



ISRAEL NEWS
A collection of the week's news from Israel
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Commentary...

Youth Must Be Served By Rabbi Stewart Weiss

It was deja vu all over again. Suddenly, I was a teenager once more. The year is 1968, the place Chicago, my hometown. I am standing amidst huge throngs of people - most of them in their teens or '20's - at the site of the Democratic National Convention, where the Democratic candidate for President will be chosen. A massive protest against the War in Vietnam is in progress for a third straight day, and, although there is a kind of circus atmosphere among the demonstrators, tensions are running extremely high. The huge crowd is chanting en masse, "1-2-3-4, we don't want your bloody war; 5-6-7-8, we don't want to escalate." Signs against politicians, the military-industrial complex and virtually every vestige of the Establishment are everywhere.

Facing off against the crowd are "Chicago's Finest," a wall of mounted police in riot gear. They are under strict orders by the Windy City's legendary, autocratic Mayor Richard J. Daley to hold back the crowd, to be brutal if necessary, but to show the protestors just who is "Boss." (Mayor Daley's nickname).

Even from behind their plexi-glass masks, I can sense that the police - and the animals beneath them - are champing at the bit, waiting for the right opportunity to punish the "hippy-dippy flower children" for ruining what the Mayor had hoped would be a grand opportunity to show off the Second City to the world. (Daley had "won" the right for Chicago to host the Convention after securing JFK's razor-thin election victory four years earlier, when he "delivered" a huge Democratic plurality in Chicago, swinging Illinois' electoral votes and the Presidency to Kennedy).

Now, the Mayor watched in abject fury as his golden prize was becoming severely tarnished.

All at once, the cops on horseback charged the crowd. With their metal-tipped batons swinging indiscriminately, they beat the defenseless protestors with Cossack-like ferocity, smashing skulls and breaking limbs. The TV cameras rolled with the punches, capturing the horrendous scenes in bloody, living color. By the time the smoke had cleared and the hundreds of wounded removed to the hospital, the vivid scene of Chicago at war had been indelibly imprinted upon the American psyche.

The Democratic Convention, along with the JFK assassination and Woodstock, would become the defining image of the tumultuous '60's. It would shake the American political system - bringing down one President and leading to the impeachment of another - and would ultimately help to end the disastrous Vietnam debacle, leaving the heavily armed United States gun-shy for more than two decades. In many ways, the kids came out on top.

All these scenes rushed back to me as I watched the recent confrontations at Amona. Again, idealistic young people stood on one side while armed, mounted policemen stood on the other. To be sure, there were those protestors who over-stepped their bounds and acted disgracefully and violently towards government forces, just as some over-zealous kids in '68 threw bags of human feces at the police and taunted them with shouts of "Here, piggy, piggy." To be sure, there were hot-heads and agitators among the Israeli throng, just as Abie Hoffman and Tom Hayden ("Mr. Jane Fonda") had egged on the Convention crowd.

But for the most part, the cruelty and brutality were heavily weighted on the part of the police, not the protestors. Numerous innocents were clubbed and beaten for no reason other than they were there; the charge of the horses directly into the crowd did not distinguish between the peaceful and the provocateurs.

While there is plenty of blame on both sides, the playing field was not exactly even in Amona. After all, who should we expect to demonstrate more restraint and more control in crisis conditions: A 15 year-old student, already hurt, confused and frustrated by this summer's pullout from Gush Katif; or an adult in uniform, supposedly trained to carry out his job with precision and professionalism?

As the world gleefully watched the Jew vs. Jew violence, all the currency we had accumulated from the Gush Katif withdrawal - when soldiers accomplished their task with hugs and not head-breaking, where the tears far

outnumbered the **בוס** truncheons - vanished into thin air. Something snapped that day, and this country crossed a red and bloody line.

What is most distressing to me about all this is the sheer cruelty displayed by our police, the "over-the-top" zealotry which they displayed while beating young boys and girls, even after the kids had been rendered helpless and lay on the ground. So extreme was their behavior that many protestors insisted they could not be Jewish. Indeed, the

Talmud says that "if you detect a strain of cruelty in a person, you can rightly question his Jewish lineage."

