

 Jerusalem 4:12; Toronto 4:42

## Events...

**Sunday January 12, 7:30pm**

David Wilder, Spokeman of the Jewish Community of Hevron, will speak at Shaarei Tefillah.

**Tuesday January 13, 8:00pm**

Rachel Schwartz of Yad B'Yad will speak on the severe and urgent problem of thousands Israeli teenage girls getting involved with Arab boys, at BAYT.

## Commentary...

**Sharon's Egregious Blunder** By Shmuel Katz

Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's recent exposition of his policy, which envisages the end of Arab terror and a reformed Palestinian Authority, will probably be blown away by continued terror and, despite rumblings in the Arab community, continued failure to institute genuine reforms.

What will not be blown away is his promise of a Palestinian state which, by its very utterance, signals a historic victory for the Arabs.

The fact that Sharon did not first discuss the idea with his cabinet colleagues, nor submit it to his own party's parliamentary representatives before telling the public, will not affect the unavoidable assumption, eager or reluctant, throughout the world, that Israel has at last succumbed to the Palestinian demand for a state.

The impact of Sharon's declaration, and its pointed repetitions, has not been dulled by the efforts of some of the Likud faithful to soften the blow. He meant, they say, "under certain conditions" or "only after broad reforms." Sharon himself has spoken of a state "with strict limitations." Most weighty of the envisaged limitations is, of course, that the Palestinian state would be demilitarized. This notion is the purest nonsense.

If Israel were to reach the nadir of political inanity of actually helping to establish a state for the Palestinian Arabs, the Arabs would reject with all vigor the idea that their state would be hobbled by a denial of major armaments. No less emphatic would be the hostile reaction of a large segment of the European and other nations.

Even friends, appalled and distressed, would find themselves bound, albeit reluctantly, to deplore such a limitation of sovereignty. They would find it intolerable.

For the Arabs the military issue is doubly critical. First because the very idea of demilitarization would be regarded as a blow to their honor; second, because a sovereign state has never been the ultimate purpose of Arab policy. The purpose is the destruction of Israel. A state could represent only the penultimate "phase" in the policy of phases. It could be the staging ground - with a large and variegated arsenal - for the "final phase." That is the original Arab game plan.

The Arabs made their purpose clear from the very beginning of Israel's existence. In the UN debate on Palestine in November 1947 which led to the partition plan, Jamal Hussein, the spokesman of the Arab League States (there was no entity called Palestinians) announced that the Arabs would not tolerate the existence of a Jewish state in Palestine. The UN partition plan actually also offered them a state. They brushed the offer aside, rejected the plan, and on the morrow of the British government's departure from Palestine, the Arab states launched their war for the annihilation of the infant Jewish state.

Nineteen years later, when the Arab leaders calculated again that they could win, they launched what became the Six Day War. The leader of the Arab coalition, president Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt, confidently, repeatedly and vociferously announced its aim. "The liquidation of Israel" he declared "will be liquidation through violence. We shall enter a Palestine not covered with sand, but soaked in blood." This is pounded out every Friday in the mosques. It is part of textbooks in the Arab schools and is the highlight of political speeches in the Muslim world.

If the Arab objective is achieved, the sovereign state of Palestine could join the Arab League. There, a pact for mutual security exists. Any Arab state attacked may call on the other members of the League to come to its assistance.

# ISRAEL NEWS

*A collection of the week's news from Israel  
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Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto Congregation*

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A ready-made casus belli exists: The Arabs have long laid it down that the very existence of Zionism is an "aggression."

As for Sharon's commitment to lay down limiting conditions for a state, he should not be taken too seriously - in particular, on the subject of demilitarization, which has very seldom succeeded anywhere. He will not stand up to the international condemnation which will pour down on his head, to

the accompaniment undoubtedly of more anti-Jewish violence. For what he is doing now - threatening with dismissal ministers who refuse to betray their trust together with him - and for his projected betrayal of that trust, there is a precedent in Israeli history.

When prime minister Menachem Begin decided to hand over Sinai to Egypt in 1977, he promised the residents of Yamit and the Sinai villages that on no account would they have to leave when (under the prospective peace treaty) the Egyptians took over. He visited Sinai personally and declared that, if in the forthcoming negotiations the demand would be made for dismantling the settlements he, Begin, "would pack his bags" and go home.

