

It's always Israel's fault

By Mindelle Jacobs *The Edmonton Sun (Canada) November 30, 2006*

The concept of land for peace has long been the reigning sentiment fuelling the push for consensus in the Middle East. Too bad it's a myth. In the quagmire of Arab-Israeli politics, there is no such thing as land for peace. Rather, it's land for war, as recent events have borne out. Israel retreats and the Arabs smell weakness, ululating in joy as they dream of the eradication of the Jewish state.

By now, the Palestinians should have been well on their way to statehood. It's been more than a year since Israel uprooted thousands of Jewish settlers and pulled out of Gaza.

A wildly optimistic wire story from September 2005 noted that the Palestinians envisage parks, industrial zones, a new seaport, a nature reserve and tourism facilities in the evacuated areas. But when you elect terrorists whose priorities include murdering Israelis and kidnapping westerners for kicks, it's hard to build a state, never mind lure tourist dollars. Israelis live in hope that one day Palestinians will choose reconciliation and peacemaking over terror and hatred.

Ordinary Palestinians, however, continue to embrace murderous pursuits, as exemplified by the recent decision of a 64-year-old grandmother to blow herself up near Israeli troops. No playing with the grandchildren for this grandma. Instead, she decided to go out with a bang. She didn't kill anyone but herself but her message was clear: better to hate than mend fences. Land for peace? Yeah, that worked out well. The Israelis left Gaza and within weeks, suicide bombings had resumed and rockets were raining over Israel. As usual, Israel gets blamed when it tries to defend itself.

Last week, the United Church of Canada urged Ottawa to condemn the killing of Palestinian civilians and call for an end to the "military and economic siege" of Gaza.

The Palestinians see limited alternatives to armed resistance because repeated peacemaking offers have been rejected by Israel, claims Wendy Gichuru, the United Church of Canada's program co-ordinator for the Middle East. Offers from whom? Yasser Arafat, whose thuggery was matched only by the cowardly speed with which he fled from a two-state solution?

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas? Well, he appears to be barely clinging to power since Hamas, dedicated to the destruction of Israel, won a decisive victory in the Palestinian elections in January.

Yet, in the eyes of the United Church of Canada, the violence is mostly Israel's fault. "The unqualified Canadian government support for the government of Israel in the face of the overwhelmingly disproportionate military response to the firing of ... rockets is a cause of grave concern," Gichuru stated.

Does Tel Aviv have to be bombed before Israel is allowed to fight back? It's all sadly familiar - the typical bromide of pacifism and relativism beloved by the Left. UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Louise Arbour sang the same tune during her trip to Israel and Gaza last week.

The former Supreme Court of Canada justice once again suggested that Israel's actions of self-defence, in which civilians are inadvertently killed, are just as bad as the intentional murder of civilians by Palestinian militants.

Yet no one has figured out how a country under constant attack by terrorists hiding among the general population can defend itself without causing civilian casualties. If "innocent" Palestinians want peace, they should stop forming human shields to protect terrorists and destroy the rockets in their backyards instead.

Carter's Palestinian fantasy No. 242

By Asaf Romirowsky *The Philadelphia Daily News December 6, 2006*

As ex-president Jimmy Carter's new book, "Palestine: Peace Not Apartheid," hits the stores, it's worth looking into the infamous UN resolution 242 that he quotes so frequently.

Reading Carter's words gives no indication that Israel was the party that actually accepted 242 and the Arabs and Palestinians were the ones who rejected it. In fact, after Resolution 242, the Arabs

issued the equally infamous three "no's": No peace, no recognition, no negotiation.

None of this matters to Carter, who's built his post-presidency on practicing foreign affairs without an electoral mandate.

Palestinians and Arabs love to quote 242. It's become the foundation for the land-for-peace formula drafted after the Six Day War, and a superficial reading seemingly places Palestinian/Arab

brokers of peace in a position of strength. For Arabs, this "legal" prerequisite emphasizes the give and take: If Israel valued peace, it would return land. If Arabs wanted land, they would give peace.

Arabs also love to quote 242 because it is a deceptively simple equation. On one hand, it talks about the exchange of land for peace with Israel, meaning there is room to negotiate. But although we naively believe it also calls for recognition of Israel as the Jewish state, that's not the case.

The resolution calls for "Withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict." It deliberately does not call for withdrawal from "all" or "any" because the authors knew that such demands were unreasonable.

As far as "peace" goes, the resolution lays on the bureaucratic boilerplate and calls for "Termination of all claims or states of belligerency and respect for and acknowledgement of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every State in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force." The resolution demands that Israel gives up some land in exchange for some, still unspecified, peace. Israel is still waiting.

As historian Michael Oren explains, "Israel accepted the resolution, albeit begrudgingly, as did Jordan. Nasser's response was more equivocal. While endorsing the UN's decision, he reiterated the three no's to his National Assembly... 'that which was taken by force will be regained by force,' and told his generals, 'you don't need to pay attention to anything I may say in public about a peaceful solution.' "

Decades later, in 2000, Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq Al-Shara illustrated the imaginary land-for-peace fantasy in a speech regarding peace with Israel. Al-Shara noted again the return of the Golan Heights as a prerequisite for negotiations with Israel:

"In no way did we agree to discuss any of the elements of peace before the issue of the full withdrawal is settled. In order for the withdrawal to be full, it must be... without leaving any Israelis - either civilian or military, nor any semi-military or semi-civilian; also, no ground station and no Israeli in any ground station. This is what full withdrawal means and we did not give it up."

