

Events...

May 18-26

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Quote for the Week...

"After spending years picking up body parts at terror attack scenes, I have come to the conclusion that the time has come to learn to live with one another, not just by each others side. I state with absolute certainty that for me, lighting an Independence Day torch is a *Kiddush Hashem* (sanctification of G-d's name). It is time we realize they our enemies do not differentiate between Orthodox and non-Orthodox, left-wing or right-wing when they indiscriminately detonate bombs around the country. My painful experiences at terror attack scenes have led me to the understanding that unity is of paramount importance, above the issues that divide us." ZAKA leader and operations officer of the anti-Zionist Eida Hareidit Yehuda Meshi-Zahav, who was among 12 Israelis honored to light a torch at the ceremony marking the 55th Independence Day of the State of Israel. He explained that he remembers Independence Day being marked as a day of mourning in his native Meah Shearim neighborhood of Jerusalem. (IsraelNN.com May 5)

Commentary...

Don't Stop Fighting Terror Jerusalem Post Editorial

Yasser Arafat and Mahmoud Abbas walked into the meeting of Palestinian legislature together, sat next to each other, and were otherwise as inseparable as their long histories as comrades in arms. Now the latter, known as Abu Mazen, has been forced on the former as prime minister, a powerless position in most Arab regimes.

The international community, including the United States, has accepted the notion that Abbas should be given a chance. He has, after all, for some time been calling amorphously for an end to the "military" attacks against Israel, on the grounds that they have become counterproductive.

The order of the day has become to help Abbas in his power struggle with Arafat, so that Abbas can end the Palestinian offensive that has taken so many Israeli and Palestinian lives with so little result. But the drive to "help Abu Mazen" only makes sense if that help will produce a positive result, rather than wasting further time and lives on propping up what is essentially a facade for real change.

Let us work backwards for a moment from the goal, and see if Abbas's appointment fits the goal. The immediate goal, Israel and the international community generally agree, is either that all Palestinian organizations end their terror offensive on their own, or the Palestinian Authority forces and end to terrorism against Israel.

Let's further take the Hamas and Islamic Jihad at their word that they will not voluntarily lay down their arms, let alone give them into to the Palestinian Authority. Why should they? Neither Arafat, nor Abbas, nor Muhammad Dahlan, who some think might implement a crackdown, have given any indication that they intend to confront Hamas, Islamic Jihad, or even Fatah (which took responsibility for the suicide bombing in Tel Aviv yesterday morning) by force.

ISRAEL NEWS

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

This week's issue is dedicated by
Larry & Sue Zeifman
in honour of the birth of their grand-daughter
Hadar Zehava Tifferet Deutsch
in Jerusalem.
Mazel Tov!

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On the contrary, the widespread expectation is Abbas and Dahlan plan to reopen the failed inter-Palestinian talks that began in Cairo. It seems unlikely that such talks will yield any agreement, but if they did, it would be to suspend suicide bombings within Israel proper while continuing terrorist attacks beyond the Green Line. Obviously, no diplomatic process can begin while such attacks continue. Further, even if the terror ceased, all the terrorist organizations would remain

armed and intact, waiting for the "cease fire" to fall apart.

There is a reason that even the "best case" scenarios under the circumstance turn out to be dead ends. Call it the Gorbachev or Khatami syndrome.

Just before the Soviet Union collapsed, Mikhail Gorbachev was hailed as a great reformer who must be helped. In retrospect, it is clear that Gorbachev was trying to save the system, not destroy it, that the system was unreformable, and that only after complete collapse could real change begin.

In Iran, Mohammad Khatami was also hailed as a reformer, and the West was thrilled by his talk of a "dialogue of civilizations." After years of experience, it is now clear that Khatami supports Iran's terrorist foreign policy and, despite his popularity and title of "president," that domestically he is powerless to implement real reform, and that the only solution in Iran is regime change.

Another example, from a different angle, is Iraq, where even after Saddam has lost power, the lack of proof that he is dead and gone could complicate the formation of an new constructive Iraqi government.

