere else in the country. "If you try to buy a house or get a job and you have a certain name or wear a scarf, you might not get it..."

But I have found some of the most open- hearted, honest, decent people in Texas. I know there are some crazy ones here, too.

But at least they're not talking out of two sides of their mouths." Carroll says the Iraq war has simply "ramped up" hostility towards Muslims.

TUESDAY, SAN ANTONIO On the first day of the war, Eric Alva, 36, sat in his Humvee just outside Basra "waiting for word" to invade.

"We'd been there for about two and a half hours," he says. During that time he got out of his truck a few times.

Once to get supplies for another vehicle; another time to heat up his MRE (meal- ready-to-eat) of spaghetti and meatballs.

The third time he went to the passenger side to get something. He never made it. On his way, he stepped on a landmine and was blown two to three metres away. "There was black smoke everywhere," he recalls.

"My hearing was gone. I could see that my arm was blown open. I tried to sit up, but my lower half couldn't move." His fellow soldiers ripped off his clothes so they could administer emergency aid. Many things ran through Alva's mind. He thought he was going to die. He had broken his promise to his mother that he wouldn't get hurt. And why weren't they removing his right boot?

Alva's right leg had been blown off. The war was just three hours old. "I have the dubious honour of being the first American to be injured in the war," he says. While in hospital in Washington DC, he received a visit from President Bush and former defence secretary Donald Rumsfeld. When he came out of rehab in San Antonio, he was sporting a prosthetic leg emblazoned with the Stars and Stripes. His arm was a mass of scars and he was missing his right index finger.

Alva was invited on Oprah and CNN. In San Antonio he became a celebrity. When he went to restaurants people would sometimes pay for his meal. His closest friend, Darrell, told him he should capitalise on his renown. So Alva did. He told the world he was gay, that Darrell was his partner and that he had earned the right to challenge the military's policy of "don't ask, don't tell".

He contacted the Human Rights Campaign, a national gay rights advocacy group.

Next, he came out on Good Morning America. Within minutes he was the centre of a different kind of attention. He was the grand marshal in San Francisco's Gay Pride parade and was on the cover of the campaign's magazine. How did those who praised him for his service respond to his sexuality? "Most people were really good about it. People who have a problem with it just don't mention it. And that's fine."

As a gay man in the military, Alva knew he had to be careful. He had started a clandestine relationship with a fellow soldier, but broke it off after a friend warned him to be more discreet. "We would have both been discharged if someone had reported us," he says.

Slowly he took others into his confidence.

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But one man he told threatened to report him. "My friends gathered around and said, 'If you say anything, we'll make up something about you.'" The man dropped it.

But, for all that, Alva enjoyed his time in the military. "I was having fun. I loved the discipline, the structure, the organisation. I loved the physical fitness and the camaraderie.

I had a great time."

Alva no longer supports the war. "Back in 2004 I would have said, yes, I support the troops, no matter what. But I don't support the Government's decision to stay there. I don't say, 'Bring the troops home' because I know it's not that easy. But I don't support our cause anymore. I don't know what our cause is anymore."

And the incongruity between Alva's sacrifice abroad and experiences at home soon became too much for him. "In 2005, Texas voted to change its constitution to ban gay marriage. I thought, 'That means you, Eric.

This is your state. You can't just sit here any more while they strip your rights away.' I fought for full equality, so that people could be treated with dignity and respect abroad.

Why should I come back and be treated like a second-class citizen?

"I was not the first gay American to serve my country and I won't be the last. A number have died. But the Government's not going to recognise the partners of a gay soldier and say, 'I'm sorry to inform you...'" The veterans' benefits he gets, including preferential loans, can't be passed on to Darrell. "If anything happens to me, Darrell couldn't stay in this house. That's wrong."

WEDNESDAY, EL PASO On John Cook's desk, there is a hand grenade with the inscription "Complaint department". Just where you would pull the pin, it says "Please take a number". Such is the gallows humour of the mayor of El Paso, a military town on the Mexican border that is home to around 15,000 soldiers at the Fort Bliss base.

At the airport, families are in tears either because someone is leaving for the front or has just come back. My cab driver is a veteran. So, too, is Cook he'd been at the base himself before heading out to Vietnam.

"Back then, the demonstrations were aimed at the warriors rather than at the war," he says. "This time, it's the exact opposite." The hotel where I'm staying features the Pentagon Channel a propaganda outlet for the defence department.

There is an entire economy of tattoo parlours, brothels, pawn stores and bars on Dyer Street that are dependent on the troops.

"The military is a crucial part of the town," Cook says. "It's the largest single employer and the main economic driver."

According to economists at the University of Texas in El Paso, it contributed \$2USbn (\$2A.2bn) to the local economy in 2005.

Around 19,000 more troops are coming to El Paso, bringing with them more jobs and demanding more schools and housing. But the changing nature of America's wars will also change the demands on the local economy. "In this war, we're fighting guerrillas with no uniforms," Cook says.

"Our soldiers have giant Humvees and they are operating bombs with garage door operators. We need things like unmanned jeeps." So a new emphasis on robotics, unmanned aerial craft and other technologies is also coming. "That will probably be bigger to the economy than the 19,000 soldiers," Cook says with a twinkle in his eye. "Defence contractors are coming and will probably stay. We have about 700 graduate engineering students at universities near here. It's a major opportunity."

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THURSDAY, CRAWFORD In August 2005, Cindy Sheehan told a Veterans For Peace convention in Dallas that she was going to stay outside George Bush's ranch in Crawford until the President interrupted his holiday and spoke to her. Sheehan, whose son, Casey, had died in Iraq a year earlier, had met the President once before and says she felt patronised. The President never made an appearance, but reporters did and, soon, so did many others who joined Sheehan at "Camp Casey".

Sheehan's protest marked a turning point in the coverage of the war on the home front. A slim majority of Americans were already against it but to read the papers or watch TV, you wouldn't have known it. Now the anti-war protest had found an acceptable and accessible face in the form of this white, suburban, middle-class mother seeking answers about her son.

"For some reason the revolution was not being televised," says Kay Lucas, director of the Crawford Peace House. "But when the media turned their cameras on Cindy, they found a peace movement that was already there and was already active."

Around 13,000 people signed in during that time. With them, says Lucas, came a sense of camaraderie. "There was a lawyer from Arizona who directed the traffic, a retired grandmother who did the parking, a Texas state representative who drove the shuttle bus."

The peace house was set up to establish a permanent presence after around 1700 protesters came to demonstrate in Crawford when British prime minister Tony Blair went to meet Bush shortly before the war. At the end of that August came Hurricane Katrina and effectively the end of Bush's credibility. A lot has changed since then. The Republicans are out of Congress.

Bush's popularity never recovered, Cindy Sheehan is now challenging Democratic House Speaker Nancy Pelosi in San Francisco for failing to impeach the President and stop the war.

Crawford is small a population of 705 and one main crossroads. A few years back, a rash of stores selling Bush memorabilia opened here. Now, as the President's lame- duck status becomes increasingly evident, not even protesters come anymore. But the memory of them still rankles. One shop sells a T-shirt asking, "Sin-D Sheehan. What planet are you from? V-Nuts or Uranus?"

So the week ends as it began. One more body has come home to Texas and another Texan has died in Iraq. In a speech to the Veterans of Foreign Wars in Kansas City that same Thursday, Bush is harking back to the Vietnam War, warning of dire consequences if the job is not finished. "Here at home, some can argue our withdrawal from Vietnam carried no price for American credibility, but the terrorists see it differently," he says.

Over at Camp Casey, less than a mile from the Peace House, Carl Rising-Moore is out of jail and back holding the fort. "So long as George W. Bush is coming to Texas, I plan to live either here or in jail," he says.

"I don't know whether I'm delusional that's possible but my dream is that the American people wake up out of their slumber. And if they wake up in time, they can save the republic." And, with that, he headed out, in the searing heat of late afternoon, to "take back" the ditch in the name of peace and the republic.

