

Events...

Tuesday, December 10, 8:00pm

BAYT presents Lydia Lanxner, B.N., MA., Disaster Response Specialist, Laniado Hospital, Netanya.

Commentary...

Latest Attack on Jews Brings a Deafening Silence By Rosie Dimanno

There's no haven for Jews. Not within Israel and not without.

The earth is stained with their blood: From an El Al counter in Los Angeles to a beach resort in Mombasa.

Their children, their elderly, their scholars, their farmers, the diaspora of their tribe - all targets, at home and abroad. Shopping for food, riding a bus, strolling across a campus, dining as families in restaurants, dancing in clubs, worshipping in synagogues. Not a blessed place in all the world is safe.

The carnage in Kenya last Thursday is only the most recent atrocity but no doubt history will recall it as a defining moment in the modern-day Holocaust of Jews - a point where all buffers of presumed security were breached, when the war of attrition against Israelis went extra-territorial, crossing geographical borders and moral boundaries. Those shredded bodies of vacationers who believed themselves somehow beyond the reach of homicide bombers are sad testament to the reality of their predicament. And the poor victims who were not Jews, the Kenyan dancers welcoming new arrivals to a holiday hotel, they were but expendable bit-players, the collateral damage of Jew-hating terrorism.

Palestinians might revile Israelis as oppressors and occupiers, might bleat to the international community for redress of their political grievances. But Palestinians the world over aren't hunted down like dogs. Arabs the world over aren't targeted for extermination. Muslims the world over aren't murdered in packs. Humankind would not stand for it. The Pan-Arab alliance would not stand for it. Islamic countries would not stand for it.

Imagine, if Zionist terrorists armed with shoulder-held rockets had attempted to bring down a Saudi airplane, as unidentified militants had attempted to blast an El Al flight out of the sky over Kenya, simultaneous with the Mombasa bombing - a two-pronged attack suggesting sophisticated planning and a network of operatives, with the fingerprints of Al Qaeda all over it. The reverse scenario - Jew on Muslim - would be grounds for war, for a unified assault on Israel. And the West would be hard-pressed to interdict, to mollify.

Ah, but these are just dead Jews. And we are accustomed to their dying.

I have been waiting, in the days since Thursday's abominable attack, for just one word of sympathy, of pity, from the Muslim world. One note of commiseration to emanate from inside the thousands of mosques, one hint of regret and empathy from commentators ever ready to assail any Israeli misstep and aggression. But the silence has been deafening.

Islam, that great religion of peace, has had nothing to say of more murdered Jews. That silent majority that disapproves of extremism, that argues the Muslim faith has been ill-served by militants who've twisted every article of the Islamic faith - not a murmur of renunciation of those who commit such travesties in their name. Where is the rage?

If little in the way of revulsion might have been expected from the hostile nations that surround Israel, then surely a word of consolation from moderate Muslims in the West might have been forthcoming. Yet I've heard nary an

ISRAEL NEWS

*A collection of the week's news from Israel
A service of the Bet El Twinning Committee of
Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto Congregation*

utterance from the very same agencies and organizations, purportedly representing Muslims and Arabs, that are so vigilant about pouncing on any perceived racism or intolerance against their people, even in this country. Nothing from the Canadian Islamic Congress, nothing from the Canadian Muslim Civil Liberties Association, nothing from the Palestinian-Canadian Student Society, nothing from the Canadian Arab Friendship Association, nothing from the Canadian Society of Muslims. To name a few.

Only the beleaguered Palestinians themselves, in a poll taken before Thursday's tragic events, have expressed weariness with the whole campaign of violence aimed at Israel, this as one lone voice - a potential successor to Arafat - has declared that the intifadah must stop because it has done nothing to further the Palestinian cause.

It's impossible to disentangle the war against the Jews from the larger Islamist war against the West. Assuredly, the misery of Palestinians was not what motivated the terrorist agenda of Osama bin Laden and Al Qaeda. Bin Laden, preoccupied with routing America's presence in the Arab world, militarily and culturally, paid only passing lip service to the plight of Palestinians in the occupied territories. At some point, they became a postscript to his anti-Western, anti-American screeds. But others quickly linked the micro-terrorism to the macro-terrorism, as if to invest Al Qaeda and like-minded terrorist networks to a more palatable cause. And in this they've been rather successful, with a rationalizing argument that offers endemic Islamic grievances on the one hand and Israeli truculence on the other. It is a sham of an argument, illogical at its core, but repeat a lie often enough and it will become the lingua franca of terrorism.