Any time you raise the notion of "compromise" in the context of an Israel-Palestinians peace agreement it is relative to their fantasy interpretation of 242. To actually abide by the resolution would be anathema. And, in fact, when it came to implementing 242, Israel did turn over land time and time again: Sinai, the Oslo accords, the withdrawal from Gaza - in exchange for a cold peace at best and open warfare at worst.

During the Oslo years and the al-Aqsa intifada and today under the Hamas-led Palestinian Authority, "land-for-peace" really translates into "land-for-talk" because to too many Americans and Europeans, talk - not peace - is all that Israel should expect (and possibly deserve), in exchange for territorial concessions. This is the motivation which drove Hezbollah to attack Israel this summer and what continues to fuel Hamas as it rejects Israel's right to exist.

If the Palestinians really want to talk about Resolution 242 as the basis for anything, they should first get their own territories under control, stop firing rockets at Israeli towns, and start creating a decent civil society. Until then, Israelis have learned a hard lesson that until the other side stops wanting to wipe Israel off the map, resolutions like 242 really aren't worth the paper they're written on.

Asaf Romirowsky is an associate fellow at the Middle East Forum and manager of Israel & Middle East affairs for the Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia.

A Discredit to the United Nations

By The New York Times editorial November 21, 2006

The old, unreformed United Nations Human Rights Commission was selective and one-sided, but occasionally managed to do some good work. That may be more than can be said for its successor body, the Human Rights Council, born earlier this year of a weak-kneed compromise from which the United States stood honorably apart. If this is the best the U.N. can do at reforming itself, it isn't worth the effort.

The council is new, but its deliberations have already fallen into a shameful pattern. When it comes to the world's worst and most consistent human rights violators, like China, Iran, North Korea, Myanmar and Sudan, there has been a tendency to muffle words and conclusions and shift

the focus from individual and political rights to broader economic and social questions.

But when it comes to criticizing Israel for violations committed in a wartime context that includes armed attacks against its citizens and soldiers, the council seems to change personality, turning harshly critical and uninterested in broader contexts. As the council prepares to resume deliberations next week, an ad hoc coalition of human rights violators is pushing for an end to the practice of singling out individual countries for special criticism and follow-up investigations.

Those critical reports and follow-ups were the most useful thing the old unreformed commission used to do. The problem was that many other deserving targets were shielded by their diplomatic

allies. Moving away from the practice altogether would be a decided step backward.

To inspire respect and support, the United Nations must be more than a self-protective club of sovereign states. The test of that is whether it is

willing to defend the basic human standards embodied in a succession of United Nations declarations and conventions. The new Human Rights Council now seems headed for a failing midterm grade.

Zeal for combat filling Palestinian ranks

By Thanassis Cambanis *The Boston Globe* December 2, 2006

Young militants have flooded the ranks of the Palestinian factions, bringing a new mixture of lethal zeal and contempt for practical, political solutions to a long-term war against Israel they don't expect to win in their lifetimes.

These foot soldiers of the militant wings of Fatah and Hamas have little education and hold much more violent and absolute views than their political leaders. While leaders negotiate with Israel, reaching such agreements as Sunday's fragile cease-fire in the Gaza Strip, most of the young militants oppose negotiations and want to annihilate the Jewish state. Interviews with the militants reveal a bleak insight, casting doubt on the prospects for peace as autonomous militant groups show complete disregard for political action, and their way of thinking increasingly dominates their factions' leadership.

"For 12 years we have been in peace negotiations, we have given up many things, but achieved nothing," said Abu Ali, 20, who said he was a fighter in the Al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades, ostensibly the most moderate militant faction because of its link to Fatah, which recognizes Israel. "We don't believe in a political solution, because Israel will never respect it," Abu Ali said. "So we are forced to seek a military solution, even though Israel is stronger. There will be no peace" in the Palestinian territories, he said.

Such pronouncements worry older Palestinian moderates, and lend credence to Israeli security officials who over the past year say they have charted a growing trend toward violence and Islamist militancy in the Palestinian territories, more pronounced in the Gaza Strip than in the West Bank because of the relatively free flow of weapons and activists from Egypt. According to a senior military official who spoke on condition of anonymity, Israeli intelligence has seen evidence that Al Qaeda is operating in Gaza and that the traditional Palestinian militant factions are smuggling in increasingly sophisticated weapons systems.

Iran and Hezbollah, the Lebanese Shi'ite Islamist organization, are training and funding young and more extremist Hamas and Islamic Jihad militants, the military official said, and believe that they can create a formidable force in the Gaza Strip.

"We're at the beginning of a process in the Gaza Strip," the military official said. "They [Iran and Hezbollah through Palestinian proxies and allies] would like to upgrade their capabilities."

Gaza's young militants acknowledge that they get some funding and training from Iran, and that they are trying to emulate some of Hezbollah's military tactics. But they view their struggle as unique to Palestinians, distinct from the broader global agenda of such groups as Al Qaeda.

The generation that came of age throwing rocks at Israeli soldiers during the era that followed the 1993 Oslo Accords is now in its late teens and early 20s. Most of these radicalized youths have never met an Israeli, and they have none of the links to Israelis that their parents often had. Their contact comes when Israel makes military incursions into Gaza in response to the young fighters' rocket attacks, suicide bombings, and kidnappings.

