

MURKY POLICY ON ISRAEL

St. Louis Post-Dispatch (Missouri)

April 13, 1992, MONDAY, FIVE STAR Edition

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Section: EDITORIAL; Pg. 2B

Length: 691 words

Body

The United States has encouraged Soviet Jews to emigrate to **Israel** for a decade; about 300,000 have done so. But **Israel** is having trouble building decent housing for them, cutting the recent flow substantially. During that same decade, the Reagan and Bush administrations guaranteed loans totaling more than \$5 billion for Iraq (which allowed Iraq to buy \$5 billion of additional weapons), facilitating the rape of Kuwait, which precipitated the Persian Gulf War. President Bush then called Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein the moral equivalent of Adolf Hitler. During the gulf war, Iraq rained Scud missiles on **Israel**'s civilian population. **Israel**, at U.S. urging, refrained from retaliating against Iraq. To induce Egypt to join the gulf war coalition, the Bush administration forgave \$7 billion in Egyptian debts. Syria was granted \$3 billion in credit (which it used to buy weapons, including Scuds). The United States and **Israel** informally discussed a U.S. guarantee of loans to build housing for its new immigrants in recognition of **Israel**'s "team player" attitude during those tense and terrible days. When **Israel** asked the Bush administration for the guarantee, Bush personally and vehemently opposed the guarantees and berated **Israel** in the strongest terms. Recently, the Bush administration announced payments on more than \$2 billion of defaulted Iraqi loans owed to Gulf International Bank, apparently in violation of U.S. **policy** and U.N. sanctions. Ignoring the forced expulsion of 300,000 Palestinians by Kuwait, the thousands of Kurds and Shiites slaughtered by Iraq, the hundreds of Palestinians slain by their brethren for advocating peace with **Israel**, the headlong pursuit of nuclear weapons by Iran, Iraq, Libya and Syria and their sponsorship of worldwide terrorism, and ignoring the 50-year, single-minded, maniacal Arab commitment to the destruction of **Israel**, the Bush administration announced yet again that the major obstacle to Middle East peace is Israeli settlements in the disputed territories.

Alice's Wonderland was crystal clear compared to this. Richard H. Senturia Creve Coeur Unhealthy Facts I share the Post-Dispatch's editorial confidence (April 8) that the people of Missouri are not likely to be fooled by the "misinformation" about state Rep. Gail Chatfield's state-controlled health-care scheme for Missouri. They would be even less likely to be fooled if there was someplace they could get the facts. So, let me try again. When the Chatfield bill was pre-filed on Dec. 2, 1991, it was to be funded by a 7.5 percent gross payroll tax on business, plus an income tax surcharge on individuals. Three months later, the backers said that wasn't going to be enough; the largest tax hike in the history of the state wasn't going to be enough. So they hiked the tax hike to 9 percent from 7.5 percent. That, by the way, is a 20 percent increase in three months, not really "along the line of the inflation rate," as the editorial said. The editorial seemed concerned that Chatfield's opponents might use scare tactics. It would only be fitting because, quite frankly, the Chatfield state-run health-care scheme scares the hell out of me. Given the unique spectacle of a tax being raised before it has ever been enacted, it's hard to have faith that Chatfield offers anything more than an open-ended raid on the taxpayers of Missouri. Chatfield's proposal now demands that we more than double our state taxes; it demands \$11.5 billion in new taxes. But that won't be enough either and, like the drunk at the bar, the national healthers are going to keep telling us, "Just one more. Just one more tax hike, and then we'll quit." But they won't be able to quit because while Chatfield's proposal contains much that would do harm to the quality of our health care, it contains nothing that would truly control the costs of health care. Once the people of Missouri have the facts about what Chatfield would do to our health care, our economy and our taxes, they will be lining up to oppose it. Jim Floyd Manager External Communications Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Missouri St. Louis

Classification

Language: English

Subject: DESERT STORM (84%); JEWS & JUDAISM (61%); DICTATORSHIPS (60%)

Company: AL MUDON INTERNATIONAL REAL ESTATE CO KSCC (57%); GULF INTERNATIONAL BANK BSC (54%); AL MUDON INTERNATIONAL REAL ESTATE CO KSCC (57%); GULF INTERNATIONAL BANK BSC (54%); UNITED NATIONS (54%); UNITED NATIONS (54%)

Organization: UNITED NATIONS (54%); UNITED NATIONS (54%)

Ticker: ALMUDON (KUW) (57%)

Person: RONALD REAGAN (71%); GEORGE W BUSH (62%); SADDAM HUSSEIN (50%)

Geographic: IRAQ (94%); ISRAEL (94%); UNITED STATES (93%); EGYPT (91%); KUWAIT (79%); SYRIA (67%); GULF STATES (52%)

Load-Date: October 11, 1993