When had we ever seen this kind of gratuitous violence? What, exactly, fueled this near-savage behavior? Why didn't the police use another form of crowd control, such as water hoses, or even tear gas? After all, these were not criminals or convicts on a rampage, nor were they drug addicts or vandals out to do reckless vandalism. These were good kids from good homes, who believe deeply in the sanctity of the land and are prepared to fight - and die, if necessary - in or out of uniform, to preserve the Jewish homeland. Surely they deserved better.

The knee-jerk reaction of acting Prime Minister Olmert to whitewash the police behavior and stonewall any investigation into their conduct was absolutely Daley-esque. He, too, stood by his troops to a fault, refusing to acknowledge any malfeasance of duty on their part and placing all the blame on the younger generation.

But youth must be served. Instinctively, our kids sense that there is something amiss here. A society that first encourages settlement, then retracts it, that demonizes the pioneers and cavalierly abandons them to their fate, that rolls back sacred principles at will and redefines the values always held dear, is a society that must be confronted and challenged. Thank G-d we have a younger generation that gives a damn, that has a cause, that cares deeply about what happens to this country.

Rather than beat back that impulse, we have to address it, nurture it and treat it with the respect it deserves. (Jerusalem Post Feb 19)

Weak on Hamas By Caroline Glick

At its Sunday morning cabinet meeting did Israel's interim government finally lay out a strategy for contending with the fact that Hamas has taken over the Palestinian Authority? The Israeli and international media reports of the meeting could easily lead a person to think so.

Sadly, nothing could be further from the truth. The interim government's decisions Sunday show that the government has no policy for contending with Hamas. The absence of a policy is a result of the government's lack of a basic understanding of - or its unwillingness to understand - the threat the Hamas takeover of the PA poses to Israel.

In declaring that the government had decided to stop all direct transfers of funds to the PA, Sunday's headlines indicated that Acting Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and his associates have launched a concerted campaign against the Hamas-led PA. But the small print told a different story completely.

Over the objections of the IDF, the government is continuing to allow Palestinians to work in Israel. The government also rejected the IDF's recommendation to cut off all links to Gaza and transform the passages from Gaza to Israel into international border crossings.

Far from working to cut off international funding of the Palestinians, the Olmert government continues to support international funding of non-governmental and UN organizations that operate in the PA; and apparently does so unconditionally.

Finally while Olmert admitted Sunday that the PA has become a "terrorist authority," he and his ministers failed to take any actions - either diplomatically or militarily - that legally arise from this designation.

OLMERT'S opponents, and specifically Likud leader Binyamin Netanyahu, were quick to criticize the government's decisions. They argued that in acting in such an ambiguous manner, the government ignored the threat Hamas - which is supported by Iran and works in concert with Hizbullah and al-Qaida - poses to Israel's survival.

Responding to those critics Olmert defended his government's contradictory decisions by castigating his detractors as "fear-mongers." Olmert further stated: "There is no reason to terrify the State of Israel by claiming that the sky has fallen."

Olmert and his colleagues justified their limited steps against Hamas by saying that they were motivated by "humanitarian" considerations. Foreign

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Minister Tzipi Livni told reporters that Israel wants to prevent a "humanitarian crisis" in the PA. Were such a crisis to unfold, Livni warned, Israel would be blamed for it.

Livni, like Olmert and all other Kadima spokesmen, further maintained that by acting in such a limited manner, the government is safeguarding international support generally, and US support specifically, for Israel's bid to isolate the Hamas-led PA.

PERHAPS THE strongest indication that the Olmert interim government has no idea how to craft national strategies or advance Israel's national interest is the fact that the US Congress and the Bush administration are both taking much clearer stands against Hamas than Israel's government.

Perversely, far from working to build a strong and unambiguous international consensus against the Hamas-ruled PA, the Olmert government is undermining the efforts of Israel's friends in the US Congress. Its contradictory moves toward the Hamas-led PA serve to undercut Israel's supporters in Washington while strengthening the leftist American Jewish groups now working feverishly to scuttle a concerted US response to the Hamas takeover of the PA.

Immediately after the PA election results were announced, US Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, who chairs the House of Representatives Subcommittee on the Middle East and Central Asia, submitted a bill that updates US policy toward the PA in response to the Hamas takeover. Her bill, which enjoys wide support in both houses of Congress and is backed by AIPAC and other mainstream American Jewish organizations, would end not only all US direct assistance to the PA, but also bar US support for non-governmental organizations and UN agencies operating in the PA areas that have any links whatsoever to terrorism.