Despite Israel's pullout from Gaza settlements last year, economic opportunity has shriveled in the territory because Israel keeps the borders sealed to commerce most of the time. Militants from every major faction described a milieu that has convinced them that fighting is the only way forward.

In a series of interviews, eight militants in the Gaza Strip refugee camp at Khan Yunis discussed the rocket attacks, kidnappings, and suicide operations they plan against Israel, and their pessimistic outlook. Unlike their parents, many of whom still believe that Palestinians can find some political accommodation with Israel, these men say they are convinced that Palestinians will only achieve statehood through force -- and that it might take decades or longer before they can effectively challenge Israel's military.

Three Islamic Jihad fighters who have participated in rocket attacks from the Gaza Strip said their bombardment on Israeli civilians served a significant strategic purpose, even if it did nothing to chip away at Israel's military dominance.

"We are using the rockets to erect a balance of fear with the Israelis," said Abu Talha, 20, a beginning fighter in the Islamic Jihad militia. Palestinian fighters in Gaza increasingly reflect that philosophy. While the political leadership of Hamas and the other groups occasionally lays out terms for negotiating with Israel, such as the release of

Palestinian prisoners or the cessation of attacks, the young fighters say they see politics as a dead end, an old man's game.

Hamas took the leadership of the Palestinian Authority in March but has had no more success politically than its predecessors from the more moderate Fatah faction. A 24-year-old fighter for the Popular Resistance Committees who gave his nom de guerre as Al Mullah Omar, is representative of the young fighters who embrace militancy as its own goal, rather than as a means to a political end. The resistance organization sprang up in 2000, at the beginning of the most recent intifadah, as a militant catchall group independent of the established Palestinian militant wings.

Anyone interested in attacking Israel -- including hotheads considered too out-of-control for the major factions, especially Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and Fatah -- can join, Omar said. All that matters, Omar said, is that fighters are willing to attack Israelis by any means, no matter how long the odds of success.

The group's ethos of pure militancy has made it the fastest-growing armed wing in Gaza, aided, according to Israeli authorities, by generous funding from Iran. Omar said he doesn't expect his generation to achieve any significant military victories against Israel, but that in time Palestinians will drive Jews out of the Middle East. "The Jews will not leave the land unless they are killed," he said.

His family life is steeped in a culture of fighting far removed from traditional Palestinian activism, which for decades mixed combat with politics. Some relatives are in Fatah, others in Hamas, he said. He

has trained his wife to clean and fire his gun, and expects his children to grow up to be fighters.

"If I have a son and he doesn't join the resistance, I'll snap his neck," Omar said. After offering sweet sage tea, Omar took a reporter through a series of narrow dirt lanes to the home of a Hamas member whose 17-year-old son had already joined the Hamas militant wing, Izzedine al-Qassam Brigades. In the well-appointed sitting room, with floor cushions lining three walls and a platter of fruit for guests, the generation gap was on display.

Abu Assim, 44, has raised 12 children in Gaza and sees violence as only one part of a broader Palestinian strategy. "To get the attention of a negotiator, you must have the power to pressure the other side," Abu Assim said. But his son, Abu Ataya, spoke softly of his decision to join the Qassam Brigades. "The anger and hatred inside us is a response to the occupation," he said. "We know that we are on the right course, not following the failed illusory agreements of Oslo or the road map," the US-backed peace plan.

Palestinians widely blame Israel and the Western world for Hamas's inability to govern, because the outside world cut off most funding when Hamas took power. But the Islamist party's difficult leadership tenure has emboldened the more extremist, less politically oriented youth, who argue that no faction can win a Palestinian state through politics. "The Jews should go back to their original countries and dismantle the Israeli state," said Abu Anas, an Islamic Jihad fighter. "Ten years of politics has achieved nothing. But five years of tough resistance, and they withdrew from Gaza."

Palestinian al-Qaeda plans By Louis Rene Beres and Clare M. Lopez **The Washington Times December 6, 2006**

Most Palestinian communities across the world were jubilant on September 11, 2001. This past June, these very same communities expressed outrage at the successful American assassination of terrorist leader Abu Musab al-Zarqawi. For them, the murderous mastermind of al Qaeda in Iraq had been a great hero. Dead, he was now a "martyr."

But the Palestinian link to al Qaeda has become more than mere sympathy and friendship. Al Qaeda has now set its sights on Israel and on an incremental takeover of the Palestinian cause. This is the next phase of its campaign to dominate the Muslim world and re-establish an Islamic Caliphate.

In the wake of Israel's withdrawal from Gaza in August 2005, and Hezbollah's war with Israel in July 2006, al Qaeda perceives a unique opportunity. With chaos gripping both the Palestinian Authority and the Lebanese political scene, al Qaeda has precisely the opening it needs to counter Iran's radical Shi'ite expansionism and to acquire a necessary foothold in

the region. Its direct entry into the Arab-Israeli conflict could produce major instabilities and war.

A common hatred of the United States and Israel facilitates networks of tactical cooperation between Palestinians and al Qaeda. These alignments have functioned for some time in Gaza, the West Bank, Jordan and Lebanon. Shadowy connections exist among clandestine cells that now stretch from the Sinai, across the border into Gaza, and on up to the refugee camps in Lebanon. They involve information sharing, weaponry, safe houses and scientific expertise. The overriding purpose of these alignments is future terror attacks against both Israel and the United States. These planned operations could include chemical, biological or even nuclear technologies.