Guardian

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### **Body**

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#### POLITICS

Henry Waxman

A member of the House of Representatives since 1975, Rep. Henry Waxman long ago earned his reputation as the chamber's resident bulldog, ever ready to chomp at the legs of miscreant tobacco executives, corporate polluters and their ilk. Since last November's election swept Democrats back into the majority, the Los Angeles lawmaker has used his new position as chairman of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform to mount one of the toughest, most sustained attacks yet against the Bush administration's performance, from

its handling of Hurricane Katrina to what Waxman has called an epidemic of corruption in Iraq. As the longest-serving Jewish member of the House, Waxman, 68, serves as informal dean of the unofficial Jewish caucus, and in this capacity, too, he has long been a respected player. When House Speaker Nancy Pelosi came under fire last spring for visiting Syria, Waxman's support helped defuse the criticism. This fall, on the other hand, he led the charge against a fellow Democrat, Rep. Jim Moran of Virginia, for laying responsibility for the Iraq War at the feet of Aipac. Waxman's office drafted a sharply worded letter of rebuke, signed by more than a dozen of his Jewish colleagues.

Reva Price

The Democratic takeover of Congress last year catapulted Reva Price into one of the most influential positions at the intersection of Jewish interests and Washington politics. As liaison to the Jewish community for House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Price is the go-to person on any issue involving legislation of interest to the community from health care and Social Security to foreign policy and homeland security. Nothing can go through Congress without leadership approval, and for us that means not much can be done without having Reva on our side, said a Jewish organizational staffer who works the Hill. Price, a long-time policy professional with Jewish organizations in Washington, came to Congress when Pelosi was still minority leader, tasked with improving outreach efforts to the Jewish community. After almost a year on the job, Price managed to work with groups

and lawmakers to move issues that had been stuck for years when the Republicans led Congress, but she also learned that not all items on Pelosi's 100-hour agenda can actually be achieved.

Michael Bloomberg

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A former Salomon Brothers wunderkind who went on to make a fortune with his eponymous financial services empire, Michael Bloomberg is accustomed to the fine, thin air at the top of the heap. This year, he catapulted from his perch as America's chief manager-as-mayor to become the nation's most buzzed-about potential CEO-in-Chief. A longtime Democrat, Bloomberg, 65, changed his party affiliation to Republican shortly before entering New York's mayoral race in 2001. Last June he fanned speculation of a presidential run when he dropped his GOP affiliation for a new life as a political independent. Asked repeatedly about a potential campaign, he sometimes played it coy: A short, Jewish billionaire from New York? C'mon. In fact, Bloomberg is not too demonstratively Jewish as New York politicians go. A Reform Jew who attends Manhattan's Temple Emanu-El on the High Holy Days, Hizzoner wears his Jewishness proudly but lightly. At the same time, Bloomberg's tenure has been notable for his deployment of his results-based pragmatism in service of issues long championed by traditional big-city Jewish pols: social welfare, education, public health. In recent months, his administration has unveiled a new ban on trans fats in city restaurants and a major initiative to reduce the city's emission of greenhouse gases. Bloomberg has also used his heightened national profile to shine a spotlight on the case for tighter gun control. A gender discrimination lawsuit recently filed against Bloomberg LLP hasn't boosted the odds already waning that the mayor will actually mount a long-shot White House bid. If not, he still has two years left as America's most famous public CEO.

## Jimmy Jamshid Delshad

The day after Jimmy Jamshid Delshad was elected the first Iranian-born mayor of Beverly Hills in late March, he visited three synagogues in the posh enclave to thank congregants for their support. Now America's most prominent Iranian-American officeholder, Delshad, 67, could count on the city's large Persian-Jewish community, where he garnered key support as he dove into municipal politics. From 1999 to 2001, he served as president of the nearby Sinai Temple. He was elected to the City Council two years later, serving four years before winning the mayoralty by fewer than 100 votes. The Shiraz native immigrated to America in 1959, after an 18-month stay on an Israeli kibbutz. While studying computer science at California State University-Northridge, Delshad and his two brothers performed Israeli-style music at weddings and bar mitzvahs to make ends meet. This year, he became board chairman of the Magbit Foundation, a Los Angeles-based Iranian-Jewish charity that gives Israeli students interest-free loans. And while Beverly Hills has had many a Jewish mayor, Delshad was the first to affix a mezuzah to the doorway of the mayor's office.

## IDEAS &amp; ACTIVISM

## Jeremy Ben-Ami

Jeremy Ben-Ami became the point man this year in the semi-secret attempt to transform the pro-Israel lobbying map and create a new pro-peace lobby. The endeavor, known to insiders as the J Street Project, is still in the works, and critics say it might never materialize. Still, the first serious attempt by Jewish activists to take on pro-Israeli lobbying giant Aipac and build a peace-oriented advocacy group has the traditional Jewish community leadership buzzing. Ben-Ami, 44, comes to the project from Democratic politics and dovish pro-Israel activity. He was on President Clinton's domestic policy team and is now a senior executive at Fenton Communications. The groundwork on the new lobby was conducted behind the scenes over the past year. Working with allies, including Pentagon-veteran-turned-Soros-aide Morton Halperin and Israeli political veteran Daniel Levy, Ben-Ami has reached out to potential donors while simultaneously trying to nudge existing dovish groups toward the idea of joining forces. The coming year holds the answer to whether this ambitious undertaking can actually take off. Supporters give it a 50% chance. Critics think even that estimate is too generous. Still, frustrated doves see it as their best shot yet at making a dent.

## David Brog

It comes as a surprise to many that David Brog, executive director of the first pro-Israel lobbying group for evangelicals, Christians United for Israel, is actually a bona fide Jew. But for Brog, born and raised in a Conservative Jewish household outside Atlantic City, N.J., his work with Pastor John Hagee, the firebrand Texas preacher who founded CUI less than two years ago, is a natural outgrowth of his passion for the Jewish state.

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Since its inception in February 2006, the hawkish Washington-based lobby has set up chapters in 50 states and hosted more than 70 Nights to Honor Israel its signature pro-Israel fundraising dinners, which have attracted thousands of evangelicals, plus some Jewish community members nationwide. Brog, 41, who previously worked as Republican Senator Arlen Specter's chief of staff, is outspoken in his criticism of liberal Jews who spurn Hagee's legions. As Brog sees it, the Jewish community should be thanking Christian Zionists for standing with Israel during trying times. Hagee, meanwhile, is no doubt thanking Brog for lending him some Jewish credibility.

## Alan Dershowitz

With more than a little bit ofchutzpah, Alan Dershowitz has established himself as Israel's single most visible defender the Jewish state's lead attorney in the court of public opinion. Never pressshy, the famed Harvard law professor is always ready to argue Israel's case whether it means writing op-eds, delivering speeches or challenging former president Jimmy Carter to a debate. (Carter declined.) Often, Dershowitz himself becomes the topic of debate, as happened recently during the highprofile fight over the tenure bid of anti- Israel academic Norman Finkelstein.

Dershowitz's prominence makes him a lightning rod for critics, and his willingness to stake out controversial stances on issues such as torture and collective punishment gives them plenty of ammo. Yet at a time of political polarization, Dershowitz, 69, defies prevailing stereotypes of what it means to be a pro- Israel activist. While Israel's loudest defenders increasingly hail from the right, Dershowitz is an unabashed liberal and even something of a tough-minded dove, having quickly followed

his popular 2004 tome *The Case for Israel with The Case for Peace*. When he's not busy advocating for Israel, the prolific professor churns out books like *Blasphemy: How the Religious Right is Hijacking the Declaration of Independence* and *Finding Jefferson: A Lost Letter, a Remarkable Discovery, and the First Amendment in an Age of Terrorism*, both of which came out in the past year.