Furthermore, the Ros-Lehtinen bill designates the PA as a terrorist sanctuary. In line with this designation, the legislation bars PA officials from receiving visas to enter the US; bars the PA from having representative offices in the US; and places travel restrictions on PA and PLO representatives to the UN.

Finally, the bill bars US diplomats from having any contact of any kind with members of Palestinian terror groups including Hamas, the Aksa Martyr Brigades, Islamic Jihad and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

AS OPPOSED to other Congressional actions taken against the PA in the past, the proposed legislation does not include a presidential waiver that would allow the administration to ignore the law if the president deemed it necessary for national security reasons. For this reason, the State Department opposes its passage. But even the State Department - which has distinguished itself for over 20 years mainly for its equivocation regarding Palestinian terrorism - has minced no words about its view of the Hamas-led PA.

Last Friday a State Department spokesman publicly demanded that the PA return \$50 million in direct US assistance which was transferred to the PA before the elections. For its part, the Olmert government has made no similar demand for the return of the \$50 million in tax revenues that it transferred to the PA after the Hamas electoral victory.

As well, on Sunday the US Treasury Department blocked the assets of KindHearts charitable organization. That group, which is based in Toledo, Ohio, was determined to be a terrorist organization because it funds Hamas. According to the Akron, Ohio, Beacon Journal, since its founding in 2002 KindHearts has raised and transferred some \$4 million per year to Hamas.

As the actions of Congress and the Bush administration show, the US continues to define Hamas as a global terrorist organization, and is abiding by US laws regarding terrorist organizations in its dealings with the Hamas-led PA.

In light of this the Olmert government's halting and confused steps against the Hamas-led PA seem all the more ridiculous.

THE ONLY constituency in the US that has galvanized around the Israeli government's incoherent response to Hamas's takeover of the PA is the Jewish American Left.

American Friends for Peace Now, the Israel Policy Forum and the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism are all actively lobbying Congress to derail the Ros-Lehtinen bill. As reported in The Jewish Week, these organizations are trying to bring about the defeat of the proposed legislation because, in their view, it will make it impossible for the US to reward "incremental movement [by Hamas] toward abandoning its traditional commitment to destroy Israel."

One of the excuses the government has given for its refusal to take concerted action against the Hamas-led PA is that it wishes to prevent the PA's "collapse." Yet, in an address last week in Washington, former IDF chief of General Staff Lt. Gen. (res.) Moshe Ya'alon explained: "We should not fear collapse; the experience of Israel's security operations in recent years shows that Palestinian society will not collapse - as the word is commonly interpreted - even under extreme conditions. Municipalities, for example, continued to operate and provide services even at the height of Israel military actions against the PA."

Ya'alon further explained, "It must be remembered that the Palestinian people elected Hamas with full awareness of its terrorist nature. It is therefore highly important that the international community send a clear message that terrorism does not pay."

Sadly, Ya'alon's clear and rational statements, which enjoy the support of the US government and the American people and are already codified in US law, are undermined by the Israeli government and by a handful of leftist

Jewish American organizations.

Through its ambiguous and contradictory policies toward the PA since the elections, far from acting to forge an international consensus against the Hamas-led PA, the Olmert government is undercutting US resolve to isolate it. In so doing it is strengthening the positions of Russia, Turkey, the Arab League and France, which advocate embracing Hamas as a legitimate political force. (Jerusalem Post Feb 20)

The Cartoon Jihad By Olivier Guitta

The Muslim Brotherhood's project for dominating the West.

It is now abundantly clear that the recent murderous protests over cartoons of the prophet Muhammad published in a Danish newspaper last September were anything but spontaneous. The actions of Islamist agitators and financiers have deliberately drummed up rage among far-flung extremists otherwise ignorant of the Danish press. The usual suspects--the regimes in Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Iran--have profited from the spread of the disorders, and even the likes of tiny Kuwait has reportedly offered funds to spur demonstrations throughout France. More important, however, and perhaps less widely understood, the cartoon jihad is tailor-made to advance the Muslim Brotherhood's long-term worldwide strategy for establishing Islamic supremacy in the West.