Israel, as it has learned from history, cannot depend on any other nation, any other alliance of nations, not even its great and steadfast friend America, to fight its battles, ensure its security or avenge its dead. In the same way Mossad tracked down and eliminated the freed perpetrators of the Munich Massacre in 1972, its counter-terrorist experts will likely, insofar as they are able, track down and eliminate those who committed Thursday's vile attacks. But this is a new generation of global terrorism and Israel's enemies - like the West's enemies - no longer stand out in a crowd. In many parts of the world, they are the crowd. Islamist pretenders, fomenting hatred in the masses, have made sure of that. And they are like

cockroaches, scurrying out of the geopolitical cracks - in Saudi Arabia, in Yemen, in East Africa, in the Philippines, in Indonesia, even in America and Canada.

They kill Jews. They kill Americans. They kill Australians who had the temerity to push rampaging Indonesian paramilitaries out of East Timor, a predominantly Catholic fledgling state. They kill Kenyan dancers and civil employees. They kill French engineers. They blow up skyscrapers and bring down airplanes. They do all this with Allah's name on their lips.

And some day, I fear they'll come for you. (Toronto Star Dec 2)

Why Shouldn't Israel Get Out of Gaza? By Michael Freund

Although the polling booths had not yet even closed in the Labor party's recent primary on November 19, Amram Mitzna was already making concessions to the Palestinians.

In an interview that day with the Associated Press, Labor's new chairman went out of his way to emphasize that if he becomes Prime Minister, one of his first acts in office would be not to intensify the war on terror, nor to dismantle the Palestinian Authority, nor even to wage an unrelenting struggle against inflation and unemployment. Rather, said Mitzna, he would carry out an Israeli withdrawal from Gaza, pulling back all troops and forcibly removing Jewish settlers from their homes. And this, he asserted, would be

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Lorne Gunter of the Edmonton Journal
on behalf of the Christian Zionist community
wishing the Jewish community a
Happy Chanukah
and thanking BAYT for publishing Israel News.

...and in commemoration of the eighth yarzeit of
מֵאִיר בֶּן יִשְׂרָאֵל ז"ל Max Pesses ז"ל
by his loving wife and children.

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carried out unilaterally, even without prior negotiations with the Palestinians.

The idea of leaving Gaza, of course, is hardly new. Back in 1992, Yitzhak Rabin made it a central theme of his election campaign, promising the Israeli public that he would "take Gaza out of Tel Aviv". Then, as now, the proposal was aimed at an electorate conditioned into thinking that Israel has no business being in Gaza in the first place, with its very presence there serving as an invitation to further violence and bloodshed.

Indeed, Gaza is almost always portrayed by the media as a teeming hotbed of hatred, one in which tiny Jewish settlements live alongside masses of Palestinians seething with anger against the Israeli army. The picture that is painted is so one-sided, yet so forceful, that even some on Israel's right have said that they would see little problem in abandoning Gaza to its own devices.

Given that this is the case, then why the heck would any Israeli want to hang on to Gaza at all? The answer, however, is quite simple: because Gaza belongs to the Jewish people, and it is time we started treating it as such.

Put aside, for a moment, all the pre-conceived notions you may have about the area, and consider the following: Gaza has a long and rich Jewish history, one which stretches back to Biblical times. After the Exodus from Egypt, when each of the tribes of Israel was apportioned various parts of the Promised Land, Gaza was given to the Tribe of Judah, (see Joshua 15:47 and Judges 1:18) as a share of its eternal inheritance.

Since we are celebrating the festival of Chanukah this week, it is worth recalling that the Hasmonean king Yochanan, brother of Judah the Maccabee, retook Gaza in 145 BCE, and his brother Shimon sent Jews to settle there, hundreds of years before the advent of Islam. In the fourth century, some 1600 years before the establishment of the PLO, Gaza served as the primary port of commerce for the Jews of the Holy Land.

Nearly forty years ago, on the outskirts of Gaza city near the sea, Egyptian archaeologists discovered a mosaic floor from an ancient synagogue which dated from the sixth century. It is one of the oldest, and the largest, ever found in the Land of Israel.