He went on to Camp David. There he was indeed faced with Egyptian president Anwar Sadat's demand that the Jews living in Sinai must be evacuated. But he did not pack his bags, and the settlers were driven by force from their homes. Begin, of course, took responsibility, but he first telephoned Jerusalem to consult one of his ministers - who promptly expressed his approval. That minister was Ariel Sharon.

In the subsequent vote in the Knesset on the agreement with Egypt, only a portion of Begin's own party supported him, but enough members of the Labor opposition gave their votes to ensure his majority. Now, a quarter of a century later, one can almost hear Sharon's mind ticking away in the same direction. If the Likud ministers, Tzahi Hanegbi and his colleagues "let him down," he can depend on ultra-defeatist Labor leader Amram Mitzna to help him out.

If Hanegbi, Uzi Landau, Limor Livnat and their colleagues in the government follow the national interest, uphold the political truth and respect the moral values with which they were brought up, they should be prepared to do everything in their power to undo Sharon's egregious blunder. (Jerusalem Post Jan 3)

*The writer is the author of Hareshet - The Net: The Aaronsohn Family Saga.*

**We Must Fight Back** By Aharon Levrant

I have already expressed in these pages that the risks from Saddam Hussein are far smaller than they were in 1991, and that fighting him should not be the free world's top priority. Yet, small as they may be, the risks for Israel from Saddam's missiles deserve close scrutiny. As opposed to many reports in the media, the threat is not a function of the number of missiles and their warheads, but of the destructive impact they may have on this country's security if they are launched.

My 1988 study of the missile attacks in the Iraq-Iran war showed the dangers were very serious. An analysis of the missiles fired at Israel in 1991 only substantiated that observation. In both wars the casualties from missiles may not have been many, but the material destruction and the strategic-psychological implications were significant.

In 1991, some 40 missiles caused us two direct deaths and more than a dozen indirect ones (the result of panic, atropine injections, and the like) and some 1,000 wounded from indirect hits. Yet 10,000 apartments and buildings were damaged, dozens of them substantially. Thousands were evacuated from their homes, schools were paralyzed and the economy suffered badly.

On the basis of an attack of 150 al-Hussein missiles on Teheran in March 1988 and a similar number of Iranian Scuds on Baghdad, the number of casualties was estimated at three dead and eight wounded per missile. But in the missile duel both sides had incidents of especially high losses. So too in 1991 an Iraqi missile on an American facility in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, killed 29 people and injured 90.

As mentioned, the strategic-psychological impact of the missiles on Iranian society and the Khomeini leadership was especially severe, in a country where human life is not the prime value. Things got so bad that they asked the pope to intervene, and three months later implored Iraq to end the war.

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For Israel, too, the missiles in 1991 were a traumatic experience. Its citizens entrenched themselves in sealed rooms, wrapped themselves in plastic sheets and gas masks and many temporarily decamped to other locales in the country or even left it in a frenzy. There was a feeling of anxiety and helplessness, under extenuating circumstances compared to the missiles on Iran.

Above all, what stood out at the time was the failure of Israeli deterrence, after its leaders had competed before the war over voicing threats against Saddam. To be sure, there were extenuating circumstances for Israel's non-response, but the bottom line is that it did not strike back at the assailants who involved it in a war in which it did not belong.

The inevitable conclusions were that the Israeli home front was no longer immune once it was exposed as a painfully weak spot, and therefore the Arabs would always have the ability to neutralize Israel's military superiority. This was a severe blow to Israel's image, its might and its deterrent capacity, which are critical to its survival. It is no wonder this gave rise to the call: If there is an IDF - may it appear right now.

This time, even if the likelihood of missiles being launched against Israel is low and their number small, Israel, if attacked - certainly if non-conventional warheads are involved - should by no means stand by. Though Israel's ability to successfully intercept missiles is incomparably better than it was in 1991, if the US operates in western Iraq, but fails to prevent missiles being fired at Israel, we must make it clear that we will defend ourselves.

Israel must not repeat its non-reaction to an attack on its non-combative population and become a punching bag in a war that is not its own. Otherwise it will weaken even further its shaken deterrence, especially after the withdrawal from Lebanon and the armed confrontation with the Palestinians.

This is all the more true if Saddam uses non-conventional weapons. The very fact that an Arab leader dared cross every red line and set new and terrible "rules of the game," and Israel failed to respond in equal measure or more, is intolerable for the future. From that moment Israel will always be hostage to the temptation to strike at it fatally, and therefore subject to an existential danger in the full sense of the word.