As first reported by the Italian terrorism expert Lorenzo Vidino on the Counterterrorism Blog, one of Denmark's leading Islamists, Imam Ahmed Abu-Laban, led a delegation late last year to visit influential figures in the Muslim world. He took with him a dossier of cartoons, both those that had been published and others, much more offensive, of dubious provenance. One place he took his road show was Qatar, where he briefed Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi, a prominent leader of the Muslim Brotherhood and a star of Al Jazeera.

Even after the riots began, Abu-Laban continued his meddling. On February 4, he told Islamonline.net that Danish demonstrators were going to burn Korans in the streets of Copenhagen, a falsehood that nevertheless added fuel to the fire.

Abu-Laban's extremist connections are well established. A Palestinian who is close to the Muslim Brotherhood, he was expelled from the United Arab Emirates in 1984 for his fiery sermons and denunciations of local leaders. According to Vidino, he served as translator and assistant to Talaal Fouad Qassim, top leader of the Egyptian terrorist group Gamaa Islamiya, in the mid-1990s. During the Iraq war, he called the Danish prime minister "an American puppet." In August, he told the Washington Post that the Danes "have made immigrants pay the price. Muslims have become the scapegoat. They think we will undermine their culture and their values."

Abu-Laban's labors were not in vain, and everywhere the loudest protests have come from the Muslim Brotherhood. On February 3 in Paris, Larbi Kechat, an imam linked to the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood, said, "The most abject terrorism is the symbolic kind, which spreads unlimited violence." Meanwhile, in Qatar, al-Qaradawi was calling for an "international day of anger for God and his prophet," describing the cartoonists as "blasphemers" and Europeans as "cowards." Acknowledging the latter's role, the pan-Arab daily Asharq Al-Awsat, in London, stated on February 8, "The issue disappeared from the radar until Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi, the mufti of Al Jazeera TV, seized upon it and called for Muslims worldwide to protest."

Finally, according to the Moroccan daily Le Matin, the U.S. branch of the Muslim Brotherhood, the Muslim American Society (MAS), called on Muslims everywhere to use their economic power to punish European countries where the cartoons were published. After French and German newspapers reprinted the controversial cartoons, MAS executive director Mahdi Bray commented, "Denmark has already paid an economic price for disrespecting Islam. If France and Germany want to be next, then so be it."

THAT THE MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD would seek to inflame this controversy makes perfect sense, given the organization's Islamist philosophy and past links to al Qaeda. What may not be sufficiently appreciated, however, is the extent of the Brotherhood's deliberate planning for an Islamist takeover of the West--and how neatly the cartoon jihad conforms to its strategy.

A new book published by Le Seuil in Paris in October may further Western understanding of this reality. Written by the Swiss investigative reporter Sylvain Besson and not yet available in English, it publicizes the discovery and contents of a Muslim Brotherhood strategy document entitled "The Project," hitherto little known outside the highest counterterrorism circles.

Besson's book, *La conquête de l'Occident: Le projet secret des Islamistes* (The Conquest of the West: The Islamists' Secret Project), recounts how, in November 2001, Swiss authorities acting on a special request from the White House entered the villa of a man named Yusuf Nada in Campione, a small Italian enclave on the eastern shore of Lake Lugano in Switzerland. Nada was the treasurer of the Al Taqwa bank, which allegedly funneled money to al Qaeda. In the course of their search of Nada's house, investigators stumbled onto "The Project," an unsigned, 14-page document dated December 1, 1982.

One of the few Western officials to have studied the document before the publication of Besson's book is Juan Zarate, named White House counterterrorism czar in May 2005 and before that assistant secretary of the

treasury for terrorist financing. Zarate calls "The Project" the Muslim Brotherhood's master plan for "spreading their political ideology," which in practice involves systematic support for radical Islam. Zarate told Besson, "The Muslim Brotherhood is a group that worries us not because it deals with philosophical or ideological ideas but because it defends the use of violence against civilians."

"The Project" is a roadmap for achieving the installation of Islamic regimes in the West via propaganda, preaching, and, if necessary, war. It's the same idea expressed by Sheikh Qaradawi in 1995 when he said, "We will conquer Europe, we will conquer America, not by the sword but by our Dawa [proselytizing]."

Thus, "The Project" calls for "putting in place a watchdog system for monitoring the [Western] media to warn all Muslims of the dangers and international plots fomented against them." Another long-term effort is to "put in place [among Muslims in the West] a parallel society where the group is above the individual, godly authority above human liberty, and the holy scripture above the laws."