## Norman Podhoretz

While neoconservatism's star has begun to dim in many quarters, the same cannot be said of one of the movement's founding fathers. At 77, Norman Podhoretz has to his credit a new book on the threat of Islamic extremism, *World War IV: The Long Struggle Against Islamofascism*. (World War III was the cold war.) An unapologetic supporter of the Iraq War and outspoken advocate of military action against Iran, Podhoretz also landed a key spot on Rudy Giuliani's foreign policy team. Podhoretz has been a major figure in intellectual circles since 1960, when the then left-liberal essayist became editor of the American Jewish Committee's monthly journal, *Commentary*. He and the magazine took a sharp right turn in the late 1960s and helped to found neoconservatism. He continued to lead the magazine and the movement until he retired in 1995. (His son John is slated to take over the journal in 2009.) A conservative eminence grise, Podhoretz was awarded the Presidential Medal

of Freedom in 2004. Should Rudy win the 2008 presidential election, there's no telling what kind of influence Podhoretz may wield.

## April Rosenblum

In recent years, many Jews have been alarmed by an apparently rising tide of antisemitism on the left. April Rosenblum, 27, a Philadelphia-based progressive activist, is also concerned about antisemitism. But she's skeptical of the community's response. While studying at Temple University, she saw fellow Jews responding to antisemitism in ways she thought were ineffective and counterproductive, circling the wagons and alienating potential allies. She spent two years doing research and facilitating focus groups with

non-Jewish activists to discuss antisemitism. This past April, on the anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, Rosenblum published the fruits of her labor: a 32-page illustrated pamphlet titled *The Past Didn't Go Anywhere: Making Resistance to Antisemitism Part of All of Our Movements*, which can be downloaded free online ([www.thepast.info](http://www.thepast.info)). Deploying terms like oppression, ruling classes and liberation (alongside harsh critiques of



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American and Israeli policies), the pamphlet is a sustained argument about what antisemitism is and why it should be opposed all written in a language her target audience of self-identified radicals and progressives understands. Her pamphlet has had a warm reception in left-wing circles; one activist called it a must-read and another said it needs to be studied and the lessons applied. Next, Rosenblum plans to work with Jewish college students to develop better ways of responding to antisemitism. By day she contributes her energies to Philadelphia's National Museum of American Jewish History, organizing programs for young adults.

Charles Jacobs and Roz Rothstein

When it comes to defending Israel in the media, on campus and in the streets, America's long-established Jewish groups no longer have a monopoly. Increasingly, the agenda is set by scrappy startups like Boston's The David Project and the Los Angeles-based Stand With Us often dragging the rest of the community along behind them. Stand With Us was founded in 2001 by a group of activists assembled by Roz Rothstein, a family therapist driven by what she saw as the larger community's anemic response to growing anti-Israel activism. The David Project was launched the following year

by Charles Jacobs, co-founder of the American Anti-Slavery Group, which targeted slavery in Sudan. Neither Rothstein, 55, nor Jacobs, 63, shies from confrontation. The David Project captured headlines in 2003 with a documentary alleging faculty intimidation of pro-Israel students at Columbia University. More recently, it waged a high-profile legal and media battle with the Islamic Society of Boston over its controversial associates and its plans for a new mosque. This summer, Stand With Us took the lead in responding to a planned pro-Palestinian rally in Washington. While the D.C. Jewish Community Relations Council opted to ignore the demonstration (which was a dud in the end), Stand With Us organized a counterprotest and answered pro-Palestinian ads on Washington's subway system with ads of its own. Both groups have focused on campus activism, multimedia projects, leadership training and curriculum development. The courses Rothstein and Jacobs charted have proven popular with action-hungry donors: Their two startups already boast multimillion-dollar budgets and sizable staffs.

George Soros

George Soros himself doesn't keep count, but aides and outside observers reckon he's spent somewhere between \$4 billion and \$8 billion over the past 30 years trying to build democracy and civil society in countries that lack it, mainly in Russia and Eastern Europe. He was a principal funder of the Polish Solidarity movement, which helped topple the Soviet empire. He's built universities, launched daily newspapers,

had laws and constitutions drafted and passed by a dozen parliaments. As long as the Soviet Union stood, his name was magic among foes of communist tyranny. Ever since the Berlin Wall fell, though, Soros has continued promoting freedom in countries the West considers free and increasingly in the West itself. Now the wise men are getting nervous. Since last fall, when he publicly turned his democratic attention for the first time to Israel and the Jewish community, his name has regularly been attached to words like obscene and even Tyranno-Soros. Born in Hungary in 1930, Soros (originally Schwartz; his father changed it) survived the Nazi occupation on the streets, living by his wits. He migrated afterward to London and then New York, where he took up stock trading and currency speculation. He did well; Forbes magazine reckons him the 80th-richest person in the world, worth some \$8 billion. His refusal to give to Jewish causes used to stir grumbling, but his aides insisted he didn't identify as a Jew. In 2003 he dodged his handlers for an afternoon and met with a group of Jewish funders, telling them he saw himself as within the tradition of Jewish philanthropy, albeit toward the universalist end of the curve. He also said antisemitism was sometimes a reaction to Jewish actions, citing Ariel Sharon's anti-terrorism tactics and his own financial manipulations. The words prompted outrage among community leaders, who said he was blaming the victim. Last fall, some of his aides participated in exploratory meetings among Jewish liberals seeking to create a more dovish voice within the community. His critics crowed that their point was proved. Soros quickly backed away, fearing his presence could sink the whole endeavor. In an essay in The New York Review of Books, he explained that he had always avoided the Israeli-Arab issue, fearing he might unintentionally harm Israel. Now, he wrote, things had reached the point where critics who care about Israel must stand up. He couldn't be deeply involved, because he didn't know the issues well enough, but he saluted those who did. Now the floodgates opened. Joseph Lieberman called him anti-American, Jackie Mason called him a self-hating Jew, Martin Peretz

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called him a cog in the Nazi wheel, the New York Daily News said he had demeaned the Holocaust and The New York Sun called his words a new blood libel. Soros's father had urged him to hide his Jewish identity. Maybe he should have listened.

Rita Katz

When Osama bin Laden resurfaced in a video a few months ago, Rita Katz was on the front lines. The 44-year-old Iraq-born, Israeli-American terrorist hunter quickly dispatched the footage to the authorities through her SITE Institute, which stands for Search for International Terrorist Entities. A few weeks later, she publicly accused the administration of leaking the tape prematurely, inadvertently tipping off Al Qaeda that its online operations had been infiltrated. This was vintage Rita Katz: cutting-edge expertise mixed with an abrasive personality, eager to go after bin Laden and his ilk but also ready to take on the FBI, the CIA and the White House. Katz's SITE Institute, which she co-founded in the wake of the September 11 attacks, has become a go-to resource for reporters on the terrorism beat, providing them with new video and audio recordings of master terrorists, helping them surf jihadist Web sites and chat rooms and offering those sought-after expert comments. Katz's family fled Iraq for Israel after the Baath regime executed her father. She moved to America 10 years ago and created a niche for herself by mixing her Arabic language skills and an aggressive investigative nature. Her working skills were honed during her years working for terrorism analyst Steven Emerson. Those were years when she used to don traditional Islamic garb, with a hidden microphone, to attend undercover gatherings of Muslim groups and report instances of anti-Western and anti-Israel incitement. She's not undercover anymore.

## RELIGION

Jen Taylor Friedman

Jen Taylor Friedman made history this year when she became the first female scribe ever to complete a Torah scroll. The sacred scroll was unveiled September 9 at New York's Drisha Institute for Jewish Education, an Orthodox feminist stronghold, before being transported to the United Hebrew Congregation, the St. Louis Reform synagogue that commissioned the Torah. Taylor Friedman, 27, is among just a few known female Jewish scribes in the world. She's said, however, that she wasn't trying to make a feminist statement in making the scroll she simply wanted to write a Torah. The calligrapher, who born in Southampton, England, and currently lives in New York City, is also the brains behind last year's controversial Tefillin Barbie, a doll that comes with a long denim skirt, tefillin and a prayer shawl. Taylor Friedman completed a ceremonial Megillah, or Scroll of Esther, in 2004. Since then, she has scribed six more megillahs. She may not have a feminist agenda, but she's certainly a pioneer for women.