Likewise, it is intolerable for the relatives of Jews exterminated in gas chambers to again be the victims of biochemical weapons. Besides, though improvements on the home front are commendable, they do little to salvage and strengthen our deterrence and the foundations of our existence.

Since an Israeli response is undesirable to the US, the government should make absolutely sure American forces take over western Iraq right at the start of the offensive. If the administration is aware of an Israeli determination to act if it is attacked it will not belittle the missile threat as General Norman Schwarzkopf did in 1991, calling it "a thunderstorm in Georgia." Despite the importance of the US for Israel, we must not behave as a banana republic - especially if we are unjustifiably attacked. The state's image is as important to its national fortitude as other components of power.

In any case, if force majeure prevents Israel from responding to being attacked, it must not come out of the war in Iraq with no strategic answers or gains. Crushing Palestinian terrorism and neutralizing the dangers of Hizbullah - Iran and Syria's long arm - will dim Israel's repeated non-response and highly contribute to the fight being waged against Islamic terrorism.

(Jerusalem Post Jan 3)

*The writer is a strategic analyst with the Ariel Center for Policy Research.*

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### **Exploiting the Palestinians: Everyone's doing it.** By Max Boot

In an interview last month with Britain's Sunday Times, Yasser Arafat rebuked Osama bin Laden for seeking to exploit the Palestinians' cause for his own ends. "Why is bin Laden talking about Palestine now? . . . He never helped us. He was working in another, completely different area and against our interests," Arafat was quoted as saying. "I'm telling him directly not to hide behind the Palestinian cause."

Good advice, but it's doubtful bin Laden will take it. Just about everyone else exploits the Palestinian cause--Arafat first and foremost, but also, according to the latest reports, some of his Israeli "peace partners"--so why shouldn't old fur face?

Whenever the serious issues of the Middle East are raised, from oppression in Saudi Arabia to nuclear weapons development in Iran, the answer one hears from Europeans, Arabs, United Nations functionaries, all sorts of supposedly serious people, is invariably the same: The real issue is the Palestinians. Until we resolve their horrible plight, peace will never come to the Middle East. This is an absurd argument since even if Israel ceased to exist tomorrow, this would not affect in the slightest the tensions between Islamic fundamentalists and secularists, between rich Gulf kingdoms and their poor cousins, between Shiites and Sunnis, between democrats and dictators, or the countless other San Andreas-sized fault lines that run through the Dar al-Islam (House of Islam). It is helpful to remember that all of the dead in the Arab-Israeli wars of the past half century amount to only a tiny fraction of the million killed during the Iran-Iraq War of the 1980s, the 100,000 killed in Algeria's civil war since 1992, or the 100,000 killed in Lebanon's civil war from 1975 to 1990.

Surely anyone with a modicum of knowledge about the Middle East knows that the plight of the Palestinians isn't "the" issue. So why do so many people

insist that it is? Let us count the reasons.

For the Europeans, championing the Palestinian cause allows them to assuage lingering colonial guilt by championing the aspirations of a Third World people who claim to be oppressed by Western imperialists--in this case, Israelis. It also allows Europeans to trumpet their moral superiority over pro-Israel Americans. And, last but not least, it allows them to curry favor with both oil-rich Arab states and their own growing Muslim minorities. Europeans hope that Arabs will show their gratitude by doing business with them and not targeting them for terrorism. All of this comes at a price, though: The E.U. is one of the Palestinian Authority's main non-Arab bankrollers, to the tune of \$10 million a month.

For Middle Eastern states, championing the Palestinian cause is even more vital because doing so provides an important pillar of legitimacy for their manifestly illegitimate governments. Naturally the Arab states' interest is in preserving "the struggle," not in succoring the Palestinian people who (along with the Israelis) are its chief victims. There are almost 4 million Palestinians and most live in conditions of unrelieved squalor; large swaths of the West Bank and Gaza Strip make the South Bronx look like Club Med by comparison. The only Arab state that has granted citizenship to Palestinians is Jordan; the others prefer to keep them as an unassimilated, militant minority.

