
OUTPOST

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IF THIS IS HOW THE U.S. RESPONDS NOW...

Herbert Zweibon

Terrorists fire shoulder-launched rockets into Israeli territory. The multinational peacekeepers stationed in the region are unable or unwilling to intervene. Israel launches a counter-terror action. The United States, which was silent when Israel was being attacked, loudly demands that Israel "show restraint" and "refrain from any steps that will harm Middle East peace." While Israeli casualties mount, the Israeli government finds itself under mounting pressure to tie its army's hands.

This horrifying scenario could describe the situation on the Israel-Lebanon border in recent weeks. But it could also describe events on the border between Israel and a Palestinian Arab entity in Judea-Samaria a year or two from now.

Although candidate Bill Clinton repeatedly promised that he would put an end to the pro-Arab bias in foreign policy that was so characteristic of the Bush-Baker years, President Bill Clinton has given complete control of America's Mideast policy to the same gang of State Department Israel-bashers who worked for James Baker. As a result, "even-handedness" is once again the watchword in U.S. policy toward Israel and the Arabs.

The U.S. will not merely be "even-handed" in appearance, but in practice, Secretary of State Warren Christopher recently assured an Arab-American audience. What Christopher means is that Israel, which is the only democracy in the Mideast and has consistently served as America's ally in the region, is to be treated no differently than the Arab regimes, all of whom are dictatorships and most of whom have been enemies of the United States.

Thus when Israel took action against the Hezbollah terrorists in south Lebanon, the Clinton administration responded by criticizing all of the parties to the conflict. There was no attempt to distinguish between the party that was the aggressor and the one that was acting in self-defense. There was no recognition of the need to wipe out the terrorists. There was no acknowledgement of the spiritual kinship between the Moslem fundamentalists who attack Israel and the

Moslem fundamentalists who blew up the World Trade Center and were planning to carry out a variety of additional atrocities in the New York area.

Instead, all one heard from Washington was the same old Bakeresque blather about "the need for all sides to act with restraint," and "the importance of not taking action that could harm the peace process."

Perhaps it is no surprise that there has been so little change from the Baker days, when Clinton's top Mideast policymakers are mostly Baker holdovers--Dennis Ross, Daniel Kurtzer, Aaron Miller.

What is worrisome, however, is the realization that if this is how the Ross-Kurtzer-Miller gang responds when Arab rockets are landing in the Galilee, Israel cannot expect anything better from them when Arab rockets are landing in Tel Aviv. If a Palestinian Arab "homeland" or "entity" is allowed to evolve in Judea and Samaria, Hezbollah, Hamas and their ilk will surely be on hand. Together with the various PLO factions, they will soon launch their campaign to "liberate" the rest of "Palestine" by firing rockets into downtown Jerusalem. If the Israelis strike back, will they have the U.S. on their side? Don't count on it. More likely there will be lots of talk about how the Arab authorities in Judea-Samaria "can't control" the "extremists," or about how "restraint" is needed to preserve "peace." In this case, however, the only kind of peace that will be preserved will be the peace of the grave--Israeli graves.◇

Herbert Zweibon is chairman of Americans For a Safe Israel.

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IS THIS WHAT YOU CALL A "LOVE FEAST"?

Relations between Israel and the United States today are "a love feast," Lester Pollack, chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, recently declared. He spoke too soon.

What kind of "love feast" is it when the U.S. pressured Israel to readmit 100 of the deported Hamas terror leaders? Has Pollack forgotten that the U.S. is demanding that Israel place the status of Jerusalem on the negotiating table? Is it really a "love feast" when the U.S. is pushing for Israel to surrender the strategic Golan Heights to a heavily-armed Arab dictator? Are friends of Israel supposed to be happy that the U.S. wants Israel to agree to a version of Arab "autonomy" which is so broad that it will turn into a PLO state on Israel's doorstep within a few years? Is it a cause for celebration that the Clinton administration forced Israel to accept a premature ceasefire which prevented the destruction of the Hezbollah terrorists in Lebanon?

It may make Lester Pollack's job easier if he pretends that all is well between Washington and Jerusalem. But Pollack's fantasies ignore the grim reality of a U.S. policy that increasingly resembles the arm-twisting, blame-Israel ways of the Bush-Baker period.◇

THE FLOODS, THE BUDGET AND U.S. AID TO ISRAEL

The recent battle between the president and congress over the budget, and the devastating losses suffered by flood victims in the midwest, carry lessons of significance for the future of U.S.-Israel relations.

Although opponents of the budget proposal had harsh words of criticism for most aspects of President Clinton's plan, they were noticeably silent regarding the plan's deep cuts in the military. Democrats and Republicans alike agreed that American military preparedness can be scaled down. Those who think that Israel can exchange vital territory for U.S. "security guarantees" should sit up and take notice. An America that is undergoing these kinds of military reductions will be no shape to rescue Israel from some future Arab attack.