None of this should be a surprise. Immediately after September 11, not only Hamas approached al Qaeda, but so too did Yasser Arafat's own forces. Fatah, formed as Mr. Arafat's personal movement to dominate the PLO, had openly embraced

"martyrdom operations" against Israeli women and children as the al-Aqsa Intifada first unfolded in 2001. Although Palestinian terrorists hardly needed al Qaeda to prod them to commit further acts of cruelty, the example of September 11 seemed to offer them both comfort and resolve. For its part, al Qaeda has been more than pleased that its Palestinian collaborators now cite frequently to the sacred Hadith: "Oh, Allah, annihilate the Jews and their supporters."

The glorification of killing for Islam has infiltrated previously secular Palestinian terror groups by way of Iranian-influenced Hezbollah, just as it has affected al Qaeda. In addition to the usual sanctification of "suicide bombing," both also approve of certain religion-based killings within the Islamic community. Both term Muslims who allegedly collaborate with the United States murtaddun (apostates) and both prescribe the sentence of murtadd harbi; to wit, the "ally with Satan" is condemned with a fatwa that pronounces a death sentence. The pertinent Koranic verse is this: "The punishment of those who wage war against Allah and His Prophet and strive to make mischief in the land, is only this -- that they should be murdered or crucified, or their hands and feet should be cut off on opposing sides." There is no difference here between man and woman: "It is permissible to shed the blood of a woman who is a heretic [harbiyya] even if her fighting is limited to singing."

Despite these factors that first allowed al Qaeda to obtain a foothold within the Palestinian cause -- a cause that had been ignored by Osama bin Laden before his 1998 Declaration of War Against Crusaders and Jews -- such an alliance is not necessarily "natural." Nor are Palestinian groups such as Hamas automatically inclined to welcome al Qaeda's growing presence in the territories. In addition to tensions that exist between Sunni offshoots of the Muslim Brotherhood (such as Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad) and the Iranian Shi'ite proxy group Hezbollah, the international jihad mission of al Qaeda goes far beyond the essentially nationalist, territorial objectives of local groups that have been fighting Israel for decades.

Historically, al Qaeda has sought various security vacuums from which to operate -- e.g., Afghanistan, Somalia, Iraq and Pakistan's wild border region. It now seeks the Palestinian Territories. As far back as December 2002, al Qaeda first announced the establishment of the Islamic Al-Maida Organization in Palestine. This announcement declared "a vow of allegiance to the Emir of the Mujahedeen, the leader Osama bin Laden, by means of whom Allah strengthened the Nation of Islam." Calling for an end to regimes that "serve only the murderous Jews and the Great Satan," the

announcement ended with a plea to "our brothers in Islam in Jordan, Egypt and Saudi Arabia to attack the American interests and the heretical institutions of apostasy... Death to the Jews and Zionism; death to America; strength to Allah, Allah is great, and victory to Islam."

It was Israel's 2005 withdrawal from Gaza that provided the first real opportunity for al Qaeda operatives to cross over newly opened border crossings from Sinai. Then, Iran's unleashing of its Lebanese Hezbollah proxy against Israel in the summer of 2006 alerted al Qaeda that a resurgent radical Shi'ism meant to stake its own claim to the Palestinian campaign against Israel. While Hamas' January 2006 electoral victory signaled the demise of Fatah, that terror group was not willing to go down without a fight. Hamas is not Fatah's only enemy, however, as a noose of hatred draws more tightly around Israel. In September, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas lost his top intelligence officer and four bodyguards in a shooting ambush claimed brazenly by al Qaeda.

All sides now openly admit to al Qaeda's expanding presence. In Sinai, a mixed Bedouin-Palestinian wing of al Qaeda operates under the name "al Qaeda Organization in the Land of the Nile." In Gaza, a group calling itself "al Qaeda Organization in the Border Districts" has surfaced. In October 2005, Israel's military intelligence chief, Maj. Gen. Aharon Zeevi-Parkash, called al Qaeda's growing interest in Israel "a real threat." Retired Brig. Gen. Danny Arditi, who heads the counterterrorism department of the Israeli National Security Council, confirmed to Army Radio that al Qaeda had infiltrated Gaza from the southern Egyptian border after Israel's disengagement. In a September 2005 interview, Hamas spokesman Mahmoud al-Zahar confirmed the infiltration of al Qaeda members into Gaza, noting not only a physical infiltration, but claiming the existence of contacts from Gaza with al Qaeda centers in other countries. The wary working relationship between Hamas and al Qaeda notwithstanding, the Muslim Brotherhood has launched a propaganda campaign against al Qaeda throughout the Arab world. Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah is frankly antagonistic to al Qaeda's spreading influence in Lebanon, and has acknowledged al Qaeda's involvement there by terming it a "dangerous and unacceptable" situation.

Al Qaeda now operates secretly in the West Bank (Judea/Samaria) and openly in Gaza at the express invitation of Hamas. Relations with Fatah have deteriorated since Mr. Arafat first imported Hezbollah fighters to assist with terror attacks against Israel. Hezbollah and Iranian Revolutionary Guards have, in turn, helped to train a variety of Middle Eastern terrorists. Early on, Mr. Arafat had gathered together a diverse collection of Iranian

Revolutionary Guards, Hezbollah, Popular Front-General Command and various Iraqi military intelligence units (Palestinian terrorists had always been extremely close to Saddam Hussein, even sending Palestinian Liberation Army units to help torture Kuwaitis in 1991). Also included were the pro-Iraqi Arab Liberation Front, and, since April 2002, al Qaeda.