More than 1.1 million Palestinians are jammed into 59 refugee camps whose support comes mainly from the United Nations Relief and Works Agency and other international bodies. As former U.S. ambassador to Morocco Marc Ginsberg points out, all the Arab states combined donate less than \$7 million to UNRWA, just 2.4 percent of its \$290 million budget. (Kuwait, Egypt, Libya, Oman, Qatar, Iraq, and the United Arab Emirates collectively contribute a grand total of zero.) By contrast, the Great Satan forks over \$110 million, or 38 percent of UNRWA's budget. The Arabs prefer to spend their money to support Palestinian suicide bombers. Saddam Hussein alone has paid an estimated \$20 million over the past two years to "martyrs" families. The Saudis held a telethon to raise millions more. The Arab League as a whole contributes \$55 million a month to Arafat's tyrannical Palestinian Authority, which keeps the suicide bombings coming.

Many Palestinians are privately appalled at these "martyrdom operations," which are killing their youth, destroying their economy, and empowering their religious fanatics. But Arab states are delighted. What are a few dead Palestinian teenagers in return for hurting Israel and its backers in America?

Much the same calculus seems to govern Yasser Arafat's thinking. He is, you might say, the chief exploiter of the Palestinians, followed closely by his senior goons. They reap the adulation of useful idiots abroad who celebrate them as "freedom fighters," but senior PA officials aren't the ones strapping dynamite to their chests and blowing up Israeli buses. Arafat's wife Suha has generously said that there would be "no greater honor" than to sacrifice her son as a martyr. But she doesn't have a son. She has a daughter and they live in Paris. Even though some suicide bombings have been conducted by teenage girls, it's doubtful that seven-year-old Zahawa Arafat will be blowing up an El Al office on the way to her école. Her life, and her mother's, are far removed, literally and figuratively, from those of ordinary Palestinians.

Anyone who visits the West Bank and Gaza Strip is struck by the contrast between the general conditions of abysmal poverty and a few glittering villas that wouldn't be out of place on the French Riviera. Who owns these palazzos? Arafat's men, of course. Since the Palestinian Authority keeps a ruthless grip not only on politics but also on the economy, anyone who gets rich within PA jurisdiction, by definition, must be one of Arafat's apparatchiks.

The pervasive corruption of the PA has long been known and resented by ordinary Palestinians, but it seldom comes out into the open, since Arafat doesn't allow freedom of the press. Revelations in the Israeli press during the past month have lifted the veil of secrecy a bit, revealing a circle of exploitation that includes not only Arafat but also some of his Israeli negotiating partners.

On December 2, the Tel Aviv daily newspaper Ma'ariv printed a fascinating interview with a businessman and former military intelligence officer named Ozrad Lev. He claimed that he and his former business partner, Yossi Ginossar, had undertaken extensive and lucrative dealings with Muhammad Rashid, Arafat's chief financial adviser. In return for fat management fees, they set up Swiss bank accounts into which Rashid transferred more than \$300 million of PA money, with Arafat's apparent authorization. Lev said he decided to go public after \$65 million mysteriously disappeared. "This money could have been used for personal needs, to form a shelter [to hide the money] for Arafat and senior Palestinian officials, to pay salaries, or even, and I really hope not, for illegal activities," said Lev.

Who is Yossi Ginossar? A former agent of Shin Bet, Israel's internal security service, who in the 1990s acted as an informal envoy to the Palestinians on behalf of prime ministers Yitzhak Rabin, Shimon Peres, and Ehud Barak. Ginossar is a leading "dove" who sits on the executive board of the Peres Center for Peace, the think tank that is to the Israeli left approximately what the Heritage Foundation is to the American right. He

also hobnobs with the American think tanker Stephen P. Cohen, another incorrigible peace advocate (the website of his employer, the Israel Policy Forum, recently featured a report claiming "Oslo didn't fail"), who, Ma'ariv reports, profited from the Ginossar-Rashid business deals. (Cohen told me he was involved in some deals with Ginossar, but doesn't know anything about Swiss bank accounts.)

Ginossar's position as envoy to the Palestinians allowed him privileged access to the highest councils of power. He participated in the 2000 Camp David talks, where he pushed Barak to make greater concessions. And, according to the Jerusalem Post, when the Gaza Strip was declared a military zone and closed to Israeli travelers, Ginossar was chauffeured to Arafat's office in Shin Bet armored cars. Israel's attorney general, Elyakim Rubinstein, is now investigating this case, which has become a huge scandal in Israel, though it's gone largely unnoticed in the United States. Both Rashid and Ginossar deny any wrongdoing. Ginossar told Ma'ariv, "I was guided exclusively by boundless loyalty to the [Israeli] state," a claim that has been met with snorts of derision in Israel's rambunctious press. But there is perhaps an element of truth in what he says.