The suffering of midwestern flood victims, combined with other American domestic problems, will inevitably lead to calls for reducing foreign aid, including aid to Israel. Such calls have already been heard in Congress, including from some who are genuinely friendly to Israel. Anybody who thinks that Israel must make territorial concessions in order to continue receiving U.S. aid should

think again. Surrendering the Golan or Judea-Samaria will not win America's heart. Regardless of how much land Israel gives up, American aid to Israel will be reduced. Israel's supporters must face that fact and plan accordingly, without reference to the illusion that U.S. aid is linked to Israeli territorial withdrawals.◇

NO REWARDS FOR LIBYAN TERRORISM

Stung by the impact of international sanctions, Libyan dictator Moammar Gadaffi has begun searching for ways to improve his image in the West. That's no surprise. What is surprising is that he seems to have found several opportunists who are willing to lend him a helping hand. Judith Miller of the *New York Times* was willing to pretty up Gadaffi's image in exchange for an exclusive interview. Abraham Sofaer was willing to provide him with legal help in exchange for some fat fees (until embarrassing publicity made him reconsider). Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, anxious as ever to promote his personal political agenda, has been spreading the word that Gadaffi is becoming "moderate" and should be rewarded.

This grotesque pandering to an unrepentant international terrorist is a moral affront to the Free World. Hundreds of innocent Americans aboard Pan Am flight 103 were murdered by terrorists acting on behalf of Gadaffi. The killers must be handed over to the U.S. without further delay. Assorted terrorist groups have training camps in Libya. Those camps must be shut down. Other terrorists around the world receive arms and funding from the Libyan government. That aid must be shut off. The way to compel Libya to take such steps is to tighten, not loosen, the various international sanctions now in force against the Gadaffi regime.◇

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UNDERSTANDING HAFEZ ASSAD

Mordechai Nisan

Orientalists are impressed with their eyes and judge power accordingly, mused General Catroux, who served as French High Commissioner in Damascus in 1920. Ships and gunboats, artillery and tanks, have a way of bringing people to their senses, and cushioning any untoward or disruptive political pretensions. In the Middle East, Machiavelli's "lion" is a sovereign and often necessary symbol to assure stability and order.

President Hafez el-Assad of Syria, whose own family name means "lion" in Arabic, has committed the requisite violent deeds to be a credible contender for the dubious title, "king of the Middle East jungle." But Assad is also the master of subtle deception and dissimulation, and in this respect he embodies the deft skills of Machiavelli's fox. When visible brute force will be effective, he is the awesome lion. But when invisible wile is appropriate, then he is the fox.

Assad's regime rests upon four pillars which have provided it with durability and longevity since his successful coup d'etat in November 1970 and his assumption of the office of president of Syria in March 1971. The virtual arrogation of key institutional power-levers, dominated and manipulated through the agency of a cohesive *esprit de corps* binding his own sectarian community, has been the formula of Assad's personal success. Employing force and politics, Assad has ruled Syria, a hodgepodge of groups with a history of disorder, for over twenty years. And this despite the fact that in 1983 he suffered a heart attack, and in 1992 sources in Amman reported that he is dying of cancer. His four pillars are:

1. **The Ba'ath Party.** Founded in the early 1940s, the Arab Socialist Renaissance Party developed from modest beginnings to become the pivot of power in Syrian politics in 1963. It ousted the traditional nobles, the merchants, the Islamicists and the Communists from center stage. The 1966 coup, itself the staging ground for Assad's later seizure of power, was a successful Ba'athist takeover. Assad's subsequent success finalized the predominance of the party and gave it the self-confidence to initiate, in 1973, a broader-based National Progressive Front (the *Jabha*) whose core component was, of course, the Ba'ath. Syria is not formally a single-party state, though in fact it functions as one. Only the Ba'ath party, for example, is permitted to recruit members in the army and the universities.

2. **The Army.** Like other Middle Eastern regimes, the Syrian case demonstrates the primacy of the army in political affairs. The inefficacy of the pre-independence and parliamentary regime and the obstacles to clarifying national purpose in an ethnically and religiously

pluralistic society provided the army with an opportunity, which it declared was actually an obligation. Three military coups d'etat in 1949 propelled officers into politics, and created the norm of military intervention in a society that lacked a unifying and strong civilian leadership. The "men of the swords" inaugurated authoritarian rule and a functioning state system.

3. **The State Bourgeoisie.** Syria was the traditional home of capable merchants and artisans yet failed to nurture a powerful bourgeois class, that might have offered the progress, steadiness, and leadership so badly needed. Instead, the Assad regime established a commanding bureaucracy in the name of a socialist, statist, economy. Major civilian projects in oil and irrigation, and military projects, weapons acquisitions and the like, were a function of national expenditures administered by the state apparatus. In the May 1990 elections to the People's Council, government employees were personally brought to the polls to vote.