A European secret service agent interviewed by Besson explains that "the project is going to be a real danger in ten years: We'll see the emergence of a parallel system, the creation of 'Muslim Parliaments.' Then the slow destruction of our institutions will begin."

One point emphasized in "The Project" is that Muslims must constantly work to support Islamic Dawa and all the groups around the globe engaged in jihad. Also vital is to "keep the Ummah [the Muslim community] in a jihad frame of mind" and--no surprise here--"to breed a feeling of resentment towards the Jews and refuse any form of coexistence with them." (On February 2, At-Tajdid, a Moroccan Islamist daily close to the Brotherhood, explained to its readers that the Danish cartoons were "a Zionist provocation aimed at reviving the conflict between the West and the Muslim nation.")

By inflaming a controversy such as the current one, the Muslim Brotherhood attempts to widen the rift between the West and Islam. It specifically targets Muslim communities living in the West, aiming to radicalize their moderate elements by continually pointing out the supposed "Islamophobia" all around them. Right on cue, the Saudi daily Al Watan reports that the Council of Islamic Countries decided in December to create a worldwide Islamophobia watchdog organization that will lobby for the adoption of "anti-Islamophobia" laws, as well as promoting a common position against states or organizations it sees as attacking Islam.

Under the scheme outlined in "The Project," the Muslim Brotherhood would seek to become the indispensable interlocutor of Western governments on issues relating not only to Islam but also to international issues touching the Islamic world, notably the Israeli-Arab conflict, the war in Iraq, and even the war on terror.

The same approach turns up in Qaradawi's 1990 book *Priorities of the Islamic Movement in the Coming Phase*. Qaradawi sees the presence of large Muslim populations in the West as a major opportunity. For him, "the Islamic presence" in the West is necessary "to defend the interests of the Muslim Nation and the land of Islam against the hostility and disinformation of anti-Islamic movements." He actually calls on Western Muslim communities to reform their host countries.

The cartoon jihad has been a godsend for Islamists throughout the world. For the past year, Muslim lobbies in Europe have been pushing for the adoption of blasphemy laws by the United Nations, the European Union, and the nations of Europe. Predictably, Qaradawi endorsed this cause in his sermon of February 3 (translated and posted on the web by the Middle East Media Research Institute): "The governments must be pressured to demand that the U.N. adopt a clear resolution or law that categorically prohibits affronts to prophets." Like the cartoon jihad, it is a ploy straight out of the Muslim Brotherhood playbook--and, most worryingly, a move likely to have strong appeal to Muslim moderates. (Weekly Standard Feb 20)

Why No Nukes for Iran?: The rules of the game. By Victor Davis Hanson

How many times have we heard the following whining and yet received no specific answers from our leaders?

- "Israel has nuclear weapons, so why single out Iran?"
- "Pakistan got nukes and we lived with it."
- "Who is to say the United States or Russia should have the bomb and not other countries?"
- "Iran has promised to use its reactors for peaceful purposes, so why demonize the regime?"

In fact, the United States has a perfectly sound rationale for singling out Iran to halt its nuclear proliferation. At least six good reasons come to mind, not counting the more obvious objection over Iran's violation of U.N. non-proliferation protocols. It is past time that we spell them out to the world at large.

First, we cannot excuse Iran by acknowledging that the Soviet Union, Communist China, North Korea, and Pakistan obtained nuclear weapons. In each case of acquisition, Western foreign-policy makers went into a crisis mode, as anti-liberal regimes gained stature and advantage by the ability to destroy Western cities.

A tragic lapse is not corrected by yet another similar mistake, especially since one should learn from the errors of the past. The logic of "They did it, so

why can't I?" would lead to a nuclearized globe in which our daily multifarious wars, from Darfur to the Middle East, would all assume the potential to go nuclear. In contrast, the fewer the nuclear players, the more likely deterrence can play some role. There is no such thing as abstract hypocrisy when it is a matter of Armageddon.

Second, it is a fact that full-fledged democracies are less likely to attack one another. Although they are prone to fighting — imperial Athens and republican Venice both were in some sort of war about three out of four years during the 5th century B.C. and the 16th century respectively — consensual governments are not so ready to fight like kind. In contemporary terms that means that there is no chance whatsoever that an anti-American France and an increasingly anti-French America would, as nuclear democracies, attack each other. Russia, following the fall of Communism, and its partial evolution to democracy, poses less threat to the United States than when it was a totalitarian state.