Significantly, this same crosscut of Islamist terrorist groups presently exists in the United States - although here they function "only" as fund-raising, propaganda, recruitment and sleeper-cell operatives. Al Qaeda's hatred of the United States has very little to do with American support for Israel. If Israel ceased to exist, its enmity for this country would continue unabated. This is because the United States is seen as the superpower leader of liberal democracy, wielding the ability to check al Qaeda's dream of a new global Caliphate. The unforgivable "sin" of American ties to "apostates and criminals" who rule in such Muslim countries as Egypt, the Emirates, Jordan, Kuwait, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia

elicits the same implacable wrath as American support for Israel because both linkages weave a network of opposition to al Qaeda expansion.

Joint Palestinian-al Qaeda teams are planning coordinated mega-terror strikes against Israel and America. Simultaneously, a fight is taking shape among the major ideological factions of radical Islam. It follows that both Israel and the United States should immediately cease any and all assistance to the Hamas-controlled Palestinian Authority. Above all, it is time for Washington to stop sending American tax dollars to support archenemies of the United States.

Louis Rene Beres, who has counseled various government agencies in Washington and Jerusalem, served as chairman of Project Daniel under former Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon. Clare M. Lopez, who lectures on the Mideast and counterterrorism issues, served 20 years as a CIA operations officer.

Just an Anti-Semitic Laugh? Hardly.

By Charles Krauthammer *The Washington Post* November 24, 2006

"Borat" is many things: a sidesplitting triumph of slapstick and scatology, a runaway moneymaker and budding franchise, the worst thing to happen to Kazakhstan since the Mongol hordes, and, as columnist David Brooks astutely points out, a supreme display of elite snobbery reveling in the humiliation of the hoaxed hillbilly.

But it is one thing more, something Brooks alluded to in passing but that requires at least one elaboration: an unintentionally revealing demonstration of the unfortunate attitude many liberal Jews have toward working-class American Christians, especially evangelicals.

You know the shtick. Borat goes around America making anti-Semitic remarks in order to elicit a nodding anti-Semitic response. And with enough liquor and cajoling, he succeeds. In the most notorious such scene (on "Da Ali G Show," where the character was born), Borat sings "Throw the Jew Down the Well" in an Arizona bar as the local rubes join in.

Sacha Baron Cohen, the creator of Borat, revealed his purpose for doing that in a rare out-of-character interview he granted *Rolling Stone* in part to counter charges that he was promoting anti-Semitism. On the face of it, this would be odd, given that Cohen is himself a Sabbath-observing Jew. His defense is that he is using Borat's anti-Semitism as a "tool" to expose it in others. And that his Arizona bar stunt revealed, if not anti-Semitism, then "indifference" to anti-Semitism. And that, he maintains, was the path to the Holocaust.

Whoaaaa. Does he really believe such rubbish? Can a man that smart (Cambridge, investment banker and now brilliant filmmaker) really believe that indifference to anti-Semitism and the road to the Holocaust are to be found in a country-and-western bar in Tucson?

Of all the gin joints in all the towns in all the world.

With anti-Semitism reemerging in Europe and rampant in the Islamic world; with Iran acquiring the ultimate weapon of genocide and proclaiming its intention to wipe out the world's largest Jewish community (Israel); with America and, in particular, its Christian evangelicals the only remaining Gentile constituency anywhere willing to defend that besieged Jewish outpost -- is the American heartland really the locus of anti-Semitism? Is this the one place to go to find it?

In Venezuela, Hugo Chavez says that the "descendants of the same ones that crucified Christ" have "taken possession of all the wealth in the world." Just this month, Tehran hosted an international festival of Holocaust cartoons featuring enough hooked noses and horns to give Goebbels a posthumous smile. Throughout the Islamic world, newspapers and television, schoolbooks and sermons are filled with the most vile anti-Semitism.

Baron Cohen could easily have found what he seeks closer to home. He is, after all, from Europe, where synagogues are torched and cemeteries desecrated in a revival of anti-Semitism -- not "indifference" to but active -- unseen since the Holocaust. Where a Jew is singled out for torture

and death by French-African thugs. Where a leading Norwegian intellectual -- et tu, Norway? -- mocks "God's Chosen People" ("We laugh at this people's capriciousness and weep at its misdeeds") and calls for the destruction of Israel, the "state founded . . . on the ruins of an archaic national and warlike religion."

Yet, amid this gathering darkness, an alarming number of liberal Jews are seized with the notion that the real threat lurks deep in the hearts of American Protestants, most specifically Southern evangelicals. Some fear that their children are going to be converted; others, that below the surface lies a pogrom waiting to happen; still others, that the evangelicals will take power in Washington and enact their own sharia law.

This is all quite crazy. America is the most welcoming, religiously tolerant, philo-Semitic

country in the world. No nation since Cyrus the Great's Persia has done more for the Jews. And its reward is to be exposed as latently anti-Semitic by an itinerant Jew looking for laughs and, he solemnly assures us, for the path to the Holocaust?

Look. Harry Truman used to tell derisive Jewish jokes. Richard Nixon said nasty things about Jews in government and elsewhere. Who cares? Truman and Nixon were the two greatest friends of the Jews in the entire postwar period: Truman secured them a refuge in the state of Israel, and Nixon saved it from extinction during the Yom Kippur War.