Boruch Shlomo Cunin

As California's top Chabad emissary, or shaliach, since 1965, Rabbi Boruch Shlomo Cunin, director of West Coast Chabad-Lubavitch, has established a formidable presence on the left coast. In California, where Chabad houses are popping up in just about every town where Jews can be found, Cunin has built something of an empire. With more than 200 West Coast Chabad houses and campus centers dozens in Los Angeles County alone Chabad's reach may surpass that of the Reform and Conservative movements. One of the first shlichim sent into the field by Lubavitcher Rebbe Menachem Mendel Schneerson in the 1950s to bring Jews back to the fold, Cunin early on established a reputation as an innovator with a knack for translating lofty goals into practical reality. He set up some of the first Chabad community centers and campus centers, now a nationwide phenomenon. He famously brought Chabad into American living rooms, thanks to the annual Chabad telethon, launched in 1980 after his West Coast headquarters burned down. Now 67, Cunin is also a political presence, lobbying for more than two decades to secure the return of a Chabad library still held by the Russian government, more than 50 years after it was seized by the Soviets following World War II. With his legions growing by the day, Cunin's far-reaching influence is only poised to expand.

Laura Geller

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Heading up one of Los Angeles's largest Reform congregations is no small job, but Laura Geller, senior rabbi of Temple Emanuel in Beverly Hills, has been doing it with gusto and a flair for social activism for the past 13 years. Geller, 57, was only the third woman to be ordained when she graduated from Hebrew Union College in 1976. While things have certainly changed since then, Geller continues to be a trailblazer, injecting her congregation with a passionate commitment to social justice, and these days, environmental consciousness. This year, Geller kicked off the Greening the Synagogue campaign to reduce Temple Emanuel's carbon footprint by 20%, making her congregation a model for other area synagogues to follow. Geller also has remarkable foresight: Five years ago, before teen philanthropy was on the radar screen, she established Match: Money and Teenagers Creating Hope, which places teens on the board of an endowment fund and asks them to decide how to allocate the interest. Geller's leadership will, no doubt, continue to blossom.

Eric Yoffie

Passing the 12-year mark as the unchallenged head of America's largest Jewish denomination would be reason enough for anyone to appear on a list of influentials. But Rabbi Eric Yoffie, 60, earns it anew every year. He never fails to surprise. In the last eight months alone, his Union for Reform Judaism, the movement's congregational arm, has: rolled out a program to engage Reform Jews in fighting malaria in Africa; published a new Reform prayer book with more Hebrew than ever; launched a series of

teen rallies to free Israeli soldiers captured during the 2006 Lebanon war; begun pilot programs in six cities to help congregations reach out to the frail elderly, and convened a national Reform summit on disabilities. Boldest of all was his August 31 address to 30,000 American Muslims gathered in Chicago for the annual convention of the Islamic Society of North America. The society, reputedly the largest Muslim organization in the country, is reviled on the right, accused of being an ally of Hamas and a front for the extreme wing of Saudi Islam even as others have hailed it for its purported moderation and pursuit of interfaith dialogue. Yoffie's speech came just 16 months after another address he gave to students at Jerry Falwell's Liberty University. Why does he do it, in the face of sometimes furious criticism? Because, he argues, moderates in every community need to reach out to each other and not allow extremists to set the agenda. My task as a rabbi, he told the Muslim group, is to rally that reasonable, oftensilent majority and encourage them to assert the moderate principles that define their beliefs and Judaism's highest ideals.

Toba Spitzer

This year marked two major milestones for gays and lesbians in Jewish life: Not only did the Conservative movement approve the ordination of gay and lesbian rabbis, but for the first time, one of the major religious denominations elected an openly gay rabbi to lead its clergy. In March, Toba Spitzer, a 45-year-old rabbi from West Newton, Mass., became the president of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical Assembly. While it comes as no surprise the Reconstructionist movement was, after all, the first to ordain gay and lesbian rabbis Spitzer's election raises the bar for gays and lesbians, not to mention for women, in organized religious life. Ordained in 1997, Spitzer has served as rabbi at Congregation Dorshei Tzedek ever since. A committed progressive activist, Spitzer is known for her Israeli-Palestinian peace efforts and for her economic justice work with groups such as the Jewish Funds for Justice. Her activism, it would seem, is as much reflected in her own trailblazing career as in her work on behalf of others.

Arnold Eisen

With some of Conservative Judaism's own adherents publicly asking whether their ailing movement has a future, Arnold Eisen, the newly-inaugurated chancellor of its flagship institution, the Jewish Theological Seminary, has no easy road ahead of him. But the plucky West Coast transplant is putting a bright spin on where the movement is heading, while at the same time acknowledging what he calls the movement's past failure on message. Eisen, 56, moved to New York this fall from Palo Alto, Calif., where he was Koshland professor of Jewish culture and religion at Stanford University, to take over the reins at JTS from outgoing chancellor Ismar Schorsch. Eisen, a widely respected academic, is the first non-rabbi to lead the historic institution. After overseeing last year's process of deciding whether to admit openly gay and lesbian students into the rabbinic training program, Eisen will now have

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to contend with satisfying both the movement's left and right wings, as well as re-inspiring its graying ranks. But with his fresh-faced enthusiasm and dogged devotion to the movement he grew up in, Eisen might just be up to the task.

Andy Bachman

In the past few years, the leafy Park Slope section of Brooklyn has come to rival Manhattan's Upper West Side as a hub of non-Orthodox Jewish life only hipper. Alongside the neighborhood's five established synagogues which run the gamut from Orthodox to left of Reconstructionist several independent minyans have sprung up to serve the area's burgeoning bourgeois bohemian set. As much as anyone, Rabbi Andy Bachman has been in the thick of the Jewish renaissance in so-called Brownstone Brooklyn. In 2003, Bachman and his wife, Rachel Altstein, launched a group called Brooklyn Jews, bringing youngish Jews together for low-pressure text study, holiday celebrations and socializing. The group's High Holy Day services quickly became the place to be for local 20- and 30-somethings. Last year, Bachman took over the pulpit at Brooklyn's largest Reform synagogue, Congregation Beth Elohim. Even as he has taken on the challenge of leading an established congregation, he has continued to nurture the independent Jewish scene, keeping Brooklyn Jews going and making Beth Elohim's facilities available to local minyans on the Sabbath. Beyond Brooklyn, the 44-year-old Bachman is a rabbinic favorite of the creative crowd, having participated in the Reboot network and serving on the advisory board of the Web site Jewcy.

Morris Allen

Until last year, Rabbi Morris Allen was known mostly as a local congregational rabbi and promoter of Jewish social justice efforts in the Minnesota Twin Cities area. That all changed when Allen decided to plunge headfirst into the billion-dollar kosher food industry. Prompted by a report in the Forward on working conditions at an Iowa kosher slaughterhouse, Allen pushed the Conservative movement to form a committee to look into the ethical and environmental implications of kosher food. The committee began its work by visiting the Iowa plant, the nation's largest kosher slaughterhouse, where Allen and others interviewed immigrant workers. Soon after, Allen announced the creation of Conservative Judaism's Tzedek Hechsher, or Justice Certification, a bold new effort to certify kosher food that is produced with ethical considerations in mind. For years, kosher food certification has been dominated by Orthodox authorities, and Allen sees the Tzedek Hechsher as a way of re-engaging Conservative Jews and his own congregants with the spiritual implications of the food they eat. This, not surprisingly, has won Allen the ire of many in the Orthodox world. Questions remain as to just how the new certification would work and it is clear that in this case the devil will be in the details. But Allen's energies show no sign of flagging.