The point of all these examples is that in dictatorships, particularly those long dominated by a single, untouchable leader, half-way regime changes don't real exist and certainly don't work. So let's be generous and say this is a transition period to real, full regime change. What's the problem with that?

The problem is that this transition period, assuming it is one, will not be benign, but a period of continuing and perhaps increased terror.

Over seven days during the recent Passover holiday, seven suicide bombers attempted attacks including the one who did blow up in Kfar Sava train station, killing the security guard who stopped him. Yesterday's suicide bombing at a Tel Aviv night spot killed three and wounded 26.

Further, Israel is now under pressure to "help Abu Mazen," which is taken to mean easing up on its military operations. If Israel unilaterally eases up on its constant pursuit

of terrorists, the result will be to give those much depleted organizations a chance to recover, as IDF [Chief of Staff Moshe Yaalon] just told a Knesset committee. Yaalon, incidentally, also said this would be the result if Hamas and Islamic Jihad did agree to a temporary cease fire.

The objective of Israel and the US, therefore, should not be to "help Abu Mazen," unless what is meant by that is to hold him to the only effective standard, which is the complete dismantling of all terrorist organizations.

In the meantime, the US has no moral right to request, nor Israel to accede, to any diminution in the IDF campaign to protect Israelis from Palestinian terrorism. (Jerusalem Post May 1)

Peace and the God of Martyrdom By Saul Singer

Since roughly 1967, the West has seen solving the Palestinian problem as the key to peace and stability in this region.

The war in Iraq was partly an implicit admission that this paradigm has failed and is in need of reversal: The road to peace lay through defeating Arab radicalism, therefore it ran through Baghdad. It would seem natural, then, that post-Saddam US diplomacy would begin with the welcoming of Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) as Palestinian Authority prime minister and the presentation of the Quartet's road map to the parties.

So why are the Palestinians and Europe happy, while Israel seems worried and nervous? Why does Israel seem to feel threatened when a major strategic enemy has been wiped out and there is a fresh opportunity to pursue peace?

For those trained to believe that Israeli land-hunger is the perennial obstacle to peace, jitters in Jerusalem make perfect sense. But this standard picture of Israel avoiding and the Palestinians pursuing a land-for-peace deal is a misreading of the situation.

Think of it this way. Let's say the heart of a deal is statehood for peace.

When Yitzhak Rabin and Yasser Arafat shook hands at Oslo's signing on the White House lawn a decade ago, the idea of Palestinian statehood was not only an anathema to Israelis, but had just a few years before been ruled out by US secretary of state George Shultz.

Over the following decade, on the Israeli side, the prospect of a Palestinian state went through a sea change from an unutterable taboo to something approaching a consensus. Remarkably, this consensus has remained largely intact despite the collapse of the 2000 Camp David summit and the brutal terrorism of the past 30 months.

In 1993, if an independent Palestine was unthinkable for Israelis, peace with Israel was, despite the rhetoric of Oslo, unthinkable for the Palestinians. Before Oslo, the PLO was formally dedicated to destroying Israel and the symbol of the homes Palestinian refugees left in Israel encapsulated the ethos of the "right of return." Oslo was built on the theory that while Israelis got used to the idea of a Palestinian state, Palestinians would part with the idea that they could return to Israel (most Palestinians have never lived in Israel).

No one thought this would be easy. When Oslo was signed the right of return more accurately described as the demand of displacement was as unacceptable to Israelis across the political spectrum as it was axiomatic to Palestinians.

Oslo's fundamental failure was that the Israeli evolution toward the Palestinian position was not reciprocated. Throughout the past decade, even in Oslo's heyday, there was no Palestinian effort to prepare themselves to limit their demands to their own state and abandon the idea of moving into Israel.

Keys remain a potent symbol of Palestinian propaganda and mythology to this day. Having built up the notion of return, there is no way it can be turned off in an instant, and there is little indication that Abu Mazen, let alone Arafat, is prepared to try.