It is very hard to be a Jew today, particularly in Baron Cohen's Europe, where Jew-baiting is once again becoming acceptable. But it is a sign of the disorientation of a distressed and confused people that we should find it so difficult to distinguish our friends from our enemies.

The Luck of the Israelis By Rory Miller and Michael J. O'Sullivan The Wall Street Journal December 5, 2006

Last May, Warren Buffett made his first acquisition ever outside the U.S. His Berkshire Hathaway investment company agreed to pay \$4 billion for 80% of Israeli tool maker Iscar. That's no small token of Mr. Buffett's confidence in the Israeli economy, as Prime Minister Ehud Olmert was quick to point out. And yet, Mr. Olmert felt strangely under pressure from another small country, thousands of kilometers away. "Israel is in a very competitive place compared to other places in the world," he said, "including Ireland."

Israel's preoccupation with the "Celtic Tiger" bridges all ideological divides. From Likud leader and free-market proponent Benjamin Netanyahu, who praises Ireland's success in replacing "a welfare ethic with a business ethic," to Labor's Amir Peretz, a champion of state intervention in the economy, Israelis have come to admire the Irish economy. Israelis particularly marvel at Ireland's ability to attract foreign direct investment on a phenomenal scale.

Why has Ireland attracted so much more investment in both absolute terms and as a percentage of GDP than Israel over the last 15 years? Both countries can draw upon well-educated populations and large diasporas of talented professionals, as well as sophisticated and able institutions.

Part of Ireland's success has been predicated on the political stability and the surge in economic initiatives on both sides of the border following the 1994 paramilitary cease-fire and the 1998 Good Friday Northern Irish peace agreement. Israel is far from achieving a similar level of regional stability. But the move toward peace is only half the story.

More important is that Ireland has excelled in establishing flexible business practices by reducing

red tape across the economy. The Irish government, with the support of trade unions and employers, has made the promotion of a competitive enterprise environment an overriding priority of its economic strategy. Ireland, helped by its membership in the European Union, has succeeded in imposing fiscal discipline while offering low corporate taxes to inward investors. Add to this the supercharged effect of abnormally low interest rates that have come with euro membership, and the drivers of Ireland's performance become clearer.

As a result, since 2001 Ireland has been continuously positioned among the top four in the A.T. Kearney/Foreign Policy globalization index, which measures political, economic, personal and technological globalization in 62 countries. Israel improved its ranking to 15th, up from 22nd place last year. But it still has a way to go to catch up.

The openness of the Irish economy, though, also highlights the country's dependence on foreign corporations and capital, a situation made even more precarious by the mediocre state of domestic industry. In this respect, Israel is the exact opposite. It has more companies listed on Nasdaq than any other country outside the U.S. Two weeks ago, the exchange even launched the Nasdaq Israel Index, tracking the performance of 73 Israeli firms with a combined market capitalization of \$50 billion. Israel can also boast more U.S.-registered patents than China, India and Russia combined. In proportion to its population, Israel has the largest number of start-ups in the world. In absolute terms, its 3,500 start-ups as of 2006, mostly in high tech, were second only to the U.S.

Israel's success in building cutting-edge companies from scratch can be traced back to the 1970s. It was driven by the economic realities of a

tiny domestic market in regional isolation, as well as the strategic necessity of making long-term, risky investments in military technology in the face of relentless conflicts and arms embargoes. Israeli officials concluded that their country's only potential comparative advantage lay in high-tech, high-skill, science-based industries.

This realization has paid off. By the time of the global high-tech boom in the 1990s, Israel -- boosted by an influx of educated Russian Jews following the fall of the Soviet Union -- had more scientists and technology workers per capita than any other country in the world. It also had an impressive track record of investment in education and a highly computer-literate high school population. The country built the world's most advanced technology incubation program. Dozens of incubation centers provide hundreds of indigenous high-tech start-ups with the equipment, office space and venture-capitalist contacts to nurture high-tech talent. About 70% of Israeli industrial exports are in high tech, the highest percentage in the world.

In contrast to Israel's strategic decision to develop a domestic industrial sector, Dublin's policy makers looked to the EU and U.S. multinationals when the Irish economy was on its knees in the 1980s. At the time Ireland was effectively preindustrial, and there was little to suggest that its

domestic industry could lead the country out of its economic doldrums.

Even today this seems to be the case. Ireland's spending on R&D and education is little more than the underwhelming EU average. It has one of the worst records among developed countries in terms of Internet use and patent registrations. Irish literacy rates in math and science are close to the EU average, and the number of doctorates in these areas is below average. The World Economic Forum's 2006-07 Global Competitiveness Index ranked Israel third and Ireland 24th in the key area of technological readiness.

The Irish case shows that attracting foreign investment requires integration and interdependence. Fiscal discipline and geopolitical stability are vital preconditions for this. The Israeli case tells us that long-term economic success also requires building an investment and research environment that leads to cutting-edge technological innovation and world-beating entrepreneurship. Taken together, this tale of two economies provides a powerful lesson for emerging nations.

Mr. Miller is a senior lecturer at King's College, University of London. Mr. O'Sullivan is author of "Ireland and the Global Question".

How to End Terrorism By Daniel Pipes **The New York Sun December 5, 2006**

An effective counterterrorism strategy must focus on the fact that terrorism by Muslims in the name of Islam presents the strategic threat today to civilized peoples, whether Muslim or non-Muslim.