During the Middle Ages, Gaza was home to a thriving Jewish community which boasted its share of prominent rabbis, including Rabbi Yisrael Najara, author of "Kah Ribbon Olam", the popular hymn sung in Jewish homes around the world every Sabbath. He served as Gaza's Chief Rabbi until his death in 1625, and he was buried in the city's Jewish cemetery. The great medieval kabbalist Rabbi Avraham Azoulay also lived in Gaza, where he authored his famed work, *Hesed L'Avraham*, along with a commentary on the Bible.

After the expulsion of the Jews from Spain and Portugal at the end of the 15th century, a number of the exiles made their way to Gaza, where members of the Jewish community worked in various trades, such as merchants, silversmiths and farmers.

Centuries ago, the great scholar Rabbi Yaakov Emden ruled that Gaza is an intrinsic part of the Jewish people's national heritage. "Gaza and its environs are absolutely considered part of the Land of Israel without a doubt," he wrote in his work *Mor U'ketziyah*, adding, "there is no doubt that it is a mitzvah to live there, as in any part of the Land of Israel."

It should come as no surprise, then, that even though Jews have been expelled from Gaza at least six times over the past two thousand years, they have nevertheless returned to resettle it with increased determination and vigor. In 61 CE, the Roman governor Gavinius evicted the Jews from Gaza, as did Napoleon, the Crusaders and the Ottoman Turks.

In August 1929, when Arab rioters threatened to slaughter Gaza Jewry, the British army forced the community to evacuate. In October 1946, on the night following Yom Kippur, the Gaza Jewish settlement of Kfar Darom was established. It lasted just a year and a half, until the outbreak of Israel's War of Independence in 1948, when Egypt overran the area and occupied it. Finally, in 1967, in a war of self-defense, Israel retook Gaza, making it possible once again for Jews to reside there.

Hence, the 7,000 Jews currently living in Gaza are neither invaders, nor occupiers, nor intruders. They are indigenous residents who have returned home, treading on the very same ground as that of their ancestors before them.

There are plenty of military and security reasons to justify Israeli rule over Gaza as well, if only because it serves as a gateway from the east to seizing control over the entire country. Conquerors throughout the centuries, from Titus to Napoleon to the British, all entered Israel by way of Gaza, setting the stage for its eventual capture. Thus, to abandon Gaza, as Amram Mitzna now suggests, is to overlook the key strategic role it has played throughout history.

But more importantly, it also ignores the fact that Gaza is an intrinsic part of the Land of Israel, the Jewish people's patrimony. By suggesting that Israel withdraw, Mitzna is essentially implying that we have no right to this strip of territory. And that, quite frankly, is an affront, not only to Jewish history, but to Jewish destiny as well. (Jerusalem Post Dec 4)

The writer served as Deputy Director of Communications & Policy Planning in the Prime Minister's Office from 1996 to 1999.

Giving Thanks By Naomi Ragen

It's awfully late, past midnight, and I should be going to sleep instead of sitting here writing this. But somehow I can't allow this day to end without

talking about it to someone.

I am trying to find my feet. To know where it is I am now that the world as we know it doesn't seem to exist anymore. The daily murder of Jewish children by armed, adult men wasn't supposed to happen anymore. Not to my generation. The world had learned a lesson, cried a tear, placed a memorial wreath. It was horrified at the practical results of the ideology of anti-Semitism. We Jews had forgiven, if not forgotten. Taken the reparations. Bought Volkswagen cars and DeDetrich dishwashers. Now, it was supposed to be a land dispute with neighbors we were embroiled in..

The hotel blown up in Nairobi reminded me of the Park Hotel in Netanya, blown up on Seder eve. I was there. I knew exactly how those people in the lobby felt, and the ones in their rooms who spoke about the shattering of glass, the slivers that flew past their faces. The holiday turned nightmare. The family get together that will scar and sear the family's memory for as long as they live, even if they walked away without a scratch. I cannot even begin to imagine how an injury or death would affect the family.

I sat all day thinking: the world as I know it has disappeared. Well, not all day. Because for us Israeli-Americans today was also Thanksgiving. It's a day we've been spending together, eating turkey, here in the Middle East, for thirty years. My Israeli-born children insist on it. So, the raw turkey was sitting on the counter, and the green apples in the bowl waiting to be peeled for the pie. The sweet potatoes, stuffing, mashed potatoes, corn muffins were all still raw ingredients.