## COMMUNITY

Robert Wexler

Last March, Conservative Judaism's Los Angeles outpost, the University of Judaism, joined forces with a nearby Jewish retreat center, the 66-year-old Brandeis-Bardin Institute, to create a behemoth of Jewish higher education: American Jewish University. Rabbi Robert Wexler, the UJ's president of 15 years, negotiated and oversaw the landmark merger. Wexler, 56, a Los Angeles native and a graduate of UJ's first class of rabbinic students, is widely credited with bringing UJ into the black the result, perhaps, of having earned a master's of business administration from Baruch College in New York. Now, as president of AJU, Wexler is not only overseeing one of the largest Jewish educational institutions in the world, but he is also taking it in a more pluralistic direction. Under Wexler's leadership, AJU now has 10,000 students at all levels of affiliation in its continuing education program. While he is targeting Jews of all stripes, Wexler has also continued to grow the Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies, one of only a handful of AJU's components still affiliated with Conservative Judaism.

Elise Bernhardt

A little more than a year into her tenure as president and CEO of the Foundation for Jewish Culture, Elise Bernhardt has enacted sweeping changes at the organization once known as the central address for arts and

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culture, as well scholarship, in the Jewish world. While some foundation insiders have criticized her brisk management style, Bernhardt has also won admirers in the Jewish philanthropic world, who credit her with bringing fresh energy to an organization gravely in need of a makeover. Bernhardt, 51, came to the foundation from the world of dance, where, among other things, she ran the Manhattan experimental performance space The Kitchen. If her new strategic plan, recently approved by the foundation's board, succeeds, the organization previously known as the National Foundation for Jewish Culture will be far more streamlined, operate in the black, and focus on supporting individual artists. Gone is the broad mandate to fill every gap in the cultural landscape; after all, Bernhardt has noted, there are plenty of dynamic new start-ups that are managing to do it better than one central organization possibly could. What emerges in its place, however, will ultimately determine Bernhardt's legacy.

Howard Kohr

If anyone needed proof of Howard Kohr's status in the Washington lobbying scene, it was provided this year by GQ magazine. Kohr, 51, came in sixth in the prestigious list of the 50 most influential individuals in Washington, ranking ahead of such household names as Hillary Clinton and Condoleezza Rice. Kohr, executive director of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee since 1996, navigated the organization through another complicated year, when negative attention was directed at the pro-Israel lobbying community, of which Aipac is the lynchpin. As he has in the past, Kohr largely managed to keep Aipac out of the debate, leaving the arena clear for other Jewish groups to fight it out. And for all the fireworks, the public debate over the role of the pro-Israel lobby in shaping American policy has had virtually no visible adverse effect on Aipac. Membership continues to grow, as do revenues, and its access to Capitol Hill seems unimpeded. This year the group succeeded in pushing tough anti-Iran legislation through Congress, winning final confirmation just last month. The looming trial, scheduled for January, of two former Aipac staffers accused of mishandling classified information, is expected to be a source of concern for Kohr. He might find himself called to testify about Aipac's lobbying practices, an issue he has tried to keep out of the limelight.

Abraham Foxman

Accused by The New York Times Magazine of crying wolf on antisemitism, by political scientists John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt of stifling debate on Israel and by Armenian groups of denying the truth of the Armenian genocide, it's been a rough year for Abe Foxman, national director of the Anti-Defamation League. Yet, despite all the barbs, Foxman, 67, shows little sign of slowing down. He is at once a lightning rod and a battering ram with Foxman, the metaphors come easily and quite possibly the most influential figure at work in the Jewish organizational world today. Though his most trusted medium remains the sharply worded press release, Foxman this year published a book, *The Deadliest Lies*:

The Israel Lobby and the Myth of Jewish Control, that offers a sustained, sober retort both to Walt-Mearsheimer and to Jimmy Carter's *Palestine: Peace Not Apartheid*. But perhaps the most bruising battle of the year, both for Foxman and the organization he has headed for 20 years, was the debate over the Armenian genocide. The ADL, like other major Jewish organizations, has long avoided the term genocide in referring to the World War I-era massacres of Armenians, in deference to Turkey's role as Israel's most important friend in the Muslim world. But when Armenian groups in Massachusetts began to press for a boycott of an ADL anti-bigotry program and when the ADL's own regional leadership repudiated the national organization's policy Foxman was forced into an awkward about-face. It was an issue rife with painful ironies. The ADL, normally so vigilant when it comes to the language of genocide, suddenly let such sensitivities fall by the wayside. It was the Armenians who seemed to be using the ADL's usual playbook. And yet, when the House Foreign Relations Committee approved a resolution calling the massacres genocide and Turkish-American relations became strained overnight as a result Foxman's concerns suddenly seemed prescient.

Steve Gutow

When holidays approach, Rabbi Steve Gutow can be counted on to unveil a socially conscious initiative that captures the spirit of the season. Last Hanukkah the 58-year-old executive director of the Jewish Council for

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Public Affairs exhorted the community to work against global warming by installing environmentally friendly compact fluorescent light bulbs in institutions and homes. And as the Yom Kippur fast approached this fall, he challenged Americans Jewish and non-Jewish to try eating for a week on \$21, the amount doled out to 20 million Americans surviving on food stamps. (Participants included Christian clergy and the first Muslim member of Congress, Rep. Keith

Ellison.) A Texas lawyer for three decades before being ordained as a Reconstructionist rabbi in 2003, Gutow has a proven talent for creating communal platforms to further advocacy efforts. In 1984 he became the founding Southwest regional director of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, and six years later he was named founding executive director of the National Jewish Democratic Council. After a break studying for the rabbinate and a brief stint in the pulpit, he was wooed to the JCPA, which coordinates public policy among the main national Jewish agencies and local federations, in August 2006. With Gutow at the helm, the JCPA is rapidly regaining its status as the national Jewish community's voice of justice.

David Saperstein

Thirty years leading the fight for social justice have earned Rabbi David Saperstein a reputation far beyond the Jewish community. The director of the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, Saperstein is, above all, the chief Washington lobbyist for Reform Judaism. Over the

years, he's turned his center into the second-largest Jewish lobbying shop in the capital exceeded only by the American Israel Public Affairs Committee and into the most influential voice for Jewish liberalism. He's an outsized figure in national coalitions, promoting social justice on 100 fronts. He's a board member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and of People for the American Way. He was the founding chair of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, appointed by President Clinton in 1999 (and replaced in 2001 by Elliott Abrams). He has formed coalitions on issues ranging from African hunger to children's health care to prison rape. The past year found Saperstein at his prime, working with the restored Democratic majority in Congress to pursue the stalled hate crimes bill, the S-CHIP children's health bill and wiretapping on each of which he's considered a major force. He's pressed the community to speak out on the Iraq War, arguing that too few rabbis have preached from the pulpit on the issue. And he proved his independence this fall when he took part in a meeting with Jimmy Carter, showing respect for the ex-president despite his Middle East views, while all other mainstream Jewish leaders refused.

Andrew Tarsy

For all but a few days this past year, Andrew Tarsy, 38, was the New England regional director of the Anti-Defamation League. But it's those missing few days that are the key. In an August 16 phone conversation with the ADL's national director, Abraham Foxman, Tarsy labeled morally indefensible the organization's unwillingness to describe the World War I-era massacres of Armenians as genocide. He was fired the next day. But just four tumultuous days later, Foxman, facing an uprising from Boston Jewish leaders galvanized by Tarsy's act of defiance, changed course and called what happened to the Armenians tantamount to genocide. Tarsy

was reinstated soon thereafter. Tarsy, who served in the Civil Rights Division of the Clinton Justice Department before joining the League, showed that, contrary to popular belief, the ADL is more than just a platform for Foxman: It can be a forum for debate and dissent, capable of being nudged in the right direction when it strays.