Further, if the shooting stopped tomorrow, we would not be back to the square one of 1993, or of 2000, but to a situation more difficult than when Oslo was signed. For the last 30 months, the Palestinians have been glorifying terrorism on an almost hourly basis. It is a measure of how deeply the ethos of "martyrdom" has penetrated that even Abu Mazen's speech, hailed for its moderation, was permeated with it.

Much attention was paid to Abu Mazen's denouncing of "terrorism by any party and in all its shapes and forms both because of our religious and moral traditions and because such methods do not lend support to a just cause like ours, but rather destroy it." But Arab states routinely distinguish between terror, which they are against, and attacking Israelis, which is called "armed resistance."

In almost the same breath as Abu Mazen condemned terror, he praised the "courageous uprising against Israel's aggression" and claimed that Palestinians had "fought with honor." How would a Palestinian learn from this that suicide bombings or shooting children in their beds is wrong rather heroic? Why didn't Abu Mazen simply condemn suicide bombings, which would have gone far to remove this ambiguity?

If Abu Mazen is unable to speak clearly against terrorism it is hard to see how he can act clearly against it.

At the same time as Israelis were drumming into themselves that there are no military solutions and that a Palestinian state was not only safe, but necessary to preserve Israel as a democratic and Jewish state, the Palestinians have compounded the myth of return with the god of martyrdom.

How are the Palestinians to deprogram themselves of ideas that are incompatible with peace? Hard to say. But we do know the task can't be done until it is begun. And once begun, it seems naive to believe it can happen overnight.

The conclusion is that the Palestinians have a lot of catching up to do to reach the point where they can really accept that the Jewish people has a right to national self-determination in this land. There is not much Israel can do to hasten this process, except to block all the alternatives. The fall of Saddam Hussein was a massive psychological shock in the right direction.

The fall of Arafat, whenever it happens, will be another. At this point, until further notice, fighting terror and its sponsors is the greatest educational tool, and therefore the most effective peace process. (Jerusalem Post May 2)

A Matter of Honor By Steven Zak

It's a matter of honor.

We ended the tyranny of Saddam Hussein in but a few weeks -- but we didn't do it alone. The honorable course of action would be, at the least, to acknowledge that we had some very significant help from our friends.

I'm not talking about the Brits, the Aussies or the Poles, who all, generously, offered manpower. I'm talking about the Israelis, who provided brainpower.

Our capable ally not only supplied us with weaponry for use in Iraq, including Israeli-armored bulldozers and Israeli-made pilotless planes, but, as reported in USA Today, played "a key role in U.S. preparations" for the war, even "helping to train soldiers and Marines for urban warfare, conducting clandestine surveillance missions in the western Iraqi desert and allowing the

United States to place combat supplies" within her borders.

We also went to the Israelis for advice on such things as how "to spot a suicide attacker on his way to attack, how to deal with roadblocks, overpowering a suicide bomber," reported the Israeli daily Ma'ariv. That paper reported too that before the start of war Israeli Defense Minister Sha'ul Mofaz "was summoned for a few consultations" with Washington and "recommended a great increase in the number of soldiers (from 50,000 to a quarter million), to combine air strikes with broad ground operations, to attack Baghdad from many directions and be careful not to wind up in a death trap inside the city. In the end, the Americans are doing precisely that."

One can only guess, then, how many American lives the Israelis are responsible for saving.

Also revealed this week, to U.S. Congressman Tom Lantos (D-CA.) by Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, was that the Jewish State played a key role in providing critical initial intelligence that helped locate U.S. Army PFC Jessica Lynch and other American military. This, according to the New York Post and Israeli mass circulation daily, Maariv.

Shamefully, though, we have shunned our ally from manifest participation in our "coalition of the willing." Like a faithless teenage girl afraid to be seen with an unpopular friend, we prefer to associate with Israel out of public view. So rather than welcome our ally to stand beside us openly -- a powerful statement that we will no longer pander to the Arab world's rejection of Israel's existence -- we instead treat that country's friendship as a dirty little secret.