I wondered: How can I go on? Is it right for me to go on, prepare a family dinner, an evening of laughter with sons, daughters, grandchildren, great-grandparents? I thought of calling everyone up and cancelling. But then, what to do with all this food? Reluctantly, I set about making Thanksgiving dinner.

And when the turkey was crisp and brown, the pie bubbling with fragrant juice, the potatoes mashed, the sweet potatoes baked, I heard the news on the radio suddenly switch from talking about Mombasa, to talking about Beit Shean.

Armed men with submachine guns opening fire on people standing on line to vote. Men with grenades. Six dead, twenty injured. In a sleepy little town. People there were being asked not to go out of their homes, because a gunman might still be on the loose.

A sense of panic went through me. Was this, then, war? Would they be blowing up cars on the highway? Attacking the trains? Could we really get into the car and make the hour and a half ride to Netanya to bring our holiday meal and cheer to Mom and Dad, who can't get around anymore? Mom ũ who lived through Auschwitz. And Dad, who just had his ninetieth birthday, who lost his first wife and two small children to the gas chambers? Should we cancel on them, stay home, lock the doors, draw the curtains, shut off the lights?

My daughter told me she was taking her three children to Mom and Dad, whatever I decided to do. So did my son and his wife, who were both at the Passover Massacre just a few months back. My children weren't afraid. Weren't about to give up or give in, or stop living, or stop feeling joy, stop celebrating being alive and having a family and living in the Jewish State. Just yesterday, this same daughter spent the evening with her sister in law, whose young husband is dying of cancer. A handsome father of four. Thirty-eight years old. His little girl crawled into bed beside her father, who can no longer see, and asked: "Do you know who this is?" And he answered: "Of course. You have your own scent. Like a flower. Do you know," he asked her, "how much I love you?"

My daughter wanted our family to be together this Thanksgiving. And so I, reluctantly, full of fears, loaded my car with a box full of a Thanksgiving feast. In the beginning of the journey, I watched every car on the highway nervously. We said the travel prayer, asking God to let us come and go safely, a prayer we have been saying for forty years, long before the Intifada, or Oslo made it necessary. I felt better after that. I tried not to think about the elections which will decide the course of Israeli history.

And you know what? When we arrived, safely, unpacked the food, set the table, we did forget, for a little while. Surrounded by all the people I love, passing the warm, good food around the table, giving some comfort to Mom and Dad, seeing some smiles on their faces as we invaded their small, quiet world with our talk and laughter, and small children that made a mess, spinning Chanukah dreidels, eating gold foil wrapped chocolate money, setting up plastic bowling pins on the living room carpet, and spreading playing cards over the couch. I had somehow entered the old world again, the good world, the world I grew up in, the world in which I raised my own four children.

It was, for an hour or two at least, a reminder of all those things we are fighting so hard for, we Israeli Jews. All the things we so deserve after all that has happened to us.

I knew the feeling would not last, because there were fellow Jews to mourn over, and that couldn't, shouldn't be forgotten. We needed to bring that into the world we are creating, day by day. But for those few hours, I felt great thanks for the things that God in His goodness, has granted me to rejoice in.

I'm going to sleep now. I don't know how I'll feel in the morning. But I'm hoping some of that good, old world I love will force its shape, insist on its place in the world I inhabit, even as corrupt men full of sickening evil insist on reshaping it in their own image. But I have learned something: I will see many more days of thanksgiving, if only I have the courage to insist upon them.

God bless you all. Have a Happy Chanukah. Insist on it.

(NaomiRagen.com Nov 28)

Dispatches from an Anxious State By Daniel Gordis

In New York last week, I had occasion to be interviewed on NPR. It still amazes me how many people listen to talk radio, and of those, how many find the time to search the web in order to write email comments on what they've heard. I was pretty flooded with responses to the interview (www.wnyc.org/shows/lopatate/episodes/11182002), and rather struck by one particular theme that appeared in many of the letters. The following is typical -- I use it as the example because it was somewhat less inflammatory than many of the others:

"Listening to you on the Leonard Lopate show, I couldn't but be amazed at your disregard for the lives of your children. When the neighborhood we were living in deteriorated to the point that it was no longer safe to walk the streets we moved. We could have stayed, worked with the neighborhood association, joined the block watchers, etc, but in the meanwhile we had images of our children coming home from school mugged, bloodied, or even killed. It wasn't worth it to be heroes. . . . How will you feel if one of those suicide bombers kills your child when you could have avoided it by moving back to the States? Israel does not need you, it has many, many people who will fight the good fight, and in any event the problems are caused by forces beyond your control. Doesn't your family come first? Richard"

Well, Richard, I didn't answer that e-mail until today, because I didn't really know where to begin. But today was the kind of day in Israel that clarifies everything-- why we're here, why this isn't anything like the neighborhood that you left, and why we're not killing our children, but giving them something to live for.

We were at a Bar Mitzvah at the Kotel (The Western Wall) this morning. After the service was over, I grabbed a cab to head back to the office for a meeting. The news was prattling about something that "even we were unprepared for."

Uh-oh. That was the first I'd heard about the attack in Mombassa. Details were sketchy, and the only way the news could get any information was to speak on cell phones to Israelis who were actually at the site. One woman, just shy of hysterical, told the story of the explosion, and recounted how it took just under two hours for the first Kenyan ambulances to arrive. (Tonight, Israelis still can't believe that. We get to these disaster sites in two to three minutes, though admittedly, we have a lot more practice.) When asked what she expected would happen next, she said, "I assume Israel will send doctors, medicine and soldiers, and then they'll bring us home." And she was right. The news immediately cut to an airfield, where five IAF planes were being loaded with the medical equipment and personnel that the Kenyans couldn't seem to amass, and shortly thereafter, the planes and their cargoes were on their way.

You see, Richard, this isn't some dumpy neighborhood somewhere in the States that makes no difference to anyone but those who can't get out of it. This is what we call home. Muslim extremist evil knows no borders. We've known that for a long time. Remember Munich? Remember New York? Muslim terrorism isn't about the settlements, or the "occupation" (which may or may not be a bad idea, depending on who you ask, but certainly isn't the root cause of all this terrorism), but about Israel herself and about Israelis and Jews wherever they may be. (Truthfully, it's about Western Civilization, which the Jews for some reason are seen to represent.) And when Jews end up butchered in Mombassa, they know one thing. Kenyan incompetence will not allow them to be stranded.

We'll get there. And we'll bring whatever's left of them home. And then we heard about the two shoulder-mounted missiles fired at the Arkia jet carrying 271 people, and how they missed. And on tonight's news, even CNN showed a home video one of the passengers had taken as the plane prepared to land. Outside the window, IAF F-16's were flanking the jet, making sure that it hadn't been damaged and was safe to land. They were so close that from the cabin window, the passenger was able to film the pilot and navigator relatively clearly. And as the plane landed, the video caught the clapping and spontaneous singing of "Heveinu Shalom Aleichem" -- a kitchy old Israeli homecoming song that no one on that plane had sung for decades. But no matter. There was no reason to be embarrassed by the kitch. Six decades ago, when people fired at Jews across the world, there was no one willing to do anything.

The F-16's outside the window showed our children, Richard, that we're not disregarding them or their safety -- we've brought them to the only place on the planet where Jews can take care of themselves.

Of course, we're not always successful, Richard. You're right. Sometimes, they get us. In the past two years, there have been 14,500 terrorist attacks in Israel. No exaggeration. What's amazing is that relatively few have killed people. Still, when two terrorists shot up a Likud Party headquarters this afternoon

killing six people (so far), it was the culmination (though the day's not over, so one hesitates to use that word definitively) of a rather horrible day. But no one's running away. The Likud party primary didn't get cancelled or delayed. The polls stayed open. The countries these terrorists "represent" don't have a single democracy to their credit (save Turkey, if you call that military-in-the-shadows-government-sham a democracy), but we do. They blow up a hotel, try to shoot down a jet, shoot up a bus station and we still vote. Quietly, peacefully, democratically. And in the midst of all the sadness and grief, many of us are proud of that. I think we have a right to be.