The Israeli governments of the 1990s wanted to encourage closer economic cooperation with the Palestinians in the hope that this would give their enemies a stake in peace. Unfortunately, instead of creating small businesses that could be the building blocks of Palestinian civil society, what developed was the kind of crony capitalism that is endemic to places like Russia. Arafat's confidants--not only Rashid but Muhammad Dahlan, Jibril Rajoub, Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen), and others--were the big beneficiaries. Along, it now seems, with some select Israeli friends.

The Palestinian people and the cause of long-term peace were of course not helped by any of it. Instead these "business" dealings helped foster a gangster state more interested in war-making than economic development. It is striking that at the same time that news of Rashid's \$300 million slush fund leaked out, the PA claimed it had no money to pay 100,000 civil servants. But the PA's transgressions, no matter how glaring, have long been overlooked by professional doves like Ginossar. Indeed, Lev says that he and Ginossar continued managing the \$300 million fund for the Palestinians until at least August 2001--almost a year after the Al Aksa Intifada had begun.

So to the list of those exploiting the Palestinian cause add leading "peace" advocates. The good news is that the people of the Middle East are increasingly hip to this tiresome con game.

The Iranian government has recently tried to deflect the student demonstrations over the death sentence handed down to a history professor who dared to suggest that Muslims not "blindly follow religious leaders." Instead of protesting Seyyed Hashem Aghajari's fate, President Mohammad Khatami urged students to demonstrate for International Qods Day, a holiday invented by the late Ayatollah Khomeini to protest Israel's supposedly unlawful occupation of Qods (Jerusalem). The Student Movement Coordination Committee for Democracy in Iran threw this demand back into Khatami's face. In a statement translated by the Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI), the students said, "Observing the 'Day of Qods' in support of violence is a lunacy that is neither advantageous to the Palestinian nation nor does it coincide with the national interests of the people of Iran."

Pretty smart, those Iranian students. They aren't fooled by pro-Palestinian rhetoric. But there is at least one group left that takes seriously the protestations that no progress can be made in the Middle East until the Palestinian issue is settled. You can find them in Foggy Bottom. (The Weekly Standard Jan 13) *The writer is the Olin Senior Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations and a contributing editor to The Weekly Standard.*

### **Save Your Breath, Jack** By Michael Freund

Even as Israelis were burying their dead on Monday after the double suicide bombing in Tel Aviv, British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw could find nothing better to do than to criticize the Jewish state.

Straw was peeved because in the wake of Sunday's attack, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon decided to bar Yasser Arafat's representatives from attending a London conference on Palestinian Authority reform.

Never mind that the very idea of reforming an entity that is busy massacring its neighbors is, as the British themselves might put it, "most peculiar". But having already planned the menu and sent out the invitations, Straw was apparently unhappy to learn that his little party may be cancelled just because a few more Israelis had been killed.

"I greatly regret the decision announced by the Israeli cabinet this morning to prevent representatives of the Palestinian Authority from travel," Straw said, adding, "This cannot advance the cause of peace and security for Israelis any more than it can for Palestinians."

With all due respect, Straw is hardly in a position to be telling Israel what will or will not advance its security.

It was just over 15 months ago, in September 2001, that Straw paid a visit to the Ayatollahs in Iran, where he sought to curry favor with them by saying that he "understands" Palestinian terror against Israel.

"I understand that one of the factors which helps breed terrorism," Straw opined, "is the anger which many people in this region feel at events over the

years in Palestine." In other words, as far as Straw was concerned, Palestinian "anger" would somehow justify the use of violence against Israel. So much for British "moral clarity" on terror.

After his remarks sparked an uproar, Straw insisted that he deplored terrorism, but quickly qualified his condemnation, stating that "there is an obvious need to understand the environment in which terror breeds."

Interestingly, when it comes to "the environment which breeds" the likes of Saddam Hussein or Osama Bin-Laden, the British Foreign Secretary sees no comparable need to "understand" the "anger" that is at work.

Another one of Straw's favorite topics is Judea, Samaria and Gaza. Indeed, though he may be wishy-washy when it comes to Palestinian terror, he is far more decisive on the question of where Jews should be allowed to build their homes.

In a meeting last month with Foreign Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Straw reportedly said that Israel should cease all construction in the settlements, asserting they were "illegal".