4. **The Alawite Community.** The political glue that combined the army, the Ba'ath Party, and the state bureaucracy into a formidable bastion of power in Syria was Assad and his Alawite sectarian community. This highly secretive religious group, perhaps an offshoot of the Shi'ite heterodoxy within Islam, was traditionally

Hafez Assad

ensconced in its impoverished asylum on the Latakia Mountain in the northwest of the country. In the mid-20th century, Alawites launched an effort to acquire modern skills, socioeconomic advancement, and political influence. This led them, given their native penchant and the situation at hand, to join the army and the Ba'ath Party in the 1940s and thereafter. A direct assault on the locus of power in Damascus was not yet feasible. But an indirect route, taking account of endemic ideological turmoil and governmental paralysis, was a reasonable path to power in Syria. Although just 11% of Syria's population, the cohesive Alawites constituted over 42% of the military members of the Syrian Regional Commands of the Ba'ath Party from 1970 to 1980. The Assad regime, built on the triangular foundation of party, army, and ethnicity, further fortified its power base by creating a state bureaucratic

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BAKER'S "JEWISH ARABISTS" ARE BACK

Dr. Michael Goldblatt

It may seem surprising that the leaders of the State Department team that recently visited Israel are the same "Jewish Arabists" whose role in James Baker's Middle East policy was the source of so much controversy in recent years. After all, more than 80% of American Jews voted for Bill Clinton in 1992, partly in response to the Israel-bashing of Baker and his Jewish advisers. But in an ironic twist, the Clinton administration last month repaid its Jewish voters by promoting three of Baker's Jewish aides to positions of even greater power and influence in the shaping of America's Middle East policy.

Dennis Ross, who was Baker's right hand man, has been named Special Coordinator for Clinton's involvement in the Arab-Israeli negotiations. Among his other accomplishments as Baker's top Mideast strategist, Ross reportedly was responsible for the leaking to the media, in 1991, of false allegations that Israel illegally transferred U.S. technology to China. The Israeli press reported earlier this year that Ross held secret meetings with PLO officials in the summer of 1992, in violation of standing U.S. policy; according to the report, he promised to push for restoration of U.S.-PLO relations. Initially retained by the Clinton administration as a "temporary consultant" for a period of six months, Ross made good use of his limited time--according to William Safire of the *New York Times*, Ross was busy pressuring Saudi Arabia to resume its financial assistance to the PLO (which the Saudis had suspended because of the PLO's support for Iraq). No wonder James Zogby, president of the Arab-American Institute, a pro-PLO lobby, praised Clinton's decision to hire Ross.

The second promotion involves Daniel Kurtzer, the State Department official best known as the architect of America's 1989 recognition of the PLO. Kurtzer has been offered the post of American consul-general in Jerusalem. Although while he was stationed at the U.S. Embassy in Cairo, Kurtzer tried to pressure an American Jewish magazine to stop printing criticism of Egypt, one doubts that he will be similarly protective of Israel. From his days as a doctoral candidate at Columbia University (when he wrote a dissertation which argued that Israeli behavior was to blame for "radicalizing" Arab terrorists--whom he insisted on calling "guerrillas" [p.254]) to his years in Washington, Kurtzer has had few kind words for the Israelis. Even after the 1992 elections, when it was expected that Kurtzer, as a Bush loyalist, would be replaced, he used his last remaining hours on the job to lecture the Israeli negotiating team in Washington on how "since they are strong and already have a state of their own, they should make additional concessions" to the

Arabs. Kurtzer told the Israelis that he was "speaking to them as 'family' and in their best interest. The Israelis were outraged and the session got very heated," according to the *Washington Jewish Week*. Kurtzer was nevertheless rehired by the Clinton administration--and now has been offered a promotion.

It's not hard to imagine the kinds of things Kurtzer will be saying and doing if he accepts his new Jerusalem post--especially when the U.S. Consulate there already has a reputation for pro-Arab activities. Located in an exclusively Arab neighborhood and staffed almost entirely by local Arabs, the U.S. Consulate has developed a reputation as a de facto embassy to "Palestine." Consular officials meet regularly with pro-PLO Arabs, and pro-PLO rallies have even been permitted on the Consulate grounds. Things got so bad a few years ago that even the American Jewish Congress charged that the U.S. Consulate "has overstepped the bounds of diplomatic decency by the de facto recognition of a Jerusalem-West Bank entity while ignoring Jerusalem as the capital of Israel."

With Ross moving up, and possibly Kurtzer to follow, the third Jewish Arabist, Aaron Miller, will play an increasingly significant role in determining U.S. policy in the Mideast. That's troubling news, when one considers that the State Department's Policy Planning Unit, under the leadership of Ross and Miller, was reportedly responsible for sabotaging the 1991 Mideast water summit in order to appease Syria (according to Joyce Starr, the former Carter administration official who was in charge of the summit). Like Kurtzer, Miller likes to portray himself as "family" as a way of pressuring the Israelis--only in Miller's approach, "I speak to Israelis the way I speak to my own children." (He made that contemptible remark to an Israeli Knesset Member in 1992.) No wonder that pro-PLO lobbyist James Zogby, who had warm words for Dennis Ross, has praised Miller as "a very capable thinker."