Michael Weil

Michael Weil has years of experience leading urban renewal projects. But the British-born 59-year-old is now engaged in his most daunting task yet: rebuilding the New Orleans Jewish community after the devastation of Hurricane Katrina. Weil took the helm of the Jewish Federation of Greater New Orleans last year, after coordinating the annual assessment of the worldwide Jewish community produced by the Jerusalem-based Jewish People Policy Planning Institute. With the same know-how he employed scanning global policy, and before that as Jerusalem's top city planner, Weil is now working to stem the exodus from a Jewish community whose numbers dropped one-third to 6,600 after the flood. With just one year on the job, Weil can already boast

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of several hundred Jewish households moving to the Big Easy since Katrina, enticed partly by Weil's mix of moving grants, loans and jobsearch assistance, and partly by a sense of pioneering and what some of them call tikkun olam. Looking down the road, Weil now has his sights set on convincing some of the 2,000 Jewish students at Tulane University to stay in New Orleans after graduation.

Ronald Lauder

It has long been rumored that while cosmetics heir Ronald Lauder, 63, was moving through leadership positions at other Jewish organizations, the prize he coveted was the presidency of the World Jewish Congress. This year he got his crown, albeit a bit tarnished. During the past few years, the World Jewish Congress has been riven by internal battles that have fractured the leadership and decimated fundraising. The organization's president until this year, Edgar Bronfman Sr., had previously said that Lauder, then WJC treasurer, was not up to the task of running the body. But after Bronfman was pushed to resign, he changed his tune and supported Lauder against South African philanthropist Mendel Kaplan. Lauder, a conservative Republican who served as American ambassador to Austria during the 1980s, has already been active, visiting world leaders on behalf of the WJC. At the same time, he has been using his massive fortune to boost his considerable profile in the field of German and Austrian art both as a collector and as an advocate for returning Jewish holdings looted by the Nazis. A major exhibition of Gustav Klimt opened at Lauder's Neue Galerie in New York this fall, and his Ronald S. Lauder Foundation remains one of the biggest supporters of Jewish revival in Eastern Europe. It remains to be seen whether he can leverage his clout and will into the ability to lift the storied WJC out of its doldrums.

June Walker

This year June Walker breathed some fresh air into the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, becoming the second woman and the first Reconstructionist to serve as chair of a body widely seen as organized Jewry's chief representative voice on international affairs. A respiratory therapist by training, with degrees in chemistry and public health administration, Walker, 73, was elected in July to a two-year term as conference chair in her capacity as past president of one of its largest member agencies: Hadassah, the 300,000-strong women's Zionist organization. During her stint as national president of Hadassah, the fabled women's group achieved prominence on the domestic stage as an advocate for stem-cell research and a wide range of women's rights and health issues. As chairwoman of the Presidents Conference, Walker has vowed to fight for the rights of another group that has often felt marginalized: the conference's 52 member groups.

Ruth Messinger

In 2005, writing about Ruth Messinger for that year's Forward 50, we described her American Jewish World Service as an upstart organization with an outsize impact. No more. Whether as a consequence of redoubled dedication, extra chutzpah, a change in the community's mood or the sheer magnitude of the need out there, AJWS has become a major player around the communal table, by anybody's measure. Revenues grew from \$14 million in 2004 to \$26 million the following year, and could approach \$30 million this year. Most of it goes in direct grants to some 270 indigenous organizations in nearly 40 countries, doing development work in small industry and sustainable agriculture, combating AIDS, empowering women and teaching the practical basics of democracy. A smaller piece of cash supports several dozen volunteers who go to recipient countries to head up projects, teach or heal the sick. Messinger, 67, oversees the whole operation as a combination field commander, cheerleader and guru. Her tireless lobbying for Darfur managed, almost singlehandedly, to put the agonies of Africa on the agenda of the American Jewish community. Along the way, she's become a sort of symbol to young Jews across the country of the Other Judaism that once was and could be again engaged with the world, driven by a passion for social justice for Jews and all humankind.

## CULTURE

Regina Spektor

For a quirky, 27-year-old pianist-singersongwriter, Regina Spektor is making quite a mark. Combining the emotiveness of a Tori Amos with the playful absurdism of Beck, and some classical thrown in for good measure,

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Spektor has rocketed out of New York's anti-folk scene to huge commercial success. (Quite literally her songs are now featured in a number of big-brand television commercials.) Her critically acclaimed album, *Begin to Hope*, has sold more than 500,000 copies, and for the past year Spektor has been playing to packed houses of adoring fans in cities around the world. While her music is not overtly Jewish, the Moscow-born, Bronx-bred Spektor displays an unselfconscious pride in her heritage that is unusual for a young celebrity. The cover of her latest album has her sporting a conspicuous Star of David pendant, and she speaks of her Jewish identity matter-of-factly, whether describing the Passover matzos she lugs around on tour or recalling how she discovered her songwriting talent during a teen trip to Israel. And while her songs span the spectrum from silly to soulful (sometimes both simultaneously), Spektor sounds seriously smart in interviews when discussing her hybrid identity as a Russian-born American Jew.

Shalom Auslander

There's a new bad boy on the literary block, and he comes with yeshiva cred and Monsey yichus. Foreskin's Lament, Auslander's memoir of growing up in an Orthodox Jewish household in the religious enclave near New York City, was released to wide critical acclaim and attention, with not one but two excerpts published in *The New Yorker*. In his book, the 37-year-old writer mined a seemingly inexhaustible wellspring of rage to advance an argument that feels at once deeply unnerving and perfectly reflective of our age: God exists, and He is very, very mean. At a time when religiously driven conflict has engendered a new atheism championed by writers like Sam Harris, Richard Dawkins and Christopher Hitchens Auslander has given angry, hilarious voice to those for whom non-belief is an impossibility. Indeed, as some observers note, by engaging with the emotional underpinnings of religious fervor, the fallen yeshiva boy might actually do more to puncture the roiling bubbles of fundamentalist religion than all the scholars and pundits who look down their noses at true believers. Not that Auslander would ever cloak himself in the robes of the do-gooder. When asked about his inclusion on this list, Auslander remarked: You people should be ashamed nominating this self-hating apikores [heretic]. Why don't you nominate Goebbels? Was Ahmadinejad busy?

Michael Chabon

These are strange times to be a Jew, writes Michael Chabon in *The Yiddish Policemen's Union*, his bestselling novel released earlier this year. Indeed they are, proven not least by Chabon's own ability to spin an unlikely literary conceit about a fictional Jewish homeland in Alaska into a lyrical potboiler/allegory/satire on Jewish identity and to see it debut at No. 2 on the *New York Times* bestseller list. A number of critics were left confused, even offended, by what some claimed were hidden (or not-so-hidden) messages about Yiddish, Hebrew, the State of Israel, even Jews as a people. One went so far as to accuse Chabon of Jewish self-hatred. But swarms of reviewers and readers alike viewed it as a triumph for contemporary Jewish literature as a whole and this author in particular. With this novel, wrote our critic, Mark Oppenheimer, Chabon

has joined the community of Jewish Jewish writers at the moment of its renewed efflorescence. And he has joined their company very much his own man, a literary original. And as if a single Jewish-themed novel is not enough for a year's work, Chabon has just published *Gentlemen of the Road*, a swashbuckling tale that he originally wanted to title *Jews With Swords*.

Erez Safar, aka D.J. Handler

People of the Book? Not these days. The renaissance currently underway among the young Jewish culturati has a decidedly melodious tone to it, with each week seeming to churn up a new iteration of Jewish music. The landscape is too rich to credit any one individual but, based on recent innovations alone, this year belonged to Erez Safar, better known as D.J. Handler. Safar, 28, is himself a musician, but he has made headlines recently as head of the Modular Moods record label which represents artists like Y-Love, Smadar and Juez and for founding and running the Sephardic Music Festival. This year, Safar added yet another project to his dossier: Shemspeed, billed as the largest Jewish music site on the Internet. Shemspeed



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offers an array of features, including Jewish music videos, four streaming online radio stations and a calendar of musical events around the world. What drives me is my insatiable desire to create something new, Safar told the Forward. I want to present a style that is Jewish and also stylin'.