You weren't proud of that neighborhood you left. Probably because it didn't stand for anything too important. Because it reeked hopelessness. So you left, and rightly so. But this place does stand for something important. And even on dark days like today, in which everyone I know was sullen, recovering from one bit of news only to hear another, this place pulses with hope. Those doctors flying to Mombassa are what this place is all about. The F-16's shadowing the 757 making its way home are what this place is all about. And the quiet, orderly voting is what this place is all about. What kind of a person in their right mind would leave this, Richard? This isn't a neighborhood. It's home. And with all its faults, and there are many, it's a dream come true. Walk away from that? How would we get out of bed in the morning and look in the mirror?

The chit-chat over dinner tonight was fascinating. Micha, our youngest and nine years old, was trying to understand the difference between Sharon and Netanyahu. Apparently, today's Likud primary had been much discussed in his fourth grade class. His older siblings were trying to explain. When they told him that Sharon has said that he's willing, in principle, to see a Palestinian state, Micha asked incredulously, "given them LAND?" To which his brother and sister explained that "they" need someplace to live, too, which is why Sharon says that. But then, they continued, "the Arabs probably won't stop killing us for a long time, which is why maybe Netanyahu's right." Elisheva and I didn't say much, and just listened to this rather lengthy discussion.

They had most of it right, some of it wrong. But guess what, Richard? They were talking about the future, a future they believe in. In just a couple of years, our daughter will get to vote, too. (That, of course, would not be the case if she lived in the Palestinian Authority. Or Lebanon. Or Syria. Or Jordan. Or Saudi Arabia. Or Egypt.) And she'll vote about stuff that really matters. The direction her country takes will be her choice, too. You're right that we can't completely stop the terrorism, and you're right that there's some danger here. But here's what our kids have learned: Life isn't about staying alive. It's about believing in something that matters while you're alive. And at the dinner table tonight, watching our kids think out loud about how much you should trust people who've been doing this to you for two years, but what you'll have if you're not willing to risk anything, I realized that it works. They actually still believe in the future. There wasn't a grain of hopelessness in their conversation. I bet that wasn't true when people talked about your old neighborhood, was it? And that's what makes all the difference.

Yes, Richard, our family does come first. And that's why we're here. To raise our kids in a place that's all about them, about their history, their future, their sense of being at home. To live in a place that unlike that old neighborhood, matters very much. Not because we're heroes, for we're not. But because we know just a bit about Jewish history; and because we have no right to expect other Israelis to "fight the good fight" if we're not willing to.

On the news this afternoon, they interviewed some alleged aviation expert about the attempted attack on the Arkia 757. He explained how these missiles work, and gave a whole dissertation on the ease of operation of heat-seeking shoulder-launched missiles. When he was done, the interviewer asked him, "Then how did they miss? After all, a lumbering 757, barely off the ground? How do you explain this?"

His answer, I thought, was telling. He said, "I can't explain it. Either they fired without priming the heat-seeking element on the missiles, or they were faulty. But normally, there's no way to miss. It was a miracle."

He didn't mean anything theological by the comment, of course, but today's the day before Hanukkah. In your old neighborhood, and in your new one, too, it's Thanksgiving. I remember it well. College football during the day. Beer and pretzels, and chatting with friends. Turkey and stuffing at night. Not bad at all.

None of that here. Just a regular old dinner. But not so tomorrow night. Tomorrow night, when you look outside our living room window, in the windows of virtually every other apartment within sight, there are going to be Hanukkah candles flickering. Religious families, secular families. Left wing families, right wing families. Native families and immigrant families. American families and French families. Young families and old families. Sharon families and Netanyahu families. They'll all have candles in the window.

Because Richard, somehow, in spite of everything, we still believe in miracles. Some of them happened a long time ago. But others are still happening. We understand them in different ways, and we disagree

passionately about how to keep them going. But after a day like today, somehow we find ourselves still believing in them.

It's a crazy, dangerous place, this neighborhood of ours, Richard. But it's home. And it's a miracle. It really is. And from that, you see, you just don't walk away.

Now do you get it?

Happy Hanukkah. (danielgordis.org Nov 28)

The first four years of these dispatches, along with other brief essays on life in Israel, have now been published by Crown Publishers as "IF A PLACE CAN MAKE YOU CRY: DISPATCHES FROM AN ANXIOUS STATE."