If Zogby had a chance to read Miller's doctoral dissertation (University of Michigan, 1977), he would be pleasantly surprised. There Miller justified the anti-Zionist line taken by the State Department in the spring of 1948 as "a policy more attuned to the new strategic realities of the Near and Middle East" (p.381). He even described Arab attacks on Palestine Jewry in early 1948 as "the guerrilla war between Jewish and Arab organizations" (p.398) --thus proposing a moral equivalency between Arab aggressors and Jewish defenders. Miller's inability to distinguish between the two lasted well past his college years. He told Newsweek last year that "the Arab-Israeli conflict is not a morality play, not a conflict between good and evil." That there are twenty-two Arab dictatorships arrayed against one tiny democratic Jewish State, or that one side has defended itself against aggression while the other has launched invasions and sponsored terrorist atrocities--none of this seems to affect Miller's perspective. As far as he is concerned, the Arab war against Israel

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Editor's Note: The following message appeared as an advertisement in the Jerusalem Post on July 8, 1993, the day that the State Department team arrived in Israel:

An Open Letter to the Visiting State Department Officials

JERUSALEM IS NOT NEGOTIABLE

We are deeply troubled by media reports suggesting that one of the purposes of your visit to Israel is to pressure the Israeli government to place the status of Jerusalem on the agenda of the Arab-Israeli negotiations.

Israelis and their supporters abroad are united in the conviction that Israel must retain exclusive sovereignty over all of undivided Jerusalem, its eternal capitol.

Jerusalem has been the capitol of the Jewish homeland since the time of King David, 3,000 years ago. It was the site of both Holy Temples, the centers of Jewish religious life. It was the focus of Jewish prayers throughout centuries of exile. Today, Jerusalem's Old City, where the Temple Mount and Western Wall are located, is the heart of world Jewry. Surrendering any part of Jerusalem to any form of foreign rule is unthinkable.

The Arabs, by contrast, never regarded Jerusalem as a city of any importance. It is not even mentioned in the Koran. During the period of Moslem rule in the region, they never made Jerusalem an imperial or provincial capitol. And when the Arabs ruled Jerusalem's eastern half, during the period 1948-1967, they barred Jewish worshippers, destroyed the city's 58 synagogues, and used gravestones from the Mount of Olives Cemetary for Jordanian Army latrines.

Damascus, Beirut, Amman and Cairo are not negotiable. Neither is Washington, D.C.

Neither is Jerusalem.

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IS THE U.S. READY FOR GOLAN DEPLOYMENT?

Is the United States Army capable of carrying out a meaningful deployment of troops on the Golan Heights, to "guarantee" Israel's safety following territorial concessions? A feature in the July 26 edition of *Army Times* describes the difficulties endured by families of American soldiers who are being rushed from one crisis spot to another because U.S. forces around the world are already spread so thin.

Mrs. Melonie Icenogle and her two children (with a third on the way) will be alone on Thanksgiving and Christmas this year because her husband Todd, after completing a tour of duty in Somalia, has suddenly been informed that his vacation has been cancelled because his unit is needed for peacekeeping tasks in the Sinai peninsula. With cutbacks in the size of the U.S. Army

proceeding, "soldiers and family members may find themselves spending more time apart because of frequent deployments," *Army Times* notes.

Although the size of the army is diminishing, the scope of its duties is increasing. While there were only 12,000 American soldiers deployed in 38 countries in 1992, there are currently 25,000 soldiers in 60 nations.

Normally, army units that are sent to the Sinai Desert undergo six to twelve months of preparation. Todd Icenogle's unit, the 1st Battalion-327th Infantry-101st Airborne Division, was needed so urgently that it was given less than four months of training before being rushed back to the Middle East. "As you see the force draw down, we may be more frequently called upon to do these types of missions," Brigade commander Col. James Donald told *Army Times*.

Given the army's heavy load, could it really handle a serious crisis between Syria and Israel?◇

--Ruth King

Letter from Israel

Aryeh Shomron

ISRAELI EXTREMISTS EXPLOIT U.S. MEDIA

Having recently completed jail terms to which they were sentenced for membership in an Arab terrorist group, Roni Ben-Efrat and Michal Schwartz recently traveled to the United States--where they were suddenly transformed into "Jewish progressives" who are supposedly campaigning for "peace and democracy." Evidently ignorance is bliss--that is, American Jewish ignorance is bliss for Ben-Efrat and Schwartz.

Articles in the *Boston Jewish Advocate* and the *Jewish Bulletin of Northern California* portrayed Ben-Efrat and Schwartz as editors of a "progressive" newspaper that has been mistreated by the Israeli authorities. Their newspaper, *Derech Ha-Nitzotz*, regularly indulges in the fringe-left conspiracy theories. On the subject of Ethiopian Jewish immigration to Israel, for example, *Derech Ha-Nitzotz* declared that the rescue of Ethiopian Jewry "served no urgent humanitarian need"; that "the U.S. and Israel are themselves responsible for the famine from which they claim to be 'rescuing' the Falashas"; and that "the Falashas are being torn away from the struggle to liberate the African nations from colonialism, and are being absorbed by a state that is a friend of South Africa, and that is guilty of suppressing the human rights of the Arabs and perpetuating a regime of conquest." As for Schwartz's perspective on the Arab-Israeli conflict, one may consider

the fact that at a 1986 press conference, Schwartz claimed that Jews who live in the Old City of Jerusalem regularly torment their Arab neighbors by "standing naked on the rooftops to insult [Arab] residents."