Carolyn Starman Hessel

This year, The New York Times found out what observers of the Jewish literary scene have known for some time: The Jewish Book Council, led by Carolyn Starman Hessel, is officially a force in the world of books. In June, Rachel Donadio profiled Hessel in the Times Book Review, noting that in her 13 years at the book council's helm, she has become a formidable power in the publishing industry. The council oversees the National Jewish Book Awards and coordinates some 70 annual Jewish book fairs at community centers nationwide. Under Hessel's leadership, the book fairs have become a major venue in the shrinking world of book marketing, filling a void left by an industry that has grown increasingly fixated on mega-hits and miserly about promoting the rest. With her savvy hand on that lever, Hessel has the power to make books and careers happen. Even when controversy erupts as it did at this year, when one of the authors of the controversial book *The Israel Lobby* was allowed to appear at the annual meeting of book fair coordinators Hessel manages to protect the council, proving herself not simply a communal clearinghouse, but an influential ambassador for Jewish books.

Jonathan Rosen

In three years, Jonathan Rosen has earned a track record that would turn most of his fellow book editors green with envy. As editorial director of the Nextbook/Schocken Jewish Encounters Series, which enlists writers to explore people, ideas and events from the Jewish past, the 44-year-old Rosen has steered the imprint toward uncommon success: 28 titles already in the works, eight of which have been published, most to critical acclaim. Each book is written by a different author, with a roster that includes such luminaries as Robert Pinksky, Daphne Merkin, David Margolick, Leon Wieseltier, Ilan Stavans and more. Still, the line as a whole bears Rosen's distinct stamp: creative, witty and profound; intellectually ambitious yet ultimately widely accessible. And Rosen, who founded the Arts section of this paper and ran it for a decade, has accomplished this without neglecting the writing that has earned him a devoted fan base. February 2008 will see the publication of his fourth book, *The Life of the Skies*, a nonfiction work about Rosen's private passion, bird-watching.

Jane Friedman

There were few bigger stories in publishing this year than the slaying of Judith Regan, the industry's seemingly unassailable dragon lady. Of those who wielded the sword, observers took particular note of Harper Collins CEO Jane Friedman. Regan had weathered a decade of controversy from accusations of questionable taste to serious charges of harassment and abuse but after she purportedly accused Friedman and two others of constituting a Jewish cabal operating against her, the tide turned: Regan, who was then enduring a tidal wave of criticism over her planned publication of a memoir by O.J. Simpson, as well as an upcoming novel about Mickey Mantle's sex life, was fired allegedly for, of all things, antisemitism.

Friedman refused to comment on the brouhaha, but many observers, noting that the two women had been battling for years, saw it as a clear victory for the 62-year-old executive. Moreover, Friedman's Jewish identity is hardly a secret; she is vicechair of the Entertainment, Media and Communications Division of the UJAFederation of New York and a member of the American Advisory Committee of the Jerusalem International Book Fair. With Regan no longer a distraction, Friedman's light can now shine all the more brightly.

Diane von Furstenberg

When fashion insiders looked at their calendars for 2007, more than a few silk, taffeta and vicuna knickers undoubtedly got all bunched in a twist: New York's Fall Fashion Week was to coincide with Rosh Hashanah. Unsurprisingly for the historically Jewish shmatte industry, several members of the tribe, including Calvin Klein and Zac Posen, were among those slated to unveil their new looks just as the new year was ushered in. But it was designer Diane von Furstenberg, 61, recently installed as president of the Council of Fashion Designers of America, who steered the clothing kingpins toward tradition, bumping the schedule up by two days. The change

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wasn't entirely a welcome one, not least because many European fabric companies are closed during the summer, forcing designers to place their orders much earlier than anticipated. But von Furstenberg, the Belgian-born daughter of Jewish émigrés – her Greek-born mother survived Auschwitz and Ravensbrück, while her father, originally from Kishinev, spent the war years in Switzerland – carried the day, proving that, at least this year, celebrating the holidays was very much in vogue.

Mike Ashley

Champion race car driver Mike Ashley is vastly outnumbered in a sport often associated with the Bible Belt, but that hasn't stopped this Long Island native from taking a stand when it comes to his Jewish identity. This year, the 42-year-old father of two sat out a qualifying race that fell on Yom Kippur at the O'Reilly NHRA Fall Nationals in Dallas. This is the second time in Ashley's career that he was faced with the decision of whether or not to race on the holiest day of the year – he did not participate in another qualifying race in 2004. Both times Ashley put himself at a serious disadvantage to make it to the final rounds, despite the fact that he doesn't consider himself particularly observant. Three years ago it didn't matter and Ashley wound up winning the event anyway, but this year he wasn't so lucky: He lost in the first round, placing 11th in the event.

## PHILANTHROPY

Lynn Schusterman

Over the past decade, the once-mighty network of federated Jewish philanthropies has been edged out of its dominant role in national Jewish community planning, eclipsed by individual megaphilanthropists who work singly or in partnerships, armed with the will and the resources to take charge. No partnership has left a deeper stamp than the trio of Michael Steinhardt, Charles Bronfman and Lynn Schusterman. Think of Birthright Israel, or the Partnership for Excellence in Jewish Education, or the STAR partnership for Synagogue Transformation and Renewal or the rebirth of Hillel. All began with those three donors. In the last year or so, though, things have changed. Steinhardt and Bronfman have shown signs of fatigue or discouragement, while Schusterman looks like she's itching to keep moving. Her Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation, begun in the 1980s with her late husband, an Oklahoma oilman, gives away about \$5 million per year, not enough to put one in the top ranks of mega-giving. Since her husband's death in 2000, however, she has learned to maneuver in the rarefied air of New York and Jerusalem, choosing achievable goals and leveraging her money. Her national Conference for Change, held last spring, brought together 150 Jews representing often marginalized groups within the Jewish community – blacks, gays, Hispanics, women – to explore shared issues of exclusion and inclusiveness in Jewish life. Her foundation is committed to donating 70% of its grants to Jewish causes (the rest of the money stays in the foundation's hometown of Tulsa), but unlike most other mega-donors, Schusterman's Jewish causes include domestic violence, gay rights, women's health and empowerment of teenage girls. The strategy opens up new sources of giving that haven't leapt into Jewish causes up to now; it also reopens some old values worth airing out and putting back in action.

Michael Steinhardt

With his public declaration in recent months that his Jewish philanthropic endeavors of the past 12 years have brought about little change, Steinhardt was said to be despairing of his efforts to entice young Jews back into the fold. But the hedge-fund manager turned mega-philanthropist, credited with injecting Jewish continuity efforts with a raft of new ideas and a heavy influx of cash to fund them, is not abandoning ship. Rather, he's rebuilding the hull. Steinhardt's foundation, the Jewish Life Network, bled at least five staff members over the past year, including its top professional, Rabbi Irving Yitz Greenberg. Steinhardt, 66, known as much for his iconoclastic comments as for his visionary philanthropy, told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency he is re-jiggering his giving, cutting back on a host of programs and instead focusing in on three areas: establishing a follow-up program for participants in the wildly successful Birthright Israel program, which takes American Jews on free trips to Israel; creating a new \$100 million fund to reshape Jewish education, and giving to the Jewish Early Childhood Education Initiative. If any of those projects have half the impact of Birthright Israel, which Steinhardt cofounded with other top Jewish donors, his swan song may be a long way off.