Our failure to behave honorably toward that loyal ally is nothing new. During the first Gulf War, too, as Israel's then-Defense Minister Moshe Arens writes in his scathing book, "Broken Covenant," Secretary of State James Baker and Defense Secretary Dick Cheney "avoided Israel like the plague." The Americans "seemed to have forgotten that Israel was their ally."

Today, even the American press is likely to forget. Thus, for instance, before the start of action in Iraq the New York Post wrote that "the United States of America has one wholly reliable ally on this troubled, turbulent and dangerous planet: Great Britain," while the Washington Times opined that "Turkey retains its position as our most underappreciated ally."

Apparently, in politics and punditry, discretion counsels against putting "Israel" and "ally" in the same sentence unless it is whispered.

American reluctance to be associated with causes that might be perceived as "Jewish" dates back at least to World War II when Franklin Roosevelt refused to publicly address the issue of the Nazi death camps because, as Michael Beschloss notes in his book, "The Conquerors," the president was "sensitive to complaints that his government was too abundant with Jews." It is a similar nod toward the sensibilities of anti-Semites that we are reticent about our friendship with the Jewish state.

Blacklisting a friend from our war coalition would be perfidious at any time. But with a gathering movement worldwide trying to isolate Israel through economic, cultural and academic boycotts, our improbity is all the more unconscionable.

But then, so is George Bush's failure to keep his promise of May 2000 that his administration would move the American embassy in Israel to Jerusalem -- "the city Israel has chosen as its capital." And so is the Middle East "peace plan" known as the "roadmap," which, as Israeli columnist Israel Harel put it, "is about to be forced down our throats."

How easily the line blurs between the pretense that we are no friend to Israel and the actuality.

On the more hopeful side, 75 senators and 250 members of the House of Representatives so far have signed a letter to President Bush urging him not to pressure Israel through the roadmap. These statesmen understand the meaning of the Marine Corps creed, *semper fidelis* -- that loyalty is a matter of honor.

The president needs to understand it, too. (JewishWorldReview.com May 1)

A Little Respect, Please Jerusalem Post Editorial

The High Court of Justice, hardly open to suspicion of right-wing bias, dispatched a potent message a few days ago to those in our society who harbor no qualms about exploiting the establishment for their own benefit, while at the same time berating and even delegitimizing it.

This peculiar intellectual climate is especially prevalent in Israel's arts community, where once-radical leftist fringe fads have gradually assumed dominance. Painter Moshe Gershuni lately gave this mindset near-absurd expression. Though he received the state's highest honor, the Israel Prize, he made it clear with much attendant publicity and in-your-face ballyhoo that he would not participate in the awards ceremony on Independence Day.

Gershuni let it be known that he objects to some of the other prize laureates (presumably the likes of Geula Cohen), declines to share the podium with them, and cannot bring himself to shake the hands of those who would award him the prize, including the country's president, prime minister, Knesset speaker, minister of education, and chief justice of the Supreme Court.

Education Minister Limor Livnat reacted swiftly by announcing that

Gershuni cannot expect accolades from the democratically-elected representatives he so despises. She consequently decided to deny him the prize after all.

Had Gershuni acquiesced in the loss of the award, his position could have been viewed as honorable, albeit misguided. Better still, had Gershuni himself refused the prize when it was initially offered him, he could have been seen as having acted with sincerity and in good conscience, regardless of the actual merits of his objections to the awards ceremony.

But Gershuni added insult to injury when he persisted in demanding the NIS50,000 in prize money, maintaining he deserves it, while at the same time reiterating his stated revulsion to those who would confer the honors upon him and hand over the check. In other words, the hands which would put the certificate in his own hands do not deserve to be shaken, and all they represent deserves to be shunned and dismissed.

Perhaps emboldened by past precedents in which the High Court did not shrink from supporting various ostensibly anti-establishment causes, Gershuni sought succor from it, asking the court to order Livnat to pay up without coercing him to be in the same auditorium with her.