In 1988, Israeli police investigators discovered that Schwartz, Ben-Efrat and several of their comrades were secretly members of an Arab terrorist group, the Damascus-based Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine. According to the charge sheet --to which Schwartz and Ben-Efrat pleaded guilty-- it was the DFLP that had initiated *Derech Ha-Nitzotz* and was financing it. Typically, Schwartz and Ben-Efrat claimed that their arrest, and the shutdown of their newspaper, was part of a government conspiracy to deny freedom of the press.

After serving their prison sentences, Schwartz and Ben-Efrat immediately flew to the U.S., where they spoke in Washington against U.S. aid to Israel, and lobbied at the American Library Association conference on behalf of resolutions accusing Israel of "censorship." When they met with Jewish journalists, however, Schwartz and Ben-Efrat carefully sugar-coated their message--they didn't talk about the activities of their Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, such as the murder of unarmed Israeli women and children. Instead, Schwartz and Ben-Efrat described themselves as "peace activists," called their magazine "progressive" and "non-partisan," and claim to be seeking only "an equitable solution to the Palestinian question." In Israel, such deception is rightly regarded with scorn. In America, however, where the truth about Schwartz and Ben-Efrat is not known, they may succeed in hoodwinking the public.◇

Aryeh Shomron writes for Outpost from Jerusalem.

UNDERSTANDING HAFEZ ASSAD

(Continued from p. 3)

machine to fulfill its communal aspirations.

In 1970, Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt died and Hafez el-Assad took power in Syria. This regional changing-of-the-guard was followed by the consolidation of Syria as a major Arab power in military and political terms. From 1979-1983, for example, Syria was the leading Third World importer of major weapons. In terms of the Arab-Israeli conflict, Syria specialist Patrick Seale considered the important question in the 1990s to be whether Israel or Syria will be the dominant power in the Levant.

Assad had remarkable success in the 1970s to basically bend Lebanon, Jordan and the Palestinian Arabs to his will. In the 1980s, he was unable, as in the war in Lebanon in 1982, to corner Israel into submission. Nonetheless, his promotion of Shi'ite terrorism from southern Lebanon demonstrated his determination to continue the campaign against Israel.

The (temporary?) neutralization of Egypt as a military coalition partner with Syria due to the 1978 Camp David Accords, and the (temporary?) neutralization of Iraq in the aftermath of the Persian Gulf War in 1991, left Syria without an immediate war option against Israel. The collapse of the Soviet Union further complicated Syria's military calculations vis-a-vis Israel. The optimal way, then, to recover the Golan Heights and reduce Israel's strategic profile was a path that led Assad to meet with President Bush in Geneva in December 1990 and to consent to participate in the Madrid peace conference in October 1991.

The generation of a sophisticated Arab war-and-peace strategy against Israel, significantly a function of the Arab losses in the 1967 and 1973 military confrontations, has become the basis of Syrian diplomacy in the 1990s. It is America which can now elevate Syrian

standing in the Mideast, and it is this route that Assad chose when he sent troops to side with U.S.-led forces in the sands of Arabia against Saddam Hussein of Iraq. And it is this route which Assad is travelling in the "peace process," hoping to appease Israel with affable affectation and an accommodating rhetoric of promises, in conjunction with Washington's leverage over Jerusalem. If he can acquire further international legitimacy and American assistance, regain the Golan Heights and maintain Syrian hegemony over Lebanon, then Alawite despotism may survive despite its proclivity for a periodical *volte face*, now and then. Assad will compensate in pragmatic achievements what he will be accused, by other Arabs, of "abandoning." It will do Assad little harm in this regard that the Arab world has been in a rather somber mood of crisis for some time now.

From Israel's perspective, its desire for peace puts it at the mercy of one of the most ruthless members of the regional Arab system. This is a telling point as Israel and Syria negotiate an accommodation for which Israel will be expected to withdraw from the Golan Heights. Israel's ability to deter future Arab aggression (like the Egyptian-Syrian attack against Israel in 1973) depends on a power equilibrium more than on a political agreement. This strategic truth explains the quiet on the Israeli-Syrian border in the Golan since May 1974. And it should be sufficient evidence --in addition to the brutality of Assad's regime, his support of terrorism, his non-conventional military acquisitions, his sponsorship of the drug trade, and his history of oppressing Syrian Jews--to dissuade Israel from capitulation.◇

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The complete version of this essay appeared in the June 1993 edition of the Bulletin of the Jerusalem Institute for Western Defence.

Should America "Guarantee" Israel's Safety?

A TIMELY AND REVEALING ANALYSIS
by Dr. Irving Moskowitz
with an introduction by Sen. Alfonse D'Amato

TO ORDER, SEE PAGE 9

**The Annual Conference of
Americans For a Safe Israel
will be held on
December 12, 1993**

- Save the Date -

BOOK REVIEW

Eye On the Media: A Look At World News Coverage of Israel and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, by Davd Bar-Illan (Jerusalem Post Books, 1993), 468 pp., \$14.95. To order, call (212) 628-9400.