Likewise, in a December 19, 2002 opinion piece in the London Jewish Chronicle, Straw insisted that Israel withdraw to the pre-1967 borders, essentially demanding that the Sharon government capitulate to the Palestinians. "A halt to the expansion of settlements," wrote Straw, "is a vital precursor for peace".

And yet, when it came to Arafat's ongoing support for anti-Israel violence, all Straw could manage to say was that the Palestinian Authority needs to "increase its capacity to prevent terrorist attacks". Evidently, in Straw's view, ending terror is not "vital", nor is it a necessary "precursor for peace". Those terms apply only to the Jews, you see.

While it would be tempting to dismiss these various Straw-isms as representing little more than his personal antagonism, the fact is that the British government has shown itself to be increasingly hostile toward Israel of late.

Last month, British Prime Minister Tony Blair refused to meet with Foreign Minister Netanyahu during the latter's visit to London, citing a "busy schedule", though he managed to find plenty of time to roll out the red carpet for Bashar al-Assad, the Dictator of Damascus.

And, as the Associated Press reported last Friday, the British government won't sell Israel vital spare parts that are needed for its fleet of F-4 Phantoms, despite the looming war with Iraq. A spokesman for Israel's Defense Ministry said the British action might force Israel to ground the planes, which would weaken the country's air defenses precisely when they might be needed most.

Unfortunately, British foreign policy continues to be tainted by a strong, underlying anti-Israel sentiment, and the Foreign Office remains oblivious to the hypocrisy and double standards inherent in its approach.

After all, when it comes to Her Majesty's own "occupied territories", such as Northern Ireland, Straw is surprisingly silent about the need for "withdrawal" as a means of achieving a lasting peace. His government will gladly tell Israel to abandon the heart of its ancestral homeland, where the founding fathers of the Jewish people are buried, but would never countenance yielding the Falkland Islands, with its incomparable flocks of sheep, to Argentina.

So, should Mr. Straw again decide to lecture us on how best to run our affairs, Israel would do well to offer him the following reply: Thanks for the advice, Jack, but next time, please keep it to yourself.

*The writer served as Deputy Director of Communications & Policy Planning in the Prime Minister's Office from 1996 to 1999. (Jerusalem Post Jan 8)*

### **Times Hits Year-End False Notes** By Andrea Levin

The New York Times finished off 2002 with a bang in its coverage of Israel. On December 28th a page-four story ("Dreaming of Palestine, Teenager Writes a Novel") and a large smiling photo of Randa Ghazi brought readers a breezy profile of the Egyptian-Italian teenage authoress of a virulent anti-Israel novel.

Times writer Frank Bruni found Ghazi "something of a riddle," saying her book for young readers "mounts a fiery case against the Israelis' treatment of Palestinians" and "drips blood and outrage." But he never once made explicit that her "fiery case" and "outrage" rely on fantastic lies, and that it is these hate-filled lies that have alarmed Jewish groups.

In fact, Bruni omits quoting the most inflammatory passages, focusing primarily on quirks of Ghazi's adolescent insouciance.

The Jerusalem Post (December 9) did quote directly from the novel, making clear why popularizing of the work has aroused concern. Ghazi wrote: "... Jihad and Riham's parents and their four-month-old twins were exterminated. One day [Israeli] tanks had entered the village and the soldiers had fired on everyone around, women, old people, children. They entered all the houses, they set some alight with the families still inside, in others they raped the women, stole the money, and destroyed everything..."

The nonchalance of the Times toward the hatred engendered in young readers by such lurid, false portrayals is nothing new. America's "newspaper of record" has for years accorded similar cavalier treatment to official

Palestinian Authority hate-indoctrination and the connection of that dangerous propaganda to the poison fruit it has borne - a generation of suicide-killers.

If a graphic summary of a year of tendentious reporting were needed, the Times' two-page, calendar-style "Year in Review" (December 29) served perfectly. Indicative of the reluctance to report the Palestinian onslaught against Israeli civilians for what it is -- terrorism -- that category was reserved for such events as the kidnap-killing of American journalist Daniel Pearl, terrorist attempts on U.S. embassies, terrorist attacks against Russians in Moscow, against Christians in Pakistan and other nations, and developments in the U.S. in the war on terror.