It would be regrettable should Taiwan, Japan, South Korea, or Germany go nuclear — but not the catastrophe of a nuclear Pakistan that, with impunity de facto, offers sanctuary to bin Laden and the planners of 9/11. The former governments operate under a free press, open elections, and free speech, and thus their war-making is subject to a series of checks and balances. Pakistan is a strongman's heartbeat away from an Islamic theocracy. And while India has volatile relations with its Islamic neighbor, the world is not nearly as worried about its arsenal as it is about autocratic Pakistan's.

Third, there are a number of rogue regimes that belong in a special category: North Korea, Iran, Syria, and Cuba, unfree states whose leaders have sought global attention and stature through sponsoring insurrection and terrorism beyond their borders. If it is scary that Russia, China, and Pakistan are now nuclear, it is terrifying that Kim Jong Il has the bomb, or that President Ahmadinejad might. Islamic fundamentalism or North Korean Stalinism might be antithetical to scientific advancement, but it is actually conducive to nuclear politics. When such renegade regimes go nuclear they gain the added lunic edge: "We are either crazy or have nothing to lose or both — but you aren't." In nuclear poker, the appearance of derangement is an apparent advantage.

Fourth, there are all sorts of scary combinations — petrodollars, nukes, terrorism, and fanaticism. But Iran is a uniquely fivefold danger. It has enough cash to buy influence and exemption; nuclear weapons to threaten civilization; oil reserves to blackmail a petroleum hungry world; terrorists to either find sanctuary under a nuclear umbrella or to be armed with dirty bombs; and it has a leader who wishes either to take his entire country into paradise, or at least back to the eighth century amid the ashes of the Middle East.

Just imagine the present controversy over the cartoons in the context of President Ahmadinejad with his finger on a half-dozen nuclear missiles pointed at Copenhagen.

Fifth, any country that seeks "peaceful" nuclear power and is completely self-sufficient in energy production is de facto suspect. Iran has enough natural gas to meet its clean electrical generation needs for centuries. The only possible rationale for its multi-billion-dollar program of building nuclear reactors, and spending billions more to hide and decentralize them, is to obtain weapons, and thus to gain clout and attention in a manner that otherwise is not warranted by either Iranian conventional forces, cultural influence, or economic achievement.

Sixth, the West is right to take on a certain responsibility to discourage nuclear proliferation. The technology for such weapons grew entirely out of Western science and technology. In fact, the story of nuclear proliferation is exclusively one of espionage, stealthy commerce, or American and European-trained native engineers using their foreign-acquired expertise. Pakistan, North Korea, and Iran have no ability themselves to create such weapons, in the same manner that Russia, China, and India learned or stole a craft established only from the knowledge of European-American physics and industrial engineering. Any country that cannot itself create such weapons is probably not going to ensure the necessary protocols to guard against their misuse or theft.

We can argue all we want over the solution — it is either immoral to use military force or immoral not to use it; air strikes are feasible or will be an operational disaster; dissidents will rise up or have already mostly been killed or exiled; Russia and China will help solve or will instead enjoy our dilemma; Europe is now on board or is already triangulating; the U.N. will at last step in, or is more likely to damn the United States than Teheran.

Yet where all parties agree is that a poker-faced United States seems hesitant to act until moments before the missiles are armed, and is certainly not behaving like the hegemon or imperialist power so caricatured by Michael Moore and an array of post-September 11 university-press books. Until there is firm evidence that Iran has the warheads ready, the administration apparently does not wish to relive the nightmare of the past three years in which striking Iran will conjure up all the old Iraqi-style hysteria about unilateralism, preemption, incomplete or cooked intelligence, imperialism, and purported hostility toward a Muslim country.

In the greatest irony of all, the Left (who must understand well the nightmarish scenario of a fascist Iran with nuclear weapons) is suddenly bewildered by George Bush's apparent multilateral caution. The Senate Democrats don't know whether to attack the administration now for its

nonchalance or to wait and second-guess them once the bombs begin to fall.