Most readers of the weekend *Jerusalem Post* turn first not to the news, the sports, or the letters, but to the "Eye on the Media" column, David Bar-Illan's powerful weekly expose of Israel-bashers in the media around the world. For accuracy, straight thinking and wit, Bar-Illan's column is second to none. This new collection of Bar-Illan's first 97 columns is a valuable introduction for those unfamiliar with the weekly article--as well as an invaluable resource that should be on the bookshelf of every American who cares about the manner in which Israel is (mis-)treated by the journalistic community. The book's detailed index makes the location of specific material especially convenient.

The *New York Times* receives an appropriate share of the book's attention, considering its long tradition of Israel-bashing--indeed, the *Times* was combatting Zionism even before Israel was established. Its Jerusalem correspondent in the 1920s, Joseph Levy, actually took part in negotiations aimed at creating an Arab-Jewish Palestine instead of a Jewish state; and right up until the United Nations partition vote in 1947, the *Times* editorial staff regularly inveighed against the idea of Jewish statehood. In today's world, of course, the *Times* staff is confronted with a whole new set of dynamics, and its Jerusalem correspondents have responded in true *Times* tradition. Bar-Illan discusses the pro-PLO activities of *Times* correspondent Thomas Friedman--activities which are relevant because they reflect preconceptions about the Middle East that continue to surface

in Friedman's reporting. Friedman's successor in Jerusalem, Joel Brinkley, is the subject of several of Bar-Illan's columns, not because Bar-Illan has any particular grudge against Brinkley but simply because Brinkley's fervent pro-Arab bias and countless, sometimes comical errors make him an irresistible target.

Needless to say, the *New York Times* has plenty of competition in the Israel-bashing business from other major media outlets, including the major American television networks, National Public Radio, the British Broadcasting Corporation and other daily newspapers like the *Washington Post*, all of which come in for appropriate scrutiny in *Eye On the Media*. Several Israel-hating Israeli journalists make their appearance, as well.

Bar-Illan is at his investigative finest in his analysis of the media's miscoverage of the 1990 Temple Mount riots. His columns on the subject appear here together with *Jerusalem Post* editorials on the controversy and a selection of letters about it that appeared in *Commentary*. Together, these materials offer the reader an informative *tour de force* of the most egregious case of media bias in recent memory. They begin with Mike Wallace's vicious story about the riots on "60 Minutes," in which he strove to demonstrate that Israeli policemen provoked the Arab riot by randomly gunning down unarmed Moslem worshippers. Wallace even went so far as to cut up a taped interview with Jerusalem Mayor Teddy Kollek, juxtaposing out-of-context remarks by Kollek with selected film footage to make it appear as if Kollek confirmed Wallace's version (Kollek forcefully denounced Wallace as a result). That travesty was followed not long afterwards by the vicious media distortions of a report issued by Israeli Judge Ezra Kama, who was commissioned to independently investigate the riots. Kama concluded that the police investigation following the violence was accurate in all of its major findings: the rioting was premeditated, with Arabs bringing buckets full of rocks up to the Mount long before the trouble started; the violence began with a mass Arab rock-throwing attack on Jewish worshippers at the Temple Mount; and the police responded with appropriate amounts of force when their lives were endangered. Yet, amazingly enough, the *New York Times* headlined its story about the Kama report, "Israel Judge Says Police Provoked Al-Aksa Violence Which Killed 17" (the *Times* never uses the term "Temple Mount"--that might imply a Jewish right to the place), while the *Washington Post* used the headline, "Judge Faults Police in Temple Mount Deaths; Earlier Findings Against Moslems Rebutted."

That the two largest U.S. daily newspapers could run stories which reported exactly the opposite of what really happened is sad testimony to the Orwellian standards according to which most Western journalists seem to operate when covering Israel. It is our good fortune to have someone as energetic and articulate as David Bar-Illan to combat them.

--Ruth King

SPOTLIGHT ON THE EXTREMISTS

...**Letty Pogrebin**, chair of Americans for Peace Now, is taking full advantage of her organization's recent admission to the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations. Pogrebin was in attendance when Clinton administration official Richard Schifter appeared at a recent meeting of the Conference to discuss Israel's relationship with the United Nations. During the question and answer session, Pogrebin pressed him to discuss alleged Israeli "human rights abuses." Schifter, to his credit, refused to do so. When Morton Klein, of the Zionist Organization of America, subsequently wrote a letter to *The Forward* in which he raised questions about Pogrebin's behavior, Pogrebin replied by calling him a "McCarthyite" and an "attack dog"...

...Radical-left attorney **Avigdor Feldman**, long-time chairman of the Tel Aviv branch of the Association for Civil Rights in Israel (ACRI), has a new client: Suleiman Abid, confessed rapist-murderer of Israeli teenager Hanit Kikos. Feldman's defense will center on the claim that the confession was invalid...

...*Zealots for Zion*, the latest book by Israel-basher **Robert I. Friedman**, is "reportage at its finest," according to "freelance journalist" **Eliyah Arnon**, whose review of the book was distributed in July by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency. *Zealots for Zion* depicts Jewish residents of Judea and Samaria as "beer-guzzling red-necks," compares them to the Ku Klux Klan, and claims that they are leading Israel to a nuclear war. Even Hillel Halkin, the Israeli literary critic and outspoken dove, has strongly criticized the book, accusing Friedman of "abysmal ignorance" of Zionist history. Reviewer Arnon forgot to mention that Friedman lost one recent libel case, and is currently facing a second libel suit, in Massachusetts, over one of his anti-Israel allegations...