Indeed, many of the worst terrorist attacks against Israelis in 2002, events of wanton cruelty, were unmentioned or severely minimized. Among those omitted entirely were the bombing on July 16 of a bus near Emmanuel at which victims were sprayed with gunfire as they tried to escape, killing nine; the blowing up of the Hebrew University cafeteria on July 31, killing another nine; the bombing of an Egged bus, shooting of two men in Jerusalem and gunning down of a husband and pregnant wife, all on August 4, killing 13; the blowing up of a bus on October 21 creating an inferno that snuffed out 14 lives; the bombing of a bus on November 21 in Jerusalem that took 11 lives, including school children and a grandmother and her 8-year-old grandson.

The Times did not, of course, list all the losses experienced by the Palestinians in its 2002 calendar either. But it needs to be said that the singling out of women and children for targeted mass murder is a policy only of the Palestinians. As numerous studies of the past two years' violence have shown, over 30% of Israeli dead have been women, while under 5% of Palestinian losses are women, a solemn indicator that one side aims to kill innocent non-combatants while the other aims to spare them and to target bombers and gunmen.

As an especially deceptive paragraph in the Week in Review calendar similarly underscores, the Times' blunders tilt one way -- in the direction of obscuring Palestinian initiation of violence and casting equal onus on Israel. Thus, under the heading "A Bloody March," the paper wrote: "March was one of the bloodiest months in the Middle East since the war in 1967. Israeli tanks pushed into Palestinian refugee camps for the first time, then bombarded Gaza from the land, sea and air. Suicide bombers attacked a conservative Jewish neighborhood, then a popular cafe. ... A suicide bombing in a hotel during Passover dinner killed more than a dozen people..."

One can't help asking why, nine months after the event, the Times does not report accurately the casualty figure for the Passover massacre, one of the most lethal attacks against Israelis. Twenty-nine people were murdered, not just "more than a dozen." What would it signify if the Times characterized the Twin Towers terrorism, with its almost 3,000 dead, as having killed "more than a thousand"?

In addition, of course, March was a bloody month because Palestinian terror made it that way. Palestinian terrorists struck from the first days, blowing up attendees at a religious celebration in Jerusalem and shooting down ten Israelis at a checkpoint. Israel struck back AFTER these bloody attacks. The Times literally reversed and disconnected these events, in the same manner that it chooses with so much of its coverage to blur cause and effect, perpetrator and victim, guilty and innocent.

The Times' shoddy review of 2002 and romanticizing of a young hate-mongering novelist does not, to put it mildly, bode well for its journalistic integrity in 2003.

*The writer is Executive Director of CAMERA, Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America (IMRA Jan 8)*

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### **Israel's Nightmare Is Not Saddam** By Steven Plaut

I am about to reveal to you a great revelation, a huge scoop, so you had better hold on to your helmets.

In the coming Gulf War conflagration, the security threat and danger to Israel will NOT be from Iraqi SCUD missiles. Let me repeat. When the Americans and the Allies invade Iraq, the threat to Israel will NOT be from Iraqi missiles. Instead, the threat will be from the Hizbollah in Lebanon, this thanks to ex-Prime Minister Ehud Barak and the Israeli Labor Party.

Let me explain.

First, Iraq probably has far fewer SCUD launchers than it had in 1991 and the ones Saddam has may not all work, due to problems with spare parts or similar. Even if they work, he may not use them; weekend polls are showing that Israelis favor massive military retaliation against Iraq by huge majorities EVEN if Iraq attacks "ONLY" with ordinary conventional weapons (Haaretz, Jan 6, 03). So it is quite possible Israel will shun the sage advice of President Bush and Secretary Powell to retaliate against Iraq by aggressively turning the other cheek. (The Administration has been sending Israel undiplomatic messages almost daily letting Israel know the US expects it to exhibit pure Quaker pacifism if Saddam tries to provoke it.)

Then even if Iraq DOES manage to shoot the missiles, it will probably be able to do so for no longer than a few days before the US finishes mopping up - my personal prediction is the US ground invasion will last six days and will become known as the Second Six Day War. If Iraq does launch missiles at Israel, it is likely that most will not get through because of Israel's anti-missile technology.

And if some do get through, they are as likely to land on Arab towns and villages as on Israeli Jews, what with the notorious inaccuracy of SCUDs. In fact, Sharon could even HELP some land on Jericho, Ramallah, Nablus, Gaza City, etc. And any SCUD that might hit Tel Aviv is likely to produce less casualties than one of the regular Oslo suicide bombings, such as the twin bombings a few night back in Tel Aviv's old central bus station perpetrated by the Al-Aqsa Martyr's Brigade under the direct personal control and command of Yassir Arafat.