On the low end, this threat involves lone individuals seized by the Sudden Jihad Syndrome who unpredictably set off on a murder spree. At the high end, it involves an outlaw organization like Hamas running the quasi-governmental Palestinian Authority, or even Al-Qaeda's efforts to acquire weapons of mass destruction. In all, were terrorism by Muslims halted, this would be a major advance toward winning what some call World War IV.

Can this be achieved? Yes, and partially via effective conventional counterterrorism. Individuals must be hunted down, organizations closed, networks smashed, borders monitored, money denied, WMD restricted. These steps, however, address only the symptoms of the problem, not the problem itself. "The problem itself" consists of the motivating forces that lie behind the surge of violence by Muslims in the name of Islam. Only by isolating why terrorism has emerged as so prominent a feature of Muslim life can the violence be countered.

This aggression results not from some perverse impulse to inflict damage for its own sake; nor does it flow from the religion of Islam, which just a

generation ago did not inspire such murderousness. Rather, it results from political ideas.

Ideas have no role in common criminality, which has purely selfish ends. But ideas, usually ones about radically changing the world, are central to terrorism, and especially to its suicidal variety. Unlike the rest of us, who generally accept life as it is, utopians insist on building a new and better order. To achieve this, they demand all powers for themselves, display a chilling contempt for human life, and harbor ambitions to spread their vision globally. Several utopian schemas exist, with fascism and communism historically the most consequential and each of them claiming tens of millions of casualties.

By 1945 and 1991, respectively, these two totalitarianisms had been vanquished through defeat in war, one violently (in World War II), the other subtly (in the cold war). Their near demise emboldened some optimists to imagine that the era of utopianism and totalitarianism had come to end and that a liberal order had permanently replaced them.

Alas, this view ignored a third totalitarianism, growing since the 1920s, that of Islamism, most briefly defined as the belief that whatever the question, from child-rearing to war-making, "Islam is the solution." As the result of several factors -- an

historic rivalry with Jews and Christians, a boisterous birth rate, the capture of the Iranian state in 1979, support from oil-rich states – Islamists have come to dominate the ideological discourse of Muslims interested in their Islamic identity or faith.

Islamic law, in retreat over the previous two centuries, came roaring back, and with it jihad, or sacred war. The caliphate, defunct in real terms for over a millennium, became a vibrant dream. Ideas proffered by such thinkers and organizers as Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab, Shah Waliullah, Sayyid Abu'l-A'la al-Mawdudi, Hasan al-Banna, Sayyid Qutb, and Rouhollah Khomeini aggressed successfully against traditional, modernist, and centrist approaches to Islam. To advance the poisoned vision of these utopians, their followers adopted violent means, including terrorism.

The most effective form of counterterrorism fights not the terrorists but the ideas that motivate them. This strategy involves two main steps. First, defeat the Islamist movement just as the fascist and communist movements were defeated – on every

level and in every way, making use of every institution, public and private. This task falls mainly on non-Muslims, Muslim communities being generally incapable or unwilling to purge their own.

In contrast, only Muslims can undertake the second step, the formulation and spread of an Islam that is modern, moderate, democratic, liberal, good-neighborly, humane, and respectful of women. Here, non-Muslims can help by distancing themselves from Islamists and supporting moderate Muslims.

Although theoretically possible, the weakness of its advocates at present makes moderate Islam appear impossibly remote. But however dim its current prospects, the success of moderate Islam ultimately represents the only effective form of counterterrorism. Terrorism, begun by bad ideas, can only be ended by good ones.

Mr. Pipes is the director of the Middle East Forum. This article is based on a much longer presentation given at a security conference in Brazil.

Olmert's Saudi friends

By Caroline Glick The Jerusalem Post December 4, 2006

The world has gone mad. As Lebanon teeters on the brink of Iranian and Syrian instigated collapse, senior American and British political officials urge President George W. Bush to hand Iraq over to Iran and Syria.

As the Palestinians push forward with their Iranian-sponsored, Arab supported jihad, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert responds by announcing his intention to release thousands of terrorists from prison and throw thousands of Israelis out of their homes while giving their lands to Hamas.

While Saturday found the Palestinian Authority's Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh meeting in Teheran with Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and applauding his plan to annihilate Israel, Olmert decided Sunday that, in the interest of peace with the Palestinians he would forbid the IDF from attacking terrorists positions in Gaza even if doing so would prevent imminent rocket attacks against the Negev.

And now, according to Britain's Sunday Times, Saudi Arabia is becoming the "principal peace broker" between Israel and the Palestinians.

Reportedly since meeting in Amman in September with the former Saudi ambassador to the US, Saudi Prince Bandar, Olmert has been seriously considering embracing the so-called Saudi peace plan from 2002. Senior Israeli officials told the Times that the plan, which would establish a Palestinian state, "could lead to a formal peace deal between Israel and seven Arab countries: Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman, the Emirates, Morocco and Tunisia."

It would really be terrific if Israel could have peace with Saudi Arabia and the rest of those Arab

countries. A true peace with Saudi Arabia would mean an end to the illegal Arab economic boycott of Israel and their boycott of companies that do business with Israel.

Peace between Israel and Saudi Arabia would mean that the Saudis would stop financing Islamic terror groups dedicated to killing Jews in Israel and around the world. Since having peaceful relations with Israel would presuppose Saudi acceptance of Israel's right to exist as a Jewish state in the Land of Israel, obviously a Saudi peace with Israel would mean an end to Saudi financing of mosques, schools and media organs throughout the world which indoctrinate hundreds of millions of people to believe that Jews are dogs and pigs and vermin and must be annihilated. Peace between Saudi Arabia and Israel would mean an end to Saudi pressure on Europeans to criminalize Israel and marginalize the Jewish communities in their countries in exchange for a stable oil supply.