...According to the Israeli weekly *Kol Ha'ir*, **Haim Ramon**, Minister of Health in the Israeli Labor government, recently telephoned **Yasser Arafat** and tried to convince him that it would help the PLO's image if he would dissociate himself from recent Arab terrorist attacks on Israelis. Arafat, in reply, vowed that the "armed struggle" will continue...

...The Arab terrorist massacre of Israeli children in the town of Ma'alot, in 1974, took place because "the

[Israeli] army refused to negotiate with the hostage-takers," according to leftwing polemicist **Edward Herman**, writing in the *Philadelphia City Paper*. Actually, the Arabs shot seven Israelis before they even took the hostages. Even so, the Israeli army conducted day-long negotiations with the terrorists, which only stalled because PLO headquarters in Beirut refused to give the designated intermediaries (the French and Romanian ambassadors) the necessary pass-word. As the terrorists' deadline approached, the Israelis finally had no choice but to storm the building...

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ON SECOND THOUGHT...

..Israeli doves who rush to Tunis to embrace Yasser Arafat completely misunderstand the PLO and are exploited to advance the PLO agenda, according to Meron Benvenisti, himself a veteran of the Israeli left. The PLO "continues to see these meetings as a propaganda tool that can improve its position in the official negotiations. It is hard for the doves to grasp that the PLO is not an ideological partner, some sort of Palestinian Peace Now...its interest in the 'alternative route' [negotiations] depends entirely on whether this path serves its diplomatic goals"...

* * *

...Pressed by journalists at a recent news conference, Ruth Gavison, chairman of the leftwing Association for Civil Rights in Israel, admitted that the Israeli government's partial closure of Judea, Samaria and Gaza "is not in and of itself a human rights violation." But Gavison was careful to couch even that concession in politically correct language. "No person from another country has a human right to be allowed into Israel," she asserted, emphasizing that she regards the territories as "another country"...

* * *

...Arab propagandists and their leftwing Jewish supporters routinely claim that all Arabs murdered by PLO death squads in Judea, Samaria and Gaza were involved in "collaborating" with Israel. But now Bassam Eid, an Arab staff member of the leftwing Israeli "human rights" organization B'Tselem, has conceded that, in fact, "two-thirds of the victims were murdered for purely personal reasons." Eid made his remark in an interview with the Israeli author and translator, Hillel Halkin...

* * *

...Yehuda Lev, the far-left associate editor of the *Los Angeles Jewish Journal*, has long advocated the establishment of a PLO state in Israel's back yard. But now even Lev admits that such a state could pose a mortal danger to Israel. Writing in the April 2-8 edition of the *Journal*, Lev admitted that PLO statehood will not solve the problem of Arab terrorism against Israel. "Israel's problem is not with those who will return to moderation once the pressures of occupation are removed, it is with those who under no conditions will accept a compromise peace and who will sacrifice their own lives if need be, to smash the peace. How that problem will be resolved remains a legitimate concern for Israelis, not just of Algerians and the New York City Police Department," Lev wrote.

One Minute to Midnight

Dr. Irving Moskowitz

SOOTHING WORDS, FALSE HOPES

"There is no reason to assume Israel will be attacked by Arab nuclear weapons," former air force commander Avihu Bin-Nun assured a Tel Aviv audience in May. Bin-Nun's assertion was less a military analysis than part of a calculated political strategy; he and other supporters of the Rabin government are anxious to persuade the Israeli public that territorial surrender is a safe option since the Arab military threat has diminished.

I have the utmost respect for Bin-Nun's accomplishments in the Israeli air force. But Bin-Nun's current proclamations are not a reflection of his military experience, and American Jews need not be awestruck by his military credentials when considering his claims.

A careful examination of the reasoning behind Bin-Nun's proclamation reveals some pretty muddled thinking. He gave two reasons for dismissing the Arab nuclear threat. First: Arab fears of Israeli nuclear retaliation. "The Arab world and the entire Middle East believe that Israel currently possesses nuclear weapons," he

noted. Second: the presence of Islamic holy sites deters Arab nuclear attacks. "A state built on Islamic fundamentalism would not attack the holy places and their surroundings with nuclear arms," he claimed.

But if that is the case, why are the Arab regimes spending so much time and money developing nuclear weapons? If they are afraid to use them because of Israeli retaliation or because Israel contains Islamic sites, why do they need them at all? Bin-Nun has no answer to these questions--because they expose the illogic of his claims.

The Arabs aren't afraid of Israeli "retaliation." They rightly believe that an initial Arab nuclear attack could be so devastating that Israel would be unable to retaliate. (What they do fear is an Israeli first-strike--which could be a credible threat depending on who is Israel's prime minister.) Nor are the Arabs afraid of damaging a few religious sites. They could always rebuild them, and would surely justify the damage in the name of "liberating Palestine."