Either way, no one should doubt that a nuclear Iran would end the entire notion of global adjudication of nuclear proliferation — as well as remain a recurrent nightmare to civilization itself. (National Review Feb 17)

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Between Hamas and Kadima By Israel Harel

In the late 1990s, a group began working on various scenarios for Israel's future. The heart of our demands, said a prominent Arab group participant, is for equal rights. After the attack on the Twin Towers in New York, some of the group's Jewish participants visited the man, a professor at the Technion and the head of an Arab local council in the north. This time, he presented, with great pathos, a totally different scenario. The powerful waves of Islam will close in on you from all sides, he said. Your state is temporary. Aren't the waves something that threatens both you and us, he was asked. After all, you are a Christian and even have a communist past. No, he answered. I identify with the phenomenon, and am part of this surge of waves.

Some six years after these prophetic words Shin Bet head Yuval Diskin says that Hamas' victory could influence radical elements among Israeli Arabs. However, the embers, to use another image suggested by the Arab intellectual, and as Diskin knows, are always burning. The Palestinian war of terror ignited small fires, in the form of collaboration of Israeli Arabs with terrorists, as well as a big bonfire, albeit short-lived, when the Palestinian Israelis tried to revolt in October 2000.

At the most recent Herzliya Conference, Ahmed Tibi spoke openly about "national and territorial autonomy," an upgrade of the "cultural autonomy" he and others had demanded earlier, when they felt that Israeli public opinion was not yet ready for a national autonomy demand. And even "cultural autonomy" is a step up from demanding "a state for all its citizens," which at the time scared most of Israel's Jews. Today, in the moral, ideological and political fog that shrouds the amorphous party that is likely to win the elections, an Arab plan for eating away at the territorial and political sovereignty of the Jewish people - and within the borders of the State of Israel - is legitimate. Certainly no one thinks that because of it, Tibi's list should be disqualified from running in the elections.

Hamas' victory will lead to the establishment of forward bases, especially in the Gaza Strip, comprised of Islamic forces that represent terrorist organizations and countries such as Iran, whose goal is the destruction of Israel. Here is the beginning, or if you will, the continuation of the realization of the vision of waves that will flood over us from here. This is the spirit Hamas represents. The success of a small terrorist organization - most of whose leaders have been eliminated - in causing the Israeli flight from Gush Katif symbolizes the beginning, and perhaps no longer just the beginning, of the arrival of the overpowering waves. And were it not for the strategic weaknesses and mistakes of the Israeli government's leaders, it is doubtful whether these waves would have reached our shores. And it is doubtful whether Hamas, which is riding on, or directing, them, would have won its big victory.

Unfortunately, the plans of Israel's forces that granted Hamas its political and territorial victories are to continue with them. And in so doing, they will, of course, strengthen the position of the organization, which is closely associated with the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and Hizbullah in Lebanon. And because of this, as it is, after all, a victory for the Arab world, and not just for it, there is no doubt as to its source, the terrorist acts that brought these achievements for them - elementary logic that the blinded Israelis refuse to follow - will only increase. Reacting with fear, panic and flight to the terror convinced the Arabs, headed by Hamas, that against the frantic Jews unable to take a deep breath and who lack the desire to achieve victory, they have a lethal weapon in their hands with an (almost) non-conventional effect.

In just over a month, Israelis will likely enthrone Kadima, which, in its previous incarnation, brought about these traditions. And in so doing, they will be continuing the masquerade and running away from a real confrontation with the strategic mistakes of the leaders of this party, which led, among other things, to Hamas' ascension to power. In contrast, the Palestinians chose Hamas specifically because it provides a genuine and clear answer to the aspirations of its people. Its leaders are not corrupt and also do not trade in, even for tactical purposes, their religious and national objectives - including a central one calling for the elimination of the Zionist-Jewish entity from the face of the earth.

And in Israel, once again the escapist and overused line from the days when Arafat and the Palestinian covenant was given legitimacy: True, the Hamas covenant exists, but they do not really intend to implement it; realpolitik will obligate them to revise it. And just as on the eve of the Oslo Accords, Israelis and Palestinians are already meeting abroad - and led by top Israeli figures from those days - with the goal of moving Hamas and Israel closer. They haven't learned, they haven't forgotten. It is as if since Oslo there have not been thousands of victims of terrorism; as if the results of the war of terrorism, the fruits of the Oslo Accords, have not eroded Israel's status in the eyes of itself and in the eyes of the world; as if there are no dark waves of Islam threatening from near and far. It is all so familiar, and so depressing. (Haaretz Apr 23)

Rose-Colored Glasses By Barbara Sofer

I recently attended a party for a girl named Gili - not a birthday party but an eye-glasses party. Gili was the first in her nursery school class to get glasses, and the other three-year-olds were invited by her perceptive and sensitive parents to turn a potentially distressing moment into a cause for celebration. Gili's aunt, adroit with scissors and iridescent pipe cleaners, shepherded the tiny classmates through an activity utilizing butterfly-shaped stickers, stars, colored markers and glue sticks. At a critical moment, each preschooler had to choose a shade of cellophane for the lenses. "How do you want to see the world - all green or yellow or rosy?" she asked them.