The calls by professors who teach in Saudi-financed US and European universities to boycott Israeli academics and end the US alliance with Israel would be muted if Saudi Arabia was at peace with Israel. Similarly, former US officials employed by the Saudis would stop calling American Jews traitors for supporting the US-Israel alliance. So if there were a possibility that the Times report that "The Saudi Arabian government is emerging as a key player in talks to broker a comprehensive Arab-Israeli peace agreement," were true, it would be a true cause for a celebration in Israel.

But of course, like the view that the turmoil in Lebanon is an internal Lebanese affair; and the view that a US retreat from Iraq could be anything other than a strategic victory for the global jihad, the belief that the Saudis are interested in brokering peace with Israel is a complete fabrication. Indeed the "deal" that the Saudis are "brokering" is nothing less than a blueprint for Israel's destruction.

The 2002 Saudi "peace plan" requires Israel to agree to be overrun by millions of hostile foreign Arabs in the framework of the so-called "Right of Return." Moreover, the text of the initiative, "Assures the rejection of all forms of Palestinian partition which conflict with the special circumstances of the Arab host countries." That is, the Saudi plan prohibits Arab states from granting citizenship to these millions of Arabs and so leaves them no choice other than to destroy Israel.

Saudi Arabia's "peace plan" also demands that Israel surrender east Jerusalem - including the Temple Mount, all of Judea and Samaria, the Jordan Valley and the entire Golan Heights to the Palestinians and the Syrians. This Israeli surrender would enable the formal establishment of a Palestinian terror state. It would also strengthen Iran's principal ally - the Syrian Ba'athist regime.

Here too, the Saudi plan is a recipe for Israel's destruction. Without these territories, Israel would be rendered indefensible. Without Judea, Samaria, Jerusalem, the Jordan Valley and the Golan Heights, Israel would be so vulnerable to missile and artillery attack that it could be overwhelmed even before conventional invading Arab armies set foot on its remaining territory. As a reading of the Saudi plan makes clear, it would only be after Israel surrendered all this land and allowed itself to be overrun by millions of hostile Arab immigrants that the Saudis and their Arab brethren would "establish normal relations with Israel." That is, the Saudis will be ready to talk to Israelis only after Israel is destroyed.

The Times' report claims that Olmert's speech at David Ben Gurion's grave last week where he offered to surrender to Hamas, "was not Olmert's own initiative but a dictate given to him last month when he met George W. Bush and Condoleezza Rice in Washington." The Americans reportedly were acting at the behest of the Saudis who wanted proof that Olmert is truly committed to capitulation.

It makes some sense that the Bush administration would express such devotion to the Saudi plan. The most glaring Achilles heel of Bush's entire war against the global jihad has been his refusal to contend with Saudi Arabia's central role in fomenting the jihad.

Bush's father's secretary of state James Baker III is the senior partner of Baker, Botts law firm which is representing Saudi Arabia in the lawsuit filed

against the kingdom by the relatives of the victims of the September 11 attacks. As the co-chair of the Iraq Study Group, Baker is about to recommend that Bush pressure Israel to capitulate to Hamas and Syria in Judea and Samaria, Gaza and the Golan Heights order to facilitate the US's capitulation to Syria and Iran in Iraq. Prince Bandar, Olmert's reported interlocutor is a personal friend of Baker and the Bush family. After 15 Saudis and four Egyptians carried out the attacks on the US on Sept. 11, it was Bandar who persuaded Bush to become the first US president to ever make the establishment of a Palestinian state an official US policy goal.

Olmert's motive for providing the Saudis with an unwarranted propaganda victory in the US and Israel is similarly understandable. Quite simply, Olmert will do anything to take the Israeli public's attention away from his failure in office. And to successfully "spin" the public, he needs the support of the Israeli media.

Olmert's embrace of a new imaginary "peace process" will win him the support of Haaretz and the other radical leftist elements in the Israeli media. These media organs will then work to prevent the opening of police investigations into Olmert's alleged criminal activities.

Friday, Haaretz columnist Gideon Samet made clear that in exchange for the media's support, Olmert must release thousands of Palestinian terrorists from jail even without securing the release of IDF Cpl. Gilad Shalit; scale-down IDF counter-terror operations in Judea and Samaria; facilitate the free flow of goods from Gaza into Israel and so render Israel even more vulnerable to terrorist penetration from Gaza; destroy Israeli communities in Judea and Samaria; and provide free medical services to Palestinians in Israeli hospitals.

Olmert's speech at the gravesite of Israel's founding father was a signal on his part to the radical leftist media that he is accepting their terms. And in exchange the media ignores the ever escalating allegations that Olmert has been involved in criminal activity. More importantly, the media makes light of the fact that by losing the war this summer and adopting a strategy of total capitulation to all external forces Olmert has placed the country in the greatest existential danger in its history. Similarly, the media hides the ideological bankruptcy of Olmert's Kadima party - whose platform of capitulation has failed completely, and ignores the fact that Kadima has no clear constituency.

It is a Faustian bargain these leaders of Israel and the US make when they prefer good press to good policies. What the self-satisfied grins on the faces of the leaders of Iran, Syria, Saudi Arabia and other "moderate" countries these days clearly signals is that it is a bargain we cannot afford.