Bin-Nun's soothing words ring hollow. One can only hope that they will not lull the Israeli public into a false sense of security, at a time when Israel needs to be more on guard than ever before.◇

Dr. Irving Moskowitz is a member of the Board of Governors of Americans For a Safe Israel.

LETTERS THEY REFUSED TO PRINT

June 28, 1993

Letters to the Editor
New York Times Magazine
To the Editor:

Although Thomas Fields-Meyer's portrait (June 27) of the Clintons' Rasputin catches some of the elements of buffoonery in Michael Lerner's character, it fails to understand the political strategy that first brought him to prominence. So far from being "welcomed virtually nowhere" until this year, Lerner has been a favorite of the news media ever since he began, in 1986, to argue the "Palestinian" cause within the Jewish community. From the inception of the *intifada*, he appeared frequently in the major newspapers (including your own) and TV networks, invariably blaming Israel and not the Arabs for the absence of peace. Always he presented himself (as he has now done to Fields-Meyer) as a courageous dissenter from "the Jewish establishment," a favorite strategy of those who, lacking the courage to face up to the Arab war of ideas against Zionism, conveniently substitute the Jewish community (a community that poses no threat and wields no power) for Arab propagandists as their major antagonist.

The keynote of Lerner's career has been the abandonment of his own people when they are under attack. When black antisemitism began to make itself felt in the late 1960s, Lerner declared (in the fall 1969 issue of *Judaism*) that "Black anti-Semitism is a tremendous disgrace to Jews; for this is not an anti-Semitism rooted

in...hatred of the Christ-killers but rather one rooted in the concrete fact of oppression by Jews of blacks in the ghetto...an earned anti-Semitism." In 1991, when Jew-baiters like Patrick Buchanan used Israel's request for a loan guarantee (to aid in immigrant absorption) as an occasion for fanning anti-Jewish resentment, Lerner told your paper that this lamentable upsurge of anti-Jewish feeling was "the fault of Shamir," and that it was Jewish lobbying that had stirred up antisemitism.

Lerner is by no means the first Jew to present betrayal of his own people as ethical idealism, or timidity as courage; but he has been the most successful in draping this fraud in the long robes of the biblical prophets. His endless blather about repairing the world puts me in mind of the anecdote about the young man who once approached the Scottish sage Thomas Carlyle and solicited advice about how he might set about reforming the world: "Make an honest man of yourself," replied Carlyle, "and there will be one rascal less in Scotland."

Sincerely,

Edward Alexander
Professor of English
University of Washington
Seattle

BAKER'S JEWS

(Continued from page 4)

is just another "conflict between competing claims and competing justices" of equal moral value.

Miller went out of his way to defend the State Department against anybody who might impugn its motives for opposing Zionism. "[T]here was nothing sinister in their opposition to [Zionism]," Miller insisted, and no proof of any "hostility to Jews" (p.417). In fact, just to cite two examples, State Department official Robert Lovett accused American Jews of harboring a "primary loyalty" to Zionism instead of to America, while his colleague Loy Henderson railed about an alleged "conspiracy" between Zionists and the White House, and accused "the Zionists" of driving Secretary of Defense James Forrestal to suicide (actually, Forrestal had been mentally ill for some time, and killed himself long after the controversy over Zionism

and the U.S. had ended).

In view of the U.S. need for Arab oil, Miller concluded, there was a conflict between America's "increasing commitment to Israel" and "its own strategic interests and the interests of world peace." (p.420) In other words, Miller is making the outrageous suggestion that an American "commitment" to Israel somehow endangers "world peace."

Bill Clinton's campaign promise to do away with the Arabism of the Bush-Baker administration has vanished into the frightening reality of U.S. Mideast policy being turned over to the harshest Israel-bashers of the Baker era. That such men happen to be Jewish only makes the phenomenon all the more nightmarish.

Dr. Michael Goldblatt is vice president of the Zionist Organization of America (Greater Philadelphia District).

BALDERDASH

"Israel is supported by a powerful lobby that certainly intimidates Congress and tries to intimidate anyone who speaks on behalf of the Palestinians. Palestinians have few opportunities to speak."

--columnist Charley Reese in the
Orlando (Fla.) Sentinel, July 27, 1993

"There is absolutely no evidence for the...Zionist claim that Jews were exiled, presumably forcefully, from Palestine by the Romans...[U]nder the Romans...the Jewish subjects had unrestrained freedom of movement. They could settle wherever they pleased."

--Israeli radical Israel Shahak, in the Spring
1993 issue of *The Journal of Palestine Studies*

"[George Bush's] level of obedience to Israeli interests was insufficient. U.S. Jews turned their backs on him because the purity of his support was slightly less than 100 percent."

--former Congressman Paul Findley,
in the July/August 1993 issue of *The Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*

"Jerusalem has been an Islamic Arab city ever since the Arabs established the city of Yabous [Jerusalem] 5,000 years ago."

--statement issued by Moslem leaders at
a June 21 celebration of the Islamic New Year, in Jerusalem

"The White House [is] openly dominated by at least two totally dedicated figures direct from the Zionist lobby..."

--Eugene Bird, executive director
of the Council for the National Interest,
in *The Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*, July/August, 1993

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