Like Munchkins in *The Wizard of Oz*, the lenses would determine the way they'd see the world. Before you could say Jacob Robinson, all the three-year olds were wearing glasses, not just Gili. Only theirs were colored. As the little boys and girls walked around with their colored glasses, I realized it was a fitting analogy for Israeli society. For all of our trouble-honed Israeli astuteness, we're accustomed to seeing the world through lenses of our own making. And I also realized that if we want to secure the future of these precious youngsters, we have to take off our own rose-colored glasses.

IT'S OUR relationship with the Palestinians that I keep thinking of. Don't you think that it's more than a little disturbing, considering the scope of the Hamas victory, that all our local experts failed to foresee it? How quickly we forget the viciousness of more than four years of terror, each murderous bombing joyfully celebrated on the streets of Gaza and the West Bank. The early days of the intifada were the late chairman Arafat's attempt to gain the concessions he was unable to get at Camp David. I've asked many Palestinians why they continued even though it meant additional checkpoints, retaliatory bombing and ultimately a wall that would prevent them from entering the modern state next door. In embarrassment, they would only talk about their anger. I finally realized that the Palestinians continued the years of bus and cafe bombings out of satisfaction at the horrors they could inflict on us.

A few reminders? At least three bombings were initially directed at hospitals - a bomber on Rehov Hanevi'im in Jerusalem allegedly wanted to blow up newborns at Bikur Holim Hospital. The bomber in the Matza restaurant in Haifa was allegedly on her way to Rambam Hospital. And more recently a bomber who had been treated at Soroka Hospital in Beersheba was on her way to destroy that home of healing.

Then there was the schoolteacher who detonated himself in the middle of a double bus full of parents with children. Remember the father from Bethlehem who went on TV the night after his son blew up a bus and wished that his other nine children would follow their brother's footsteps?

Each bombing was cheered. These weren't random expressions of a few fanatics, but the manifestation of the loathing felt for us by the Palestinian people. All through the intifada, the Palestinian polls showed that huge majorities of men and women supported the terror.

These emotions don't just go away. Only the security fence, targeted assassinations by Israel and a certain exhaustion have, thank God, cut down the number of attacks, not a change of heart or renunciation, nor an abandoned determination to destroy Israel.

So they voted Hamas, not for the reasons that those who failed to read the popular mood now give as explanation - but because they believe in the demonic ideals of Hamas.

The old saying that people get the government they deserve may not be true when despots take control, but it's certainly true where adult men and women get to cast their vote.

THE PROOF of the people's ability to have their voices heard was seen recently in Israel's Labor Party primaries. The polls and pundits agreed that a neophyte politician named Avishay Braverman would come in around 15th. But most of more than 100,000 Labor Party members liked the idea of having the pragmatic and visionary head of Ben-Gurion University, someone who already has impressive accomplishments, among the country's potential leaders. They checked the box near his name. Braverman came in third, and would have done as well in open primaries in any of the parties.

That's the beauty of democratic elections - you get to see what the people really want, not a narrow reflection of your own tinted world view, whatever that may be.

We shouldn't have been surprised that Hamas won, and we should accept at face value the unhappy truth that the Palestinian people voted the leaders of their choice into power. European nations may romanticize everyone's terrorists but their own into philosopher revolutionaries, but we should know better, even though it's hard to internalize just how much we're hated.

We have elections coming up, too. Whether we think we should shun this enemy or negotiate, we shouldn't fool ourselves into believing that our local version of Osama bin Laden is any more likely to metamorphose into an Anwar Sadat than was Yasser Arafat. As the optometrist says: open your eyes wide. We owe it to our kids to do exactly that.

Let's leave the rose-colored glasses for the three-year-olds. (Jerusalem Post Feb 16)