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Roger Bennett and Sharna Goldseker

Few deserve more of the credit for the current trend toward creative, entrepreneurial Jewish philanthropy than Roger Bennett and Sharna Goldseker. As senior vice president at the Andrea and Charles Bronfman Philanthropies for the past seven years, Bennett, 37, has been a key player in bringing young Jews into the world of philanthropy. Goldseker, a graduate of New York University's Wagner School of Public Service and a vice president at the philanthropies, has made her mark as director of the division that deals with next generation and multi-generational strategic philanthropy, known as 21/64. Over her five years at the philanthropies, Goldseker, 32, has helped grow and nurture Grand Street, a collective of 18- to 28-year-olds involved in their families' philanthropies. Out of Grand Street sprung the annual Slingshot guide, a catalogue of the 50 most creative and effective Jewish organizations. Out of that, came the Slingshot Fund, overseen by Goldseker, which culls dollars from young philanthropists and gives general operating funds to the organizations listed in the guide. This year, the Slingshot Fund awarded its first batch, doling out \$45,000 grants to eight groups. In 2002 Bennett co-founded Reboot, an incubator for Jewish art and culture, and Rebooters have already launched their own magazine, Guilt & Pleasure. Reboot's successes don't stop there: Sons of Sakhnin United, a feature-length documentary about an Arab-Israeli soccer team, developed by Reboot's nascent film division, premiered at this year's Tribeca Film Festival. Rounding out Bennett's Renaissance-man identity, the Liverpool native spent much of last year working with sociologists Steven M. Cohen and Ari Kelman on a series of studies exploring the ways young Jews engage with their identity. Between Bennett and Goldseker, we can only imagine how the philanthropies will continue to shift the landscape of Jewish giving over the next five years.

Robert Aronson

One of the major challenges facing the Jewish philanthropic world over the last few years has been the gulf between the sclerotic Jewish institutions that need cash to live and the high-worth donors who want to do their own thing. No one bridges this divide better than Detroit native Robert Aronson. The 56-year-old has spent the past 19 years as the professional head of Detroit's Jewish community federation, which has consistently fundraised well above its area's Jewish population numbers. But Aronson has also been a favored adviser to big-time Jewish donors who want to work on innovative projects. He has been the trusted counsel to Detroit Pistons owner Bill Davidson for years; just a few months ago he was chosen head the foundation of the best-known maverick of Jewish philanthropy, Michael Steinhardt. Aronson has worked his way into these positions thanks to his famous emotional intelligence his ability to walk into a room and suss

out what a person really wants within a few minutes. One reason for the success of his initiatives is that he rarely takes credit; recently, for example, he helped give birth to the Professional Leaders Project, which aims to address the crisis shortage in Jewish communal leadership. He is also the professional leader of the Areivim Philanthropic Group, a network of donors who are able to give at least \$5 million each to a Jewish fund. Aronson is responsible for convening the group, and with a few well-timed nudges he is able to direct millions of dollars.

Tad Taube

They could take the boy out of Poland, but they couldn't take Poland out of the boy, and this year philanthropist Thaddeus Tad Taube again broke new ground in his determined effort to revive Jewish life in what was once the center of the Ashkenazic world. The 76-year-old Krakow native has been a driving force behind the Museum of the History of Polish Jews now under construction in Warsaw, a \$65 million institution that will recall a millennium of Polish Jewish history when it opens its doors in 2009. A San Francisco real estate developer and former sportswear executive, Taube is president of the Koret Foundation, a major supporter of Jewish

education and culture as well as conservative causes like Stanford University's Hoover Institution. In recent years, Taube has been outspoken in urging American Jews to think of Poland as more than just the land of Auschwitz. He has even called for a rethinking of what has become a rite of passage for many, the March of the Living, arguing that the pilgrimage for teenagers should visit not only the death camps, but also the centers of Jewish life in Poland today and come 2009, presumably, the Museum of the History of Polish Jews.

## Graphic

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IMAGE

IMAGE: courtesyjcpa

IMAGE: courtesy Alan Dershowitz

IMAGE: katieo'conor

IMAGE: getyimages

IMAGE: andyfeldman

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**Load-Date:** November 8, 2007

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Alberni Valley Times (British Columbia)

December 12, 2007 Wednesday

Final Edition

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**Section:** TOP OF THE NEWS; Pg. 2

**Byline:** CanWest News Service

## **Graphic**

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Photo: CanWest News Service; Palestinian women flee Israel army tanks on Thursday in the Gaza Strip. On the eve of the first formal peace talks mandated by the Annapolis Middle East summit two weeks ago, Israel launched its biggest incursion into the Gaza Strip since Hamas seized power there six months ago. As many as eight Palestinians were killed by Israeli Defence Forces armour and aircraft during Tuesday's incursion, which drew Israeli troops several kilometres inside southern Gaza near the territory's border with Egypt. ;

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December 12, 2007  
woensdag

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# de Volkskrant

**Section:** VOORPAGINA; Blz. 1

**Length:** 441 words

## Body

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### Dikte en zwangerschap

Dikke vrouwen hebben beduidend minder kans zwanger te worden. Dat zeggen onderzoekers van het Academisch Medisch Centrum, het Vrije Universiteit medisch centrum en het Erasmus Medisch Centrum. Zij hebben twee jaar lang lang ruim drieduizend paren gevolgd die in behandeling waren vanwege vruchtbaarheidsproblemen.

### Druif op zwarte lijst

Italiaanse druiven en Spaanse paprika's bevatten veel bestrijdingsmiddelen en kunnen beter niet worden gekocht in Nederlandse supermarkten. Dat zegt Wouter van Eck van Milieudefensie. Hij baseert zich op onderzoek van de Voedsel- en Warenautoriteit, die monsters nam van groenten en fruit in een aantal supermarkten.

### 'Laat vrouw vrij'

**Women** on Waves vindt dat de 24-jarige vrouw uit Boxtel, die vastzit vanwege een vermeende illegale abortus, moet worden vrijgelaten. De organisatie, onder meer bekend van de abortusboot, heeft daarover een brief gestuurd aan minister van Justitie, Hirsch Ballin.

### Ophef over boerkini

Bezoekers van het Almelose zwembad Het Sportpark hebben zich bij de directeur van het zwembad beklagd over een vrouw die in een zogeheten boerkini kwam zwemmen. De moslimvrouw doet mee aan het reïntegratieproject van Almelo, en daar hoort sporten ook bij. Dus liet ze in Turkije een zwart badpak maken met bloemetjes dat haar bijna geheel bedekt.

### Israël trekt Gaza binnen

Het Israëlische leger is dinsdag met tanks en bulldozers de Gazastrook binnengedrongen voor een 'routineactie' tegen Palestijnse raketschutters. Het liep uit op hevige gevechten, waarbij vijf Palestijnse strijders omkwamen en vier Israëlische soldaten gewond raakten. Het was de grootste slag in de Gazastrook sinds **Hamas** in juni de macht in de enclave heeft overgenomen.

### Timosjenko verliest

Joelija Timosjenko, een leidende figuur bij de Oekraïense Oranje Revolutie in 2004, heeft van het parlement een stem te weinig gekregen om premier van Oekraïne te worden. De pro-westerse president Viktor Joesjenko had haar genomineerd voor de post die ze in 2005 ook al bezette.

### Renteverlaging VS

De aandelenbeurzen in de VS lieten dinsdag de grootste koersval in twee weken zien na de renteverlaging door de Federal Reserve, het stelsel van Amerikaanse centrale banken. Beleggers vinden de verlaging met een kwart procent naar 4,25procent onvoldoende om de economie te stimuleren.

### Heffing mp3-spelers

De Stichting Norma probeert met vier artiesten in kort geding een heffing op dvd-recorders met een harde schijf en mp3-spelers af te dwingen bij de staat. Minister van Justitie Hirsch Ballin bepaalde eerder dat een dergelijke heffing er niet komt vóór januari 2009. Volgens Norma is dat besluit in strijd met de Auteurswet.

**Load-Date:** December 11, 2007