I Stand with Israel: I Stand with the Jews By Oriana Fallaci

[A French court on Nov. 20, 2002, dismissed a request to ban "The Rage and the Pride," the best-selling book by [leftist] Italian journalist Oriana Fallaci that critics say incites hatred of Muslims. Fallaci, 73, is a former Resistance fighter and war correspondent best-known for her uncompromising interviews with world leaders]

I find it shameful that in Italy there should be a procession of individuals dressed as suicide bombers who spew vile abuse at Israel, hold up photographs of Israeli leaders on whose foreheads they have drawn the swastika, incite people to hate the Jews. And who, in order to see Jews once again in the extermination camps, in the gas chambers, in the ovens of Dachau and Mauthausen and Buchenwald and Bergen-Belsen et cetera, would sell their own mother to a harem.

I find it shameful that the Catholic Church should permit a bishop, one with lodgings in the Vatican no less, a saintly man who was found in Jerusalem with an arsenal of arms and explosives hidden in the secret compartments of his sacred Mercedes, to participate in that procession and plant himself in front of a microphone to thank in the name of God the suicide bombers who massacre the Jews in pizzerias and supermarkets. To call them "martyrs who go to their deaths as to a party."

I find it shameful that in France, the France of Liberty-Equality-Fraternity, they burn synagogues, terrorize Jews, profane their cemeteries. I find it shameful that the youth of Holland and Germany and Denmark flaunt the kaffiah just as Mussolini's avant garde used to flaunt the club and the fascist badge.

I find it shameful that in nearly all the universities of Europe Palestinian students sponsor and nurture anti-Semitism. That in Sweden they asked that the Nobel Peace Prize given to Shimon Peres in 1994 be taken back and conferred on the dove with the olive branch in his mouth, that is on Arafat. I find it shameful that the distinguished members of the Committee, a Committee that (it would appear) rewards political color rather than merit, should take this request into consideration and even respond to it. In hell the Nobel Prize honors he who does not receive it.

I find it shameful (we're back in Italy) that state-run television stations contribute to the resurgent anti-Semitism, crying only over Palestinian deaths while playing down Israeli deaths, glossing over them in unwilling tones. I find it shameful that in their debates they host with much deference the scoundrels with turban or kaffiah who yesterday sang hymns to the slaughter at New York and today sing hymns to the slaughters at Jerusalem, at Haifa, at Netanya, at Tel Aviv.

I find it shameful that the press does the same, that it is indignant because Israeli tanks surround the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, that it is not indignant because inside that same church two hundred Palestinian terrorists well armed with machine guns and munitions and explosives (among them are various leaders of Hamas and Al-Aqsa) are not unwelcome guests of the monks (who then accept bottles of mineral water and jars of honey from the soldiers of those tanks).

I find it shameful that, in giving the number of Israelis killed since the beginning of the Second Intifada (four hundred twelve), a noted daily newspaper found it appropriate to underline in capital letters that more people are killed in their traffic accidents. (Six hundred a year).

I find it shameful that the Roman Observer, the newspaper of the Pope--a Pope who not long ago left in the Wailing Wall a letter of apology for the Jews--accuses of extermination a people who were exterminated in the millions by Christians. By Europeans. I find it shameful that this newspaper denies to the survivors of that people (survivors who still have numbers tattooed on their arms) the right to react, to defend themselves, to not be exterminated again.

I find it shameful that in the name of Jesus Christ (a Jew without whom they would all be unemployed), the priests of our parishes or Social Centers or whatever they are flirt with the assassins of our Jerusalem who cannot go to eat a pizza or buy some eggs without being blown up.

I find it shameful that they are on the side of the very ones who inaugurated terrorism, killing us on airplanes, in airports, at the Olympics, and who today entertain themselves by killing western journalists. By shooting them, abducting them, cutting their throats, decapitating them. (There's someone in Italy who, since the appearance of Anger and Pride, would like to do the same to me. Citing verses of the Koran he exhorts his "brothers" in the mosques and the Islamic Community to chastise me in the name of Allah. To kill me. Or rather to die with me. Since he's someone who speaks English well, I'll respond to him in English:

"F*** you.")

I find it shameful that almost all of the left, the left that twenty years ago permitted one of its union professionals to deposit a coffin (as a mafioso warning) in front of the synagogue of Rome, forgets the contribution made by the Jews to the fight against fascism. Made by Carlo and Nello Rossini, for example, by Leone Ginzburg, by Umberto Terracini, by Leo Valiani, by Emilio Sereni, by women like my friend Anna Maria Enriques Agnoletti who was shot at Florence on June 12, 1944, by seventy-five of the three-hundred-thirty-five people killed at the Fosse Ardeatine, by the infinite others killed under torture or in combat or before firing squads. (The companions, the teachers, of my infancy and my youth.)