The court, however, let Gershuni down and unanimously upheld Livnat's decision. It has yet to publish its legal argumentation, but from what was said in the hearing, it was clear that plain common sense prevailed this time. Justice Theodore Or told Gershuni: "The state is those very persons who will sit on the podium. You cannot choose the people who will hand you the prize. They were chosen by the electorate." Justice Dalia Dorner added in the same vein: "This is the government and it is the one which awards the prize. Next time perhaps another government will do so. This is a democratic state."

Gershuni showed no contrition to the end. Hopefully, however, he and like-minded "free-thinkers" will come around to the realization that they can't have it both ways. Thus far, they have been pampered and nurtured by the very establishment they so relentlessly attack, often with vulgarity rarely matched elsewhere in the world. Not that anti-government antagonism isn't de rigueur in many democracies, but in most of them the very same protesters at least don't vociferously demand sponsorship, funding, facilities, and even friendly publicity from the very same institutions they assail.

We can only wonder if the same contempt evinced towards the duly-elected government of Israel would have been displayed toward Yasser Arafat had he awarded prizes to Israeli artists. Would they then have shunned him, too, or rushed to bask in his limelight and glory in their rebellious posturing?

Thankfully, the High Court could see the erosion of fundamental norms of pluralistic society to which the logic of Gershuni's position could lead. It is fitting indeed that the court's reaffirmation of the need for minimal respect for the democratic legitimacy of the nation's institutions came on the eve of Independence Day. (Jerusalem Post May 4)

Treating the PA like the IRA By Rabbi Berel Wein

As Tony Blair said: 'Clarity is our friend, ambiguity is our enemy'

British Prime Minister Tony Blair, frustrated by the five-year-long attempt to achieve a final settlement of the troubles in Northern Ireland, finally faced reality last week. He said unequivocally that the outcome of the Ulster peace process wholly depended on the IRA. He then posed three questions to the IRA that can be answered simply and directly.

Is the IRA finally ready to forswear terrorist violence as a tactic to achieve its political ends?

Is the IRA prepared to decommission all its weapons so that the process [of disarmament] is complete?

Does the IRA's claim to support the Good Friday Agreement mean the complete and final closure of the conflict?

Blair went on: "I don't think that those questions are very difficult questions. I think that they are susceptible to clear answers, and, because this whole process is about the trust that people need and the confidence that they need, then the answers have to be clear. And the truth is, clarity is our friend in this process and ambiguity is our enemy."

Blair's assessment of the IRA is accurate and his directness at formulating the key issues succinctly is to be commended. At the same time, Blair - together with the EU, UN, Russia and the United States - is a main proponent of the road map plan to end the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Wouldn't it be gratifying if he posed those same three questions to the Palestinian Authority?

Is the PA finally and sincerely prepared to forswear violence and terror as "legitimate means" of obtaining political goals?

Is the PA prepared to abide by its agreements regarding weapons (keeping only those armaments needed for internal security)?

Is the PA ever going to say that any agreement it makes with Israel will constitute the complete and final closure of the conflict?

These questions should have been asked of the Palestinian Authority long ago. But instead of demanding clear and unequivocal answers, most of the world, including the peace-seeking Quartet, has been satisfied to accept ambiguity and vacillation, if not downright falsehoods, from the PA.

As Blair said so well, "Because this whole process is about the trust that people need and the confidence that they need, then the answers have to be clear.

And the truth is, clarity is our friend and ambiguity is our enemy."

Before committing the Quartet's prestige and hurtling down a road which might lead to another dead end, would it not be better to get these questions answered?

There is no one more suitable to pose these questions to the PA - sharply but elegantly - than Blair.

Realistically, I doubt these questions will be posed by any members of the Quartet. I even have the nagging suspicion that the Israeli government itself may not have the fortitude to demand clear answers before taking another leap into the unknown, even though this "whole process is about trust that people need" and there is precious little trust in Israel as regards the Palestinian Authority, its leadership, and its true goals and tactics.

Unless that sense of trust - of confidence that a word is a word and a signature on a document is really worth something - is achieved, no road map will lead to any lasting resolution of the conflict here.

Being eternal optimists, we hope against hope that the paltry reforms forced on Yasser Arafat and the Palestinian Authority may yet mark a true turning point. I have long been convinced that the key to a solution in the Middle East lies with the Arabs, just as the solution in Northern Ireland lies with the IRA. Obviously, Israel will also have to contribute much in order to achieve a settlement. And I am convinced that a large majority of Israelis will support a settlement, even with costly concessions. However, if the "IRA questions" remain unasked - and unanswered - the chances for any meaningful end to the struggle are practically nil. (Jerusalem Post May 4)

Road Map for Legitimizing Terror By Israel Harel

If political gains are, by definition, the main fruit of victory in the battlefield, the road map proves the Palestinians - not Israel - have the upper hand in the war of terror that they initiated.

The attack in Tel Aviv - in the early morning hours after Holocaust Memorial Day and after Holocaust denier Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) was sworn in as the Palestinian Authority's first prime minister - is further proof that Israel does not have enough strength to put an end to that war.

Is it any wonder, then, that the United States is saying to itself: If Israel does not have the determination to put an end to the terror that is persistently striking it, its best friend must take the initiative to stop the bloodbath that Israel has been unable to halt - due to inhibitions that are characteristic of Jews, who are afraid to take the necessary steps, even when they would lead to the prevention of the continuous murder of Israeli citizens.

In order for the road map to have a chance, it must be pro-Palestinian because the initiative, even after 13 months of killing Jews, continues to be in the hands of the Palestinians.

The road map's main danger is not the harsh demands it makes on Israel but its very publication. The Arabs conclude, and rightly so, that America is declaring via the map that the terror against the Jews, unlike terror against the citizens of any other country, pays and is therefore permissible. The road map is also a personal victory for Yasser Arafat, the man who until recently seemed to have fallen, never to rise again.

It can be said that Arafat lost the battle but won the war. What's more, despite the fact that, in principle, his crimes against humanity, particularly in the past two and a half years, are no different from the crimes of Saddam Hussein and all the other war criminals who have butchered civilians, Arafat enjoys immunity like no other leader of mass terror. Perhaps it is because his victims are Jews.

The bulk of his immunity is granted by the Israeli government, which is obligated to act on behalf of the victims who were murdered by his criminal activities. This is because the government, due to characteristic Jewish victims' complexes ("political reasons"), does not dare charge Arafat with war crimes. If this is the nature of the victims' government, how can we complain against the rehabilitation provided by European governments whose representatives do not desist from making pilgrimages to visit him.

It is unfortunate that the Israel Defense Forces, unlike the American army in Iraq, did not manage to grant its government the unequivocal victory that would have enabled it to dictate political and security conditions to the Palestinians. Such a victory would also have restrained the international pressure and prevented the need, certainly from the American's point of view, for the road map.

This would also have created a political-psychological atmosphere that would have made it possible to try Arafat for war crimes, along with the band of terrorists who acted on his behalf, just as the Americans are about to try the war criminals in Iraq and just as the Allied forces, led by the Americans, tried the German war criminals 57 years ago.

We would also be able to drive home the awareness that the blood of Jewish terror victims is just as red as that of Saddam's victims and, believe it or not, as the blood of the Americans who were murdered in the terror attacks. Just imagine what America would do to Saddam, to bin Laden and their minions when they are caught.

Only after 19 months of rampant terror, following the attack at the Park Hotel in Netanya on Seder night (March 27, 2002), did Israel understand that

it was the defensive doctrine that everyone praised, thanks to the reduced military casualty figures, that had practically given the terrorists free reign to organize and carry out the mass-fatality attacks.

Even during Operation Defensive Shield, despite its relative success, the job was not finished and the terrorists remained undaunted. The IDF, like the American army in the 1991 Gulf War, halted the war on the verge of victory, while most of the terror infrastructures, particularly the headquarters and the directive and political leaderships, continued to operate.

Abu Mazen, who is now being told to finish the IDF's job, will smoke out the terrorists with the same vigor, the same efficacy and the same results as his predecessor to the commitment "to dismantle the terrorists infrastructures" - Arafat.