So should Israelis take a deep breath and laugh off the security threat? The answer is of course NO. There IS a real security threat to Israel from the Gulf War, but it is not from Iraq. It is from Lebanon. Because of Ehud Barak's policy of unilateral capitulation and withdrawal from southern Lebanon when he turned it over to the mercies of the Hizbollah back when Barak was Prime Minister before Ariel Sharon took over, there are now thousands of missiles sitting just meters outside the Israeli border with Lebanon, controlled by the Hizbollah. They are aimed at Haifa and all of northern Israel and some could reach Tel Aviv.

The Hizbollah is itching to convert the US attack on Iraq into an all-out Arab-Israeli war. The Iraqis would be overjoyed to have the Hizbollah try to create the illusion that the Gulf War is a "War of Civilizations" against the Islamic world. The Hizbollah is anxious to create maximum disruption for the Americans, and what better way to do so than creating a diversion they hope will rally the Arab world behind their jihad and Saddam's, just when it is least convenient for the United States? What better way to help out Saddam than making sure Israel is goaded into fighting in Lebanon smack while the US is invading Iraq, all this to rally solidarity among the Moslems against the "Zionist-Crusader aggression"?

The Hizbollah of course is little more than a puppet of Syria. Syria is content to play spoiler behind the scenes, feeling secure that American rage is directed against other Arab fascist regimes, at least for the moment. Syria is making little attempt to hide the fact that it is abetting Saddam, and the Western news agencies have been reporting that Saddam is hiding his weapons and equipment, including possibly weapons of mass destruction, inside Syria until the pesky inspectors get out of the way. Syria is likely to give the Hizbollah the green light to turn all of northern Israel into a killing field, just as the US ground forces enter Iraq, figuring the US will prevent Israel from meaningful reprisals against the Hizbollah and its puppet-masters.

All of this is now more than likely because of the policies of Ehud Barak and his parody of Dunkirk two and a half years ago, when he ordered Israel to capitulate to the Hizbollah and evacuate its security zone in southern Lebanon. The Barak theory, long since proclaimed as gospel by the Israeli Left and its amen choruses overseas, is that once Israel has withdrawn from Lebanon, the Hizbollah will have "nothing to fight about". Got that? When the rockets start raining down on Israeli schools and homes from the northern border, will Israelis have the courage to remind Barak and his Labor Party friends about how they assured everyone that the Arabs never attack Israel when they have "nothing to fight about"?

In fact the Arabs have never needed "anything to fight over". They have been attacking Jews in Israel for a hundred years without ever having "anything to fight over". Did bin-Laden have "anything to fight over"? Did he need anything?

The "nothing to fight about" doctrine has of course also long been the underlying foundation of the Oslo "peace process" from the start. If Israel just gives the PLO everything it wants, such as what Barak offered them at Camp David II in 2000, then of course the Palestinians will have "nothing to fight about". Except they reacted to that insane offer by launching war. And if current Israeli Labor Party contender and leftist Amram Mitzna offers the PLO even more than what Barak did, as he promises, then the PLO will again "have nothing to fight about". Except they will.

Even if Israel granted the Palestinians absolutely everything the EU Israel-bashers and the State Department "Arabists" think it should, the PLO will simply use its new state to attack Israel and launch new atrocities and wars. Tell the "nothing to fight over" theory to the families of the 23 murdered people in Tel Aviv this week, murdered by Palestinians who have nothing to fight over and by the "peace process".

What became of Ehud Barak? The same dim-witted fellow who says that had he been born a Palestinian he would have become a terrorist? Well, he is one of the many creatures already scrambling and positioning themselves on the decks of Amram Mitzna's sinking Labor Party ship, hoping to "pull a Nixon" and compete for party Chief after Mitzna's campaign crashes in Oslo flames in the coming elections.

There seems little doubt the Hizbollah will rain missiles down on northern Israel when the Gulf War begins. (The civil defense preparations in Israel seem to be designed for the Hizbollah attacks mainly, not any odd Iraqi SCUD getting through.) What is not at all clear yet is whether Israelis will have the commonsense and minimal instinct of self-preservation to tear up the Oslo "accords" and deal with Arafat and the PLO as they should have long ago. (FrontPageMagazine.com Jan 8)

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