I find it shameful that in part through the fault of the left--or rather, primarily through the fault of the left (think of the left that inaugurates its congresses applauding the representative of the PLO, leader in Italy of the Palestinians who want the destruction of Israel)--Jews in Italian cities are once again afraid. And in French cities and Dutch cities and Danish cities and German cities, it is the same. I find it shameful that Jews tremble at the passage of the scoundrels dressed like suicide bombers just as they trembled during Krystallnacht, the night in which Hitler gave free rein to the Hunt of the Jews.

I find it shameful that in obedience to the stupid, vile, dishonest, and for them extremely advantageous fashion of Political Correctness the usual opportunists--or better the usual parasites--exploit the word Peace. That in the name of the word Peace, by now more debauched than the words Love and Humanity, they absolve one side alone of its hate and bestiality. That in the name of a pacifism (read conformism) delegated to the singing crickets and buffoons who used to lick Pol Pot's feet they incite people who are confused or ingenuous or intimidated. Trick them, corrupt them, carry them back a half century to the time of the yellow star on the coat. These charlatans who care about the Palestinians as much as I care about the charlatans. That is not at all.

I find it shameful that many Italians and many Europeans have chosen as their standard-bearer the gentleman (or so it is polite to say) Arafat. This nonentity who thanks to the money of the Saudi Royal Family plays the Mussolini ad perpetuum and in his megalomania believes he will pass into History as the George Washington of Palestine. This ungrammatical wretch who when I interviewed him was unable even to put together a complete sentence, to make articulate conversation. So that to put it all together, write it, publish it, cost me a tremendous effort and I concluded that compared to him even Ghaddafi sounds like Leonardo da Vinci. This false warrior who always goes around in uniform like Pinochet, never putting on civilian garb, and yet despite this has never participated in a battle. War is something he sends, has always sent, others to do for him. That is, the poor souls who believe in him. This pompous incompetent who playing the part of Head of State caused the failure of the Camp David negotiations, Clinton's mediation. No-no-I-want-Jerusalem-all-to-myself. This eternal liar who has a flash of sincerity only when (in private) he denies Israel's right to exist, and who as I say in my book contradicts himself every five minutes. He always plays the double-cross, lies even if you ask him what time it is, so that you can never trust him. Never! With him you will always wind up systematically betrayed. This eternal terrorist who knows only how to be a terrorist (while keeping himself safe) and who during the Seventies, that is when I interviewed him, even trained the terrorists of Baader-Meinhof. With them, children ten years of age. Poor children. (Now he trains them to become suicide bombers. A hundred baby suicide bombers are in the works: a hundred!). This weathercock who keeps his wife at Paris, served and revered like a queen, and keeps his people down in the s***. He takes them out of the s*** only to send them to die, to kill and to die, like the eighteen year old girls who in order to earn equality with the fate of their victims. And yet many Italians love him, yes. Just like they loved Mussolini. And many other Europeans do the same.

I find it shameful and see in all this the rise of a new fascism, a new nazism. A fascism, a nazism, that much more grim and revolting because it is conducted and nourished by those who hypocritically pose as do-gooders, progressives, communists, pacifists, Catholics or rather Christians, and who have the gall to label a warmonger anyone like me who screams the truth. I see it, yes, and I say the following. I have never been tender with the tragic and Shakespearean figure Sharon. ("I know you've come to add another scalp to your necklace," he murmured almost with sadness when I went to interview him in 1982.) I have often had disagreements with the Israelis, ugly ones, and in the past I have defended the Palestinians a great deal. Maybe more than they deserved. But I stand with Israel, I stand with the Jews. I stand just as I stood as a young girl during the time when I fought with them, and when the Anna Marias were shot. I defend their right to exist, to defend themselves, to not let themselves be exterminated a second time. And disgusted by the anti-Semitism of many Italians, of many Europeans, I am ashamed of this shame that dishonors my Country and Europe. At best, it is not a community of States, but a pit of Pontius Pilates. And even if all the inhabitants of this planet were to think otherwise, I would continue to think so. (Corriere della Sera Dec 2)