The United States gave us enough leeway to win this war. President George W. Bush even tried to neutralize Arafat, the patriarch of Arab terror. When we did not meet the performance test due to our inhibitions and our failings, and the people continued to bleed, the Americans had to come up with a plan that they, in their mistaken naivete, felt would bring an end to the bloodshed.

And when Israel is ordered to start with "gestures" toward the Palestinians, and later to bear the brunt of the price of implementing the plan, there is no doubt as to who has won the battle. It is no wonder, then, that Arafat's calendar is so full of meetings with foreign ministers. He has been perceived, and rightly so, as the one who has again come out as the political victor in another round of the never-ending terrorist war the Arabs are waging, and will continue to wage, against the existence of the Jewish Zionist state. (Ha'aretz May 1)

The Thought Police By Arlene Peck

For almost thirty years I've been the featured columnist in the National Jewish Post & Opinion. The publisher, who at this writing is 97 years old, never once during that time told me what I could and could not say. Gabriel Cohen was the ultimate newspaperman. Nobel Prize honoree Elie Wiesel once told me that he started his career under Gabe as a "stringer." That was long before me; however, even during my tenure I had never heard the words, "politically correct."

In fact, I happily skipped along, secure in my feelings that whatever I felt as a columnist my paper would see that I was able to air it. However, there were times when I'm sure I angered some and sometimes I even strived to get that reaction. At least from my standpoint, it made them think. And when these readers wrote in about my strong Zionist feelings, that they didn't agree with, I answered, "Aw, but I'm a columnist, not a reporter. I'm able to write about my feelings and not only report the facts." I wrote about how the self-haters disgusted me. And, the horror I felt at Jew-haters such as Dreyfus, Woody Allen and Streisand, who frightened me, I knew I could write a column and it would be published.

Yet, those days are apparently over. I recently returned to the states from London. I wrote two columns about the events concerning the war and any anti-Semitism I might have found. As usual, I sent in my articles and was stunned to receive a call from the editor saying that my columns would not be accepted. It seems that according to three children of the publisher's eight, who are running the paper now, they...feel I am not only politically incorrect but 'mean to the Arabs'. They are distressed that I write 'ugly' things about them." This, dear readers, only one day after the recent bombing in Tel Aviv. Folks, it frightens me. Moreover, it angers me when I encounter Jews who are such self-haters. They would do anything to stop someone whose ideas don't coincide with their own leftist views no matter what the cost. Years ago I wrote a column about the fear I had that the Arabs were traveling to our shores to buy up our country. However, with the leftist tidal wave that has penetrated our schools and yes, even our Jewish newspapers, my fear is no longer solely from the Arabs. It's appalling that there are Jews out there who hate themselves. Even more so, that they are gaining control of the press and classrooms and are determined to muzzle thoughts and ideas that are contrary to their disposition to appease Arab terrorism. These are the same morons who I am sure were, still saying, "Let's negotiate." "We don't have to fight." "War isn't the answer" as they were being dragged into the ovens by the Nazi's sixty years ago.

I suppose I'm just an old fashioned girl. When a reporter / journalist / columnist sees something newsworthy, they have a duty to tell it. We are artists that paint with words. And the truth is something that the folks at the National Jewish Post & Opinion just don't want to admit. Maybe their new newsroom attitude is out of stupidity, or cowardice. I tend to think it's simply hatred for themselves and the Jewish people. Certainly their actions, and control of the press, is dangerous. (NaomiRagen.com May 8)

Mideast Road Trap By Frank Gaffney, Jr.

Newt Gingrich recently precipitated a firestorm of controversy when he said the Department of State was working to sabotage President Bush's security policies. As a case in point, he cited the State Department's machinations behind the "road map" for peace between Israel and the Palestinian front in the Arab-Israeli conflict:

"The State Department invention of a Quartet for Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations defies everything the United States has learned about France, Russia

and the United Nations. After the bitter lessons of the last five months, it is unimaginable that the United States would voluntarily accept a system in which the U.N., the European Union and Russia could routinely outvote President Bush's positions by three to one (or four to one if the State Department voted its cultural beliefs against the president's policies)."

"This is a deliberate and systematic effort to undermine the president's policies procedurally by ensuring they will consistently be watered down and distorted by the other three members. This is worse than the U.N. inspections process — a clear disaster for American diplomacy."

The former House speaker is, of course, absolutely correct in warning that the negotiating format the State Department has conjured up over the past year amounts to a stacked deck — stacked against Mr. Bush and the principles and preconditions for recognition of a Palestinian state that he announced last June.

Unfortunately, the problem is not simply a procedural arrangement whereby four entities profoundly hostile to Israel are in charge — so much so that they are hoping to be able to dictate terms to the Israelis. This assuredly is not the negotiating process Mr. Bush had in mind when he offered his vision for a real Mideast peace nearly a year ago.

Given the quartet's composition and proclivities, however, it is hardly surprising that the content of its road map also deviates profoundly from what Mr. Bush proposed at that time. This is evident in particular on two critical counts:

First, Mr. Bush made very clear last June that a new generation of leaders "untainted by terror" would have to come to the fore in the Palestinian community via democratic means. The clear meaning of this precondition was that neither Yasser Arafat nor anybody associated with his terrorist kleptocracy could be considered a legitimate interlocutor in a new, reformed peace process.

Career bureaucrats — like those running the State Department who, at best, can scarcely conceal their contempt for the people elected to run the country — are fond of saying "What the president meant to say is ..."

In this case, State and its quartet partners have contorted the president's intention so as to enable one of the Palestinian caudillo's most faithful lieutenants, Mahmoud Abbas, to be handpicked by Mr. Arafat but nonetheless represented as a real partner for peace with the Israelis.

Mr. Arafat and Abu Mazen (Mr. Abbas' nom de guerre — it tells you something about this man's commitment to peace with Israel that he has a guerilla nickname) even performed a little drama designed to demonstrate for Western consumption that the lieutenant, not his boss, would now control the official security apparatus and, as a result, be able to crack down on Palestinian terrorists. This gambit was reminiscent of another of Mr. Arafat's theatrical performances a few years back when, to demonstrate his commitment to live in peace with Israel, he was supposed to secure the elimination of dozens of provisions in the Palestinian Charter calling for the destruction of Jews and their state. Just as these provisions remain unchanged to this day, power still rests in the hands of those who espouse jihad against Israel.

Second, Mr. Bush also indicated last June that Israel would not be expected to accept a Palestinian state unless and until terrorism ceased to be waged against the Jewish state. But the quartet had other plans. It adopted a timetable for recognition of a state of Palestine that was geared, not to an end of the threat to Israel, but to a predetermined calendar: The boundaries of a provisional state to be fixed by as early as the end of 2003; a full-fledged and internationally recognized state not later than 2005.

And while the Palestinians would be required to "undertake visible efforts ... to arrest, disrupt and restrain individuals and groups conducting and planning violent attacks on Israelis" ("visible" being the operative term, not "successful"), the Israelis would be obliged from the get-go to make tangible and possibly irreversible steps. For example, they must pull out of forward defensive positions in Palestinian areas, stop further growth of settlements, etc.

In short, the road map offered by the quartet appears more likely to prove a "road trap" for one of the parties, Israel — and for a president who, more than any other in history, has committed himself to the survival and security of the Jewish state. Such a prospect is all the more absurd given the unprecedented opportunities a post-Saddam Hussein Middle East could present for a genuine, just and durable peace between Israel and new, non-radical Arab regimes in the region.

In his inspiring address on the USS Abraham Lincoln last week, Mr. Bush warned that "any person, organization or government that supports, protects or harbors terrorists is complicit in the murder of the innocent, and equally guilty of terrorist crimes."

It can only be hoped that the State Department, the rest of the quartet and the Palestinian sponsors of terrorism on whom they hope to confer a state understood what the president surely meant to say — both now and last June: He will not be party to surrendering Israeli security, any more than our own, to those determined to destroy freedom-loving peoples and societies. (Washington